Inappropriate Academic Collocation on Students’ Basic Consideration in Undergraduate Thesis

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Abstract

Composing good basic consideration reflects great quality of writing and establishes effective communication by using academic collocation. Indeed, EFL students use inappropriate academic collocation that leads to unnatural meaning on basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. Once this phenomenon occurs, this research is conducted to describe how types of academic collocation that used inappropriately on students’ basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. This research employed descriptive qualitative method which in data is well selected from eight basic considerations in undergraduate thesis of English Department students. The research result showed that 28 data were regarded as inappropriate collocation. These data showed that combination of verb + noun, adjective + noun, adverb + verb past participle, adverb + verb, verb + adverb, and adverb + adjective was used inappropriately. Therefore, this research result is expected to broaden lexical knowledge of the usage of academic collocation to students and present students’ academic writing difficulties to lecturers in order to encourage further improvement in English teaching.

Key words: Academic collocation, inappropriate collocation, Undergraduate thesis.

Introduction

In universities, academic writing is emphasized to communicate student’s analytical thought into complex ideas. One of academic writing is basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. Students should establish facts and problems description so that readers become convinced of their research and reflect how advance their writing are. There are eight aspects of successful writing: grammar, mechanism, purpose, syntax, lexical choice, content, the writer’s process, and readers [1]. In order to have understandable, clear, and effective basic consideration, students begin taking on these fundamental aspects.

Related to collocation, it is should be considered in academic writing. Academic collocation directly involves lexical collocation and academic writing [2]. This type collocation is set into certain patterns in order to create good lexical cohesion. As the recent research of academic collocation, two studies carefully investigated the most frequent usage of academic collocation from different matters. Both studies adopted mixed approach. Journal articles and textbook were found the most combination of adjective and noun [2]. Otherwise, Computer Science students overused noun academic collocation in their MSc dissertation [3].
In fact, students used academic collocation inappropriately on their basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. Inappropriate or unacceptable collocation is often produced by advanced level of language learners [4]. Inappropriate collocation describes that English native writers rarely use the word combination and meaning sounds odd. For instance, *increase enthusiasm* and *crucial necessity*. Both word combinations are generally accepted by Indonesia language meanwhile English natives consider inappropriate for them. *Increase enthusiasm* should be *arouse enthusiasm*. This combination is influenced by students’ native language to target language. *Crucial necessity* should be *fundamental necessity*. This combination is affected by lexical synonym. As a result, students’ writing are not like English native writers, do not establish effective communication, and do not seem easily understandable to readers.

Based on brief description above, this research intends to describe the types of academic collocation that used inappropriately on students’ basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. Through this research, it is offered some recommendation to students and lecturers in order to underuse inappropriate academic collocation in another academic writing.

**Theoretical Reviews**

**Concept of Collocation**

As linguistic phenomenon, collocation is acquired language skill in English. Some matters relating to collocation, such as syntax and semantic. Syntactically, collocation is combination of two or more lexical items in which establishing relation between structural elements and given pattern [5]. Whereas semantically, collocation deals with the relationship between two words meaning that usually co-occur together in its environment [6]. Collocation is classified into two types: lexical collocation and grammatical collocation [7]. Lexical collocation is formed by noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. Otherwise, grammatical collocation contains noun, verb, adverb, adjective, and preposition.

For selecting good combination of collocation, students should consider and fulfill some criterion. Three dimensions for appropriate collocation are suggested [8], in which are: a) Syntactical dimension points out the main constituents to determine collocation, namely base and collocator; b) Semantic dimension interprets intended meaning and collocation component are crucial within this dimension; c) Commutability indicates to limited substitution to replace lexical items. Although collocation becomes problematic in EFL learners, mastering collocation can instruct students to recognize, organize, and engage the lexical properly [9]. This word groups enable to use effectively and communicate efficiently. Thus, collocation becomes foundation to produce language more natural and colourful, and increases learners’ writing style.

