

The effect of alliteration and L1 equivalents of lexical phrases on the knowledge of collocation among Iranian EFL learners

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a review of literature to demonstrate the findings of the research relevant to the purpose of the study. With respect to the aim of the study this review covers subjects such as theories of the study that explain theoretically the issues of this study review of the researches that focused on alliteration and translation and L1 use for the lexical phrases. In this section results of the relevant research are discussed. The Purpose of the Study. English speaking Iranian learners' difficulties in the use of lexical phrase have not been given much attention in foreign language studies; moreover, a great deal of collocation errors is frequently and repeatedly observed in the Iranian language classroom. The overall purpose of this study was to focus on deliberate memorization of English lexical phrases through L1 and alliteration; additionally, the study examined the effectiveness of two proposals for how to help learners accurately recall the lexical composition of English phrases that they had learned. Since there have been considerable difficulties among English-speaking Iranian learners in the use of lexical collocations, this research tried to pave the way for best ways to help EFL learners. To achieve this goal, the study first examined teaching and effectiveness of learners' use of lexical phrases with alliteration and also lexical phrases with L1 equivalents. After analyzing EFL learners' use of these lexical phrases in two classes, the study compared the effectiveness of the two processing strategies, lexical phrases with L1 equivalents and lexical phrases with alliteration, in promoting recall of the items learned.

KEYWORDS: Alliteration, L1, Lexical phrases, Vocabulary recall

INTRODUCTION

To explain how the cognitive processes affect processing strategies, the notions of depth of processing (Craik & Lockhart, 1972) and elaboration can help to explain the findings. Hulstijn and Laufer developed the Involvement Load Hypothesis for L2 vocabulary learning. Tasks with different involvement load will lead to different incidental acquisition. Retention of unfamiliar words is claimed to be conditional upon the amount of involvement while processing these words. Involvement is operationalized by tasks designed to vary in the degree of need, search, and evaluation. The need component is the motivational, non-cognitive dimension of involvement. Two degrees of prominence are suggested for need: moderate and strong. According to Hulstijn and Laufer (2001), need is moderate when it is imposed by an external agent. An example is the need to use a word in a sentence that the teacher has asked for. Need is strong when it is intrinsically motivated, that is, self-imposed by the learners, for instance, by the decision to look up a word in an L1-L2 dictionary when writing a composition.

Search and evaluation are the two cognitive dimensions of involvement, contingent upon allocating attention to form-meaning relationships (Schmidt, 1994). Search is the attempt to find the meaning of an unknown L2 word or the attempt to find the L2 word form expressing a concept (e.g. trying to find the L2 translation of an L1 word) by consulting a dictionary or another authority (e.g. a teacher). Evaluation entails a comparison of a given word with other words, a specific meaning of a word with its other meanings, or comparing the word with other words in order to assess whether a word does or does not fit its context. For example, when a word looked up in a dictionary is a homonym (e.g. bank of a "river", or bank as a "financial institution"), a decision has to be made about its meaning by comparing all its meanings against the specific context and choosing the one that fits best. The kind of evaluation that entails recognizing differences between words (as in a fill-in task with words provided), or differences between several senses of a word in a given context, is referred to as moderate. Evaluation that requires a decision such as

how additional words will combine with the new word in an original (as opposed to given) sentence or text is referred to as strong evaluation (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001).

Each of the above three factors can be absent or present when processing a word in a natural or artificially designed task. The combination of factors with their degrees of prominence constitutes involvement load. Take two tasks that vary in involvement load for example. In task one, the learner is asked to write original sentences with some words and these words are translated or explained by the teacher. The task induces a moderate need (imposed by the teacher), no search (the words are glossed) and strong evaluation because the new words are evaluated against suitable collocations in learner-generated context. If we want to describe the task in terms of an involvement index, where absence of a factor is marked as 0, a moderate presence of a factor as 1, and strong presence as 2, then the involvement index of the task is 3 (1+0+2). In task two, the students have to read a text and to answer comprehension questions. New words, which are relevant to the questions, are glossed with Chinese meaning. The task will induce a moderate need to look at the glosses (moderate because it is imposed by the task), but it will induce neither search nor evaluation. Its involvement index is 1. Hence, task one induces a greater involvement load than task two (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001). It is supposed that task one will exert better retention than task two.

The widely-referred theory of levels-of-Processing is used to refer to learners' mental operations regarding to-be-learned lexis. It was originally suggested that word retention is aided most by semantic elaboration, that is, by forming various associations with the meaning of the to-be-learned word. However, it has been recognized that semantic elaboration may not be sufficient if the aim is for learners to recall the precise form of words (Transfer-Appropriate Processing).

For the latter purpose, structural elaboration may be more useful, that is, the performance of mental operations requiring attention to the form of the target item. In this study, the researcher tried to pay attention to learners' retention of the composition of lexical phrases. Insofar as this is a formal rather than a semantic feature, the elaboration which our treatment procedures aim to stimulate can be considered to be of the structural rather than the semantic kind.

The following two proposals for stimulating elaborations concerning the lexical composition of lexical phrases with a special interest in the verb informed the interventions that were tested in the present study.

One proposal, by Laufer and Girsai (2008), is for teachers (or materials writers) to encourage learners to compare and contrast the lexical composition of L2 phrases with the lexical composition of L1 counterparts of those phrases in order to forestall errors arising from the well documented tendency of learners to translate L1 lexical phrases into L2 word by word (e.g., Nesselhauf, 2005; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010). Evidence of the benefits of helping learners to engage in contrastive analysis of this kind has come from a quasi-experimental study (Laufer & Girsai, 2008) in which greater learning gains were observed in the contrastive-analysis treatment condition than in either a treatment that included no explicit focus on the composition of the target phrases or in another treatment which involved gap-fill and multiple-choice exercises without contrastive considerations. However, the better results of the contrastive-analysis group should be interpreted with some caution because the test used a translation format, and the contrastive-analysis group had used translation as part of their learning procedure whereas the others had not.

The second proposal for stimulating engagement with the lexical makeup of phrases is for teachers to draw learners' attention to phonological patterns such as alliteration (e.g., slippery slope; time will tell; make a mess) and assonance (e.g., small talk; high time; take a break), whose incidence in formulaic language is far above-chance (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009: 114). While the preference for a particular word over a near-synonym in a lexical phrases often defies semantic explanations, there quite often appear to be plausible phonological explanations (e.g., time will tell alliterates, whereas time will say/show/reveal do not). This 'words-of-a-feather-flock-together' phenomenon suggests that patterns such as alliteration and assonance can make word strings relatively memorable.

This possibility is in line with strong findings from four major streams of psycholinguistics research concerned with the effects of patterns of sound repetition, or 'phonological similarity', on the accessibility in memory of lexical forms. Here, we can touch only briefly on just a few of these streams. One stream, comprising many hundreds of studies, concerns the learning of lists of paired-associates, these being mostly short, discrete, more or less arbitrarily paired L1 items such as catehat. Another stream has to do with the short-term serial and non-serial recall of items from various kinds of lists (e.g., all-alliterative lists or lists where only some items alliterate, or where none do).

A third stream is concerned with effects of phonological similarity on implicit priming of targeted response words. A fourth stream concerns the facilitative role of patterns of phonological similarity (especially rhyme and alliteration) in the memorization of L1 oral texts such as song lyrics (Rubin, 1995). A common observation, especially in the paired-associates studies, is that the patterns of phonological similarity have robust effects in the wake of an intervention to promote noticing of phonological form but weak effects, or even none, in the absence of

such intervention (Rubin, 1995). In our field (of SLA and language pedagogy), there have been relatively few experimental studies of phonological similarity effects on short-term or long-term learning, but findings from a number of those studies that have been carried out suggest that the mnemonic potential of alliteration tends to remain dormant except when there has been a pedagogical intervention likely to induce noticing of phonological form. However, it is not yet clear how interventions that direct learners' attention to phrases manifesting alliteration or a similar phonological trait affect the recall of those phrases in a to-be-learned set of phrases which do not manifest the phonological trait. It is conceivable that stimulating engagement with target phrases which manifest a stipulated trait privileges recall of those phrases at the cost of other to-be-learned phrases.