**Academic Collocation**

Academic collocation describes pair of words that occurs frequently in academic text [2]. Academic collocation consists of noun, verb, adjectives, and adverb. For instance, adjective + noun (close relationship), adverb + adjective (totally different), adverb + verb (greatly enhance), adverb + verb past participle (is broadly defined), noun + noun (government policy), verb + adjective (become apparent), verb + adverb (communicate effectively), and verb + noun (encounter problems). This collocation directly involves with academic writing and lexical collocation.

**Academic Writing**

The successful academic writing shows writer’s idea to highlight insight and an issue systematically into written form. Writing in foreign language is defined as shared knowledge to communicate in written language [10]. In light of their statement, writing purpose plays vital role to convey writer’s idea properly to readers and accomplish its primary writing purposes. Academic writing presents the writer’s knowledge and develops cognitive skills, such as thinking, interpreting, and presenting towards issues [11]. There are some types of academic writing with various purposes, such as essay, research paper, journal, thesis, and so on. Students can practice generating, organizing, analyzing, and evaluating their idea with another perspective. Thus, mastering academic writing skill assists students to reach advanced level and practise their research skills.

**Inappropriate Collocation**

Many researchers have conducted collocation in a number of longitudinal studies. Collocation is well-known term in language area. Three degrees of inappropriate collocation are determining word selection, language preference, and arbitrary combination [12]. For example, expensive price must be high price. Determining word selection indicates to how appropriate lexical items are formed by combining with its partner. The adjective high is interrelated with noun price. Language preference refers to the English native speaker use word combination in spoken or written
form. Arbitrary combination discusses the word combination should be conveyed clearly. Thus, students should recognize some degrees to determine appropriate collocation so that the combination is clear.

**Research Method**

In this research, qualitative descriptive method is used to describe the phenomenon of academic collocation through interpretive analysis.

**Data**

Data in this research were sentences that have inappropriate academic collocation on students’ basic consideration in undergraduate thesis.

**Data Sources**

Eight basic considerations in undergraduate thesis of English Department Students in State University of Gorontalo were taken as the data sources.

**Data Collection Technique**

Observation and Documentation were selected as data collection technique. Both technique were conducted by reading entire sources data and mark the sentences that contain inappropriate academic collocation. Eight basic considerations in undergraduate thesis were considered large sufficiently and provided necessary data as representative of inappropriate academic collocation. These were selected randomly in order to offer range of possibilities of academic collocation pattern that used inappropriately.

**Data Analysis**

Three stages are applied to analyse data [13]:

a. Data reduction. The word combinations were classified into Academic Collocation Patterns. Then, validating data used three sources of references, such as Oxford Collocation Dictionary, Longman Collocation Dictionary and Thesaurus, and Corpus of Contemporary American English (CoCa).

b. Data display. The correct forms were represented and each lexical meaning was interpreted by Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English and Longman Collocation Dictionary and Thesaurus.

c. Conclusion. The researcher drawn conclusion based on accurate data that had been analyzed and offered some recommendation in terms of English Department and further researcher.

**Findings and Discussion**

**Findings**

The following table represents 28 data.

**Combination of Verb and Noun**

This combination is from data 01 to 13. For instance, in data 02, “Besides, the government build an organization called DFA (Deliria Free America)”. Noun organization refers to a group of people, business, or country in which is set to achieve primary purpose. This lexical does not co-occur with verb build. This build points out that make something from construction material, for example, house, wall, bridge, school, road, and so on. This inappropriate combination proposed that build organization means membangun organisasi. Both English collocation dictionaries consider the appropriate collocates is the verb found. Found in Longman Dictionary states that start something to exist, such as company, business, or organization. This verb found can be replaced by some lexical, such as create, establish, form, and start. Regarding to the data finding context, the government have started an organization to accomplish its primary purpose.