HEADINGS

Alliteration: alliteration is defined as two consecutive words that have the same word-initial sound (consonants) in which one of word combinations alliterates with the other one (Schmitt, 2000). In this study, those lexical phrases that alliterate with their initial letters are considered to be one example of alliteration. Like slippery slope; time will tell; make a mess.

The use of L1: The justification for incorporating L1 into vocabulary learning is provided by many researches in formulaic studies, and corpus studies and psycholinguistic experiments. Dagut (1977) suggested that learners do not attach new L2 words directly to the concepts that they represent, but to L1 words which represent L1 concepts that learners possess. A similar view was also expressed by Ellis (1997), Hall (2002), and Jiang (2004). Sometimes L1 concepts are identical to the concepts represented by the new L2 words, resulting in a correct translation of the learner. However, since different languages do not have entirely identical conceptual systems, many L2 words based on L1 meanings may not be identical in all semantic properties, that is, they have no exact translation equivalents. For example, even though 'home' is translated as 'maison' in French, the two are not totally equivalent since 'home' has a specific feature of comfort and safety (as opposed to 'house') and this feature is not obvious in the French translation. In order to use the L2 word with its correct specifications, a process of semantic restructuring must occur in which the learner readjusts the semantic knowledge of the word that s/he possesses to that of the native speaker.

Others extend the idea of relating L2 words to L1 concepts to the issue of lexical combinations. He suggests that learners draw upon L1 conceptual knowledge when making assumptions about connections between L2 words and that this knowledge will sometimes provide learners with misinformation about allowable combinations of L2 words. Thus, a learner who produces unusual lexical phrases or combinations of words in the L2 is probably relying too heavily on L1 lexical phrases and knowledge. Lexical phrases errors can occur even when learners are familiar with both of the words that comprise the correct lexical phrases. He gives an example of the Japanese learner who produces the lexical phrase like narrow room even though s/he knows the word small. Learning to connect words correctly requires restructuring of the existing network. Since word combinations cannot be easily predicted from the knowledge of individual words, the task of second language vocabulary learning is even greater than was thought when vocabulary was considered in terms of single words (Lewis 1993).

It may be argued that semantic restructuring of single concepts and lexical networks may occur with continued exposure to L2 vocabulary in a variety of contexts. Even if we agree to this position, an important question is whether a foreign language classroom can provide enough exposure to L2 lexis for such restructuring to take place. Judging by the available empirical evidence on learner lexis, it is doubtful whether this is the case. Early error analysis studies showed that lexical errors resulting from L1 influence persisted with advanced learners, particularly where the concepts in L1 and L2 did not overlap (Ringbom 1982). Recent psycholinguistic studies confirmed this finding. Jiang (2004) found that advanced Chinese learners of English had difficulty distinguishing between pairs of English words that were translated by a single Chinese word, for example criterion-standard, accurate-precise, safe-secure, etc. He concluded that the semantic restructuring that is necessary for acquiring the meaning of words different from L1 is a slow process, which is relatively unaffected by the quantity of input that L2 learners receive in their learning context. Lexical phrases errors persist in the learner language as well, thus showing resistance to language input and teaching. When encountered in the input, lexical phrases are usually semantically transparent, for example make a decision, send a message, offer help, submit an application, hand in a paper, etc. Therefore they may not be noticed by learners and teachers as problematic. However, producing correct lexical phrases is often difficult since 'equivalent' lexical phrases in L1 may include at least one word which is different from L2. For example, English make a decision is lakaxat haxlata 'take a decision' in Hebrew; give examples is lehavi dugmaot 'bring examples', practice law is laasok be-mishpat 'deal in law'.

Biskup (1992) conducted an error elicitation study and found that advanced Polish-speaking learners of English made L1 based lexical phrases errors. More recently, the same conclusion has been reached in a series of corpus studies (Nesselhauf 2005). For example, Nesselhauf (2005) analyzed the use of verb-noun lexical phrases such as

take a break or shake one's head by advanced German-speaking learners of English in free written production and concluded that the learners' L1 had a much stronger influence than earlier studies had predicted. Xiao and McEnery (2006) performed a cross-linguistic analysis of lexical phrases, semantic prosody, and near synonymy, drawing upon data from English and Chinese. They concluded that teachers should compare the lexical phrases al behavior in L1 and L2 since learners' awareness of L1–L2 differences should considerably reduce the number of L1 interference errors.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEXICAL PHRASES AND L1 TRANSFER

Language transfer, which simply means the influence of one language on a person's use and knowledge of another language, is a phenomenon that has been of interest to many SLA researchers. Others presented the term cross-linguistic influence to include native language transfer, inter-language transfer, and avoidance due to the influence of another system, borrowing and L2-related aspects of language loss. Since then researchers have used the terms cross-linguistic influence and language transfer interchangeably to refer to the same concept. In lexical phrases studies, some work has been done on the role of L1 transfer on the acquisition of lexical phrases. Some researchers like (Nesselhauf, 2005) tested EFL learners' knowledge of lexical phrases s with the emphasis on the role of the L1 in creating transfer effects from the L1 to the L2.

First, Biskup (1992) investigated the main reasons behind lexical phrases errors and the influence of L1 on the lexical phrases usage of Polish and German learners of English. The results of her study revealed a strong L1 influence on the production of lexical phrases by the two groups. According to the researcher, the Germans' errors were the result of negative L1 transfer. On the other hand, the Polish students' errors were either loan translations or extensions of L2 meaning on the basis of the L1 word. The results also showed that the German students produced more incorrect lexical phrases s (156 errors) than the Polish participants (106 errors) who were careful and unwilling to take risks. When the German participants were not sure about the correct lexical phrases, they used descriptive answers, as opposed to the Polish participants, who preferred to avoid responding. The researcher attributed this to the influence of the respective educational systems. It was claimed that the Polish system emphasizes accuracy and the German system emphasizes fluency.

Another study that revealed the role of L1 transfer in producing English lexical phrases by EFL learners is another study. The study had two main aims: to investigate the influence of L1 (Italian) on learners' lexical phrases knowledge and to examine the relationship between learners' general vocabulary knowledge and their knowledge of lexical phrases. To achieve these two goals, the researcher recruited seventy three Italian high school students to take three tests: Nation's vocabulary test, a receptive lexical phrases test and a productive lexical phrases test, which included 30 English lexical phrases s, half of them (15) had the literal Italian equivalents and the other 15 did not have the literal Italian equivalents. Like previous studies, Caroli reported that participants resorted to their L1 (Italian) in selecting the English word that collocated whenever they lacked lexical phrases al knowledge in the L2, English. It was also noticed that lexical phrases s with the Italian literal equivalents were easier than those lexical phrases s with no Italian equivalents.

In Bahns and Eldaw's (1993) study, the researcher found that there was no significant relationship between Italian learners' general vocabulary knowledge and their lexical phrases al knowledge. Therefore, the researcher recommended that teachers should present the new words with their frequent collocates to improve learners' lexical phrases al knowledge. Similar to what previous studies found, Granger's study (1998) confirmed the important role that learners' L1 plays in the use and acquisition of lexical phrases s. In her study, she studied the difference between native speakers of English and French learners of English in producing English lexical phrases, in particular adjective amplifiers, such as totally and highly. She found that amplifiers with direct translation equivalents in French were the most frequent ones. She attributed that finding to the L1 positive transfer that facilitated learners' acquisition of the similar amplifiers to their L1 (French).

Confirming what has been said in previous research, Nesselhauf (2003) also found a considerable influence of the L1 (German) on the production of English lexical phrases s. In her study, verb-noun lexical phrases s were used to measure the lexical phrases al knowledge of advanced German-speaking learners of English. Nesselhauf focused on production because, in her opinion, comprehension was not difficult for learners. For this purpose, she evaluated lexical phrases s produced by 32 German-speaking university students of English in their essays as to their acceptability in English using native speaker judgments, corpus analysis, and use of dictionaries. Her results showed that almost a quarter of the combinations contained one or several mistakes with non-lexical elements like the articles and prepositions belonging to a combination, not only verb-noun mismatches. However, the most common type of mistake was the wrong choice of verbs. Therefore, the researcher recommended that teachers should focus on the verb in the teaching of verb-noun lexical phrases.

Other researchers have attributed learners' deficient knowledge of lexical phrases to various factors including negative L1 transfer. For example, a study aimed at examining the comprehension and production of the target lexical phrases of L1 Turkish learners of English. The researcher analyzed data from three lexical phrases tests: correct or incorrect test, translation test and a gap-filling test that included two lexical phrases categories, i.e. verb-noun lexical phrases and adjective-noun lexical phrases. The results revealed that participants tended to generalize unfamiliar combinations in reference to the familiar ones that learners frequently encountered in the textbook. Learners also have a tendency to incorrectly over-generalize their L1 lexical phrases knowledge with unknown lexical phrases, which resulted in L1 negative transfer. His findings also confirmed the easiness of acquiring lexical phrases that have L1 equivalent and the difficulty of acquiring lexical phrases that have no L1 equivalents.

Another finding of the study was that the participants performed better on the adjective-noun lexical phrases test than verb-noun-lexical phrases test, which they found to be more difficult. The researcher concluded with advising teachers to teach the highly frequent lexical phrases and learners to spend much time reading and listening to improve their knowledge of lexical phrases instead of avoiding them.

The same claim was supported in a study where the researcher recruited four university female German speakers to participate in a picture-story narration where the main focus was on the production of verb-noun lexical phrases. As it was pointed out before, the researcher analyzed the oral errors of the participants. The study's findings confirmed the claim that learners resorted to their L1 when they lacked the knowledge of the correct lexical phrases. Also, learners tended to over-generalize their knowledge of common verbs like get, put and take to compensate their deficiency of knowledge of lexical phrases. The researcher concluded that L2 learners should be exposed to high-frequency verbs lexical phrases possibilities and restrictions.

To sum up, some previous studies have highlighted the role of L1 in EFL learners' production of English lexical phrases and indicated that L2 learners resort to their L1 when they lack English lexical phrases knowledge. On the other hand, other studies have claimed that Learners' L1 is one of the factors that influence L2 learners' acquisition of lexical phrases, but other factors, such as unfamiliarity, explicit teaching, and language proficiency are involved as well.

STUDIES ON SOUND REPETITION IN PHRASEOLOGY: ALLITERATION AND ASSONANCE

Alliteration is defined as the occurrence of the same consonant onset in two or more content words within a phrase (e.g. miss the mark) and assonance as the repetition of a vowel in a prominent syllable of two or more content words within a phrase, as in jump the gun (basic assonance), a quick fix (near rhyme), go with the flow (clipped rhyme), and make a mistake (rhyme, which is regarded here as a special case of assonance).

A question we first need to address is how common alliteration and assonance are in English idioms. Extending a previously reported study, we searched through a learner's dictionary of English idioms, examining all defined expressions which include at least two content words in addition to any verb or verbs. Of 2,906 such expressions (e.g. Let the cat out of the bag, the name of the game, a hornet's nest), 232 (8%) were identified as alliterative and 392 (13.5%) as assonant. Altogether, about 21% showed alliteration and/or assonance. Of the 197 so-called 'binomial idioms' (e.g. high and dry) not signaled as 'old-fashioned', about 38% show alliteration and/or assonance. Of 71 'as' idioms (e.g. as good as gold), about 35% alliterate and/or assonate. In a study by Boers & Lindstromberg (2009), they examined alternate five page blocks throughout, taking note of all defined noun phrases of the structure (determiner or possessive pronoun) + qualifier or noun + noun (e.g. top dog, hobby horse). Of 221 such expressions, 28% show either alliteration or assonance. Other counts (through different learner's dictionaries) focusing only on alliteration but covering all defined expressions have found its incidence among head terms to be about 13% (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2009, p. 114) or about 17%. If alliteration and/or assonance have a large enough positive mnemonic effect on learners' ability to remember the forms of L2 phrases, occurrence rates such as those just mentioned may mean that these patterns of sound repetition can facilitate the learning of L2 English idioms.

EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE FOR POSITIVE EFFECTS OF SOUND REPETITION IN LEXICAL RECALL

Rubin(1995) noted that hundreds of studies had been carried out to investigate phonological similarity effects on participants' ability to learn lists of 'paired associates', that is, pairs of items, typically short first language (L1) words or invented L1-like non-words (for an overview, see Rubin, 1995). In these studies the item pairings are determined by the researchers. Typically, participants go through several cycles of 'practicing' (i.e. trying to memorize) the pairings and then being tested on them. A strong finding is that when participants are asked to recall practiced word pairs in whatever order they like, pairs that show sound repetition are learned faster and recalled

better than ones that do not. This holds true for rhyme, for alliteration+assonance (e.g. hat – ham), and for alliteration and assonance separately. A second extensive sub-literature is concerned with learning lists of unpaired words or non-words. When participants are asked to recall these items in any order, they tend to succeed better with ones that show alliteration and rhyme as well as basic assonance, although assonance has been less studied.

Positive effects of phonological similarity have also been observed in studies of implicit priming, where observed response times are shorter when primes and response words alliterate than when they do not, with response times being shorter still when primes and response words both alliterate and assonate. An additional relevant stream of research concerns the extent to which relations of phonological similarity make primarily oral poetic texts relatively easy to recall. As might be expected, research has identified rhyme and alliteration as factors that facilitate ability to recall traditional counting out rhymes and passages of song lyrics: Provided that one of a pair or set of phonologically similar words is recalled, then recall of the other word(s) is made more likely (Rubin, 1995).

There are few studies in any of the research streams touched on above that directly address phonologically similarity effects on the recollect ability of conventionalized phrases in either L1 or L2. One probable reason for this research gap is the extreme difficulty – even in a laboratory setting – of controlling for nuisance semantic variables when the stimulus expressions are real phrases: After all, achieving approximate control is hard enough in the case of real single words. However, in practice-oriented L2 research a more exploratory approach may be called for than is normal in psycholinguistics. Accordingly, there have been a number of (quasi)experimental paired-design studies of the extent to which alliteration and assonance can help upper-intermediate and advanced learners recall or recognize short L2 English phrasal expressions that host these patterns better than similar phrases that do not (Boers, Lindstromberg, & Eyckmans, 2012; Lindstromberg & Boers, 2009). In these studies, the stimulus expressions have typically been strong collocations (e.g. full force vs. full speed). In general, a positive effect ranging from large to medium-small has been found following treatments that included brief awareness raising about alliteration or assonance and/or an intervention to direct participants' attention to the phonological form of the stimulus expressions. In the absence of such pedagogical interventions, only small positive effects or even negative ones have been observed.

Typically, though, the recall advantage shown by phonologically similar expressions has been found to dissipate with time. In some cases no effect was detected in posttests administered after a delay of from 24 hours to one week. We stress, however, that these studies did not focus on participants' learning of previously unknown expressions but instead on their ability to recall familiar expressions that happened to have been encountered on a particular occasion, that is, during the experimental treatment. Thus, these studies are much more likely to have probed 'episodic memory' than 'semantic memory' (Nadel & Hardt, 2011). To elaborate, episodic memory preserves a link between items of information and the context(s) in which the items were encountered and encoded. Episodic memory would be drawn on, for instance, when following an instruction like this, 'Please write down, from memory, as many as you can of the two-word phrases that you sorted and then dictated to each other at the beginning of class last Tuesday.' Semantic memory, which tends to be more durable and which underpins most everyday language use, does not preserve the link between something that is known (e.g. a L2 collocation) and