**Combination of Adjective and Noun**

This combination is from data 14 to 18. For instance, in data 18, “There are some students that have medium level and low level in listening skill”. Noun organization refers to a group of people, business, or country in which is set to achieve primary purpose. This lexical does not co-occur with verb build. This build points out that make something from construction material, for example, house, wall, bridge, school, road, and so on. This inappropriate combination proposed that build organization means membangun organisasi. Both English collocation dictionaries consider the appropriate collocates is the verb found. Found in Longman Dictionary states that start something to exist, such as company, business, or organization. This verb found can be replaced by some lexical, such as create, establish, form, and start. Regarding to the data finding context, the government have started an organization to accomplish its primary purpose.
Table 1. Result from Questionnaire

| No | Inappropriate Academic Collocation | Correction          |
|----|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1  | do mistake                         | make mistake        |
| 2  | build organization                 | establish organization|
| 3  | made strategy                      | design strategy     |
| 4  | delete law                         | repeal law           |
| 5  | engage evaluation                  | conduct evaluation   |
| 6  | increase enthusiasm                | arouse enthusiasm    |
| 7  | support other skill                | develop other skill  |
| 8  | give contribution                  | make contribution    |
| 9  | find difficulties                  | have difficulties    |
| 10 | construct communication            | establish communication|
| 11 | create interest                    | attract interest     |
| 12 | create joy                         | bring joy            |
| 13 | give effort                        | make effort          |
| 14 | extreme life                       | hard life            |
| 15 | suitable game                      | good game            |
| 16 | obvious word                       | clear word           |
| 17 | crucial necessity                  | fundamental necessity|
| 18 | medium level                       | average level         |
| 19 | is basically known                 | is commonly known    |
| 20 | is dominantly used                 | is widely used       |
| 21 | is typically used                  | is commonly used, is generally used |
| 22 | is mostly used                     | is commonly used, is generally used |
| 23 | fully perform                      | perform well         |
| 24 | highly affect                      | greatly affect       |
| 25 | mostly influence                   | largely influence     |
| 26 | observe deeply                     | observe carefully     |
| 27 | explore deeply                     | explore carefully     |
| 28 | very essential                     | absolutely essential  |

Combination of Adverb and Post Participle

This combination is from data 19 to 22. For instance, in data 19, “In Indonesia, English is basically known as a foreign language that is taught to all schools in every level, including Junior High School”. An adverb basically refers to something is the most important. It does not convey precise meaning within certain context. A verb know describes someone or something is familiar or recognized. However, in the sentence, the base known is collocated with inappropriate collocator and does not show general situation of context. Oxford Collocation Dictionary suggests the adverb commonly as the correct collocator. Commonly represent that something by a lot of people. It is the same as widely. This appropriate collocation has same student’s sentence context and structure. Regarding to the finding, all school have known English as Foreign Language that have been taught.

Combination of Adverb and Verb

This combination is from data 23 to 25. For instance, in data 24, “Indonesian mother tongue behaviour highly affects students’ foreign language production. The differences of language components, fundamental rules, and cultural backgrounds between those two languages become obstacles in learning process”. As the base, verb affect modifies influencing something and bring a change. The adverb highly refers to state of being very. Longman Dictionary of Temporary English underlines this adverb highly should be collocates with adjective or adverb. The adverb highly does not collocate with verb affect. It is usually followed by adjective. This inappropriate combination proposed that highly affect refers to “sangat mempengaruhi”. Collocation dictionary provide exact lexical combination, namely greatly affect. The adverb greatly refers to how something is very. Based on data finding, it presents students’ mother tongue behaviour greatly affect their foreign language.

Combination of Verb and Adverb

This combination is from data 26 to 27. For instance, in data 26, “In taking thread the previous issues, the researcher observes deeply a learning English process in eight grade. Then, the researcher found that the teacher’s way in teaching English is quite far from telling way”. An adverb deeply presents feeling or belief that influences someone strongly. It is followed by verb, such as love, regret, and resent. This adverb does not convey clear meaning neither the base nor context. A verb observe relates to pay attention to someone or something in order to have detailed information. In this inappropriate collocation observe deeply, the student had idea of “mengamati secara mendalam”. Oxford Collocation Dictionary provides the adverb carefully with the verb observe. This adverb is derived from adjective careful. The adverb carefully describes how something is done in detail. This adverb could be replaced by closely and means
“secara teliti/cermat”. This collocation is appropriate and set out in detail in next sentence. This collocation supports context that the researcher conduct an observation carefully of teachers’ way in teaching English.

**Combination of Adverb and Adjective**

This combination is data 28. “Furthermore, Amrita adds that the classroom interaction is very essential in education system, because classroom interaction is a practice that encourage development of the two very important language skills which are speaking and listening among the learners.” An adjective essential refers to very important meanwhile very emphasize the adjective. This combination very essential become inappropriate because the student did not recognize some differences between some synonym. He tries to express “sangat penting”. As Longman Collocation Dictionary and Thesaurus stated that the adverb very does not allowed combine with a word that express meaning very. It is due to that adjective essential is non-gradable adjective. The dictionaries propose an ideal combination, namely absolutely essential. This adverb is modified with ungradable adjectives. The adverb absolutely emphasizes something with greatest degree. This context explains that classroom interaction is absolutely essential in education system.

**Discussion**

As data findings have shown, the students had 28 inappropriate academic collocations, including six types of academic collocations that used inappropriately. There are combination of adjective and noun, verb and noun, verb and adverb, adverb and verb, adverb and verb past participle, and adverb and adjective. The most frequent was combination of verb and noun. This type had 13 inappropriate collocations. On the other hand, combination of verb + adjective and combination of noun and noun had used appropriately in students’ basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. Combination of verb and adjective was well—known to students. Combination of noun and noun was rarely used because they usually used compound noun. Indeed, even students have acquired knowledge about syntax and semantic, they did not put academic collocation appropriately on their basic consideration in undergraduate thesis. They did not consider lexical cohesion and accuracy of word combination. Thus, their basic considerations present low quality of writing and do not make sure the reader through their research and successful communication.

**Conclusion**

There are several dominant registers of men and women in this movie. Men tend to insult, command, be insecure, be resistant, interrupt, and talk about a factual topic. In fact, in this movie, men are dominant do polite acts with their opposite speaking. Actors have more scenes than women is one of the cases in politeness. So, the theory about politeness, it is irrelevant in this movie about women doing more polite acts than men. Then, insecurity tends to be used by women, is that irrelevant in this movie. Men are more insecure than women. Next, Men also like to compliment their listeners. Women tend to avoid strong swear words, use emphatic stress, rise intonation, and use empty adjectives. Women also like to compliment and receive compliments from their opposite speaking.

Men differ from women in appearing their temper. If men are angry, they tend to insult their opposite speaking. On the other hand, women use a swear—strong word or change the topic. In insecurity, men use question tags to ensure their utterances to their listeners but women usually use question tags because they are not confident about their utterances. In interruption, men tend to interrupt because they persuade their listeners for following them. Otherwise, women usually interrupt to show their dislike about utterances of their opposite speaking and they do not force much for following them. In command, men tend to use their temper and force their listeners to follow their command but women command their listeners by begging and adding some politeness word such as, please.

There are several reasons actresses and actors in this movie violate maxims. They violate the maxim of quality because they feel unsure of their answer and want to hide something from their listener. They violate maxim quantity because they want to give more information in order for their listener to get satisfying information. They violate the maxim of relevance because they want to skip a topic and want to change a topic conversation indirectly. They violate the maxim of manner because they want the listener to get the meaning of their utterance indirectly.

The writer suggests for other researchers who want to study linguistic aspects through several media such as drama, novels, talk shows, movies, and so on, should understand theory clearly and know to analyze all from linguistics aspect, especially in women and men register and cooperative principle. It is better if the researchers study more and have some references from related books or journals. The other researchers who want to analyze men and women register can compare men and women register through two media or two different background cultures. Besides, the other researchers can compare differences of violations of maxim based on different media or different background cultures.
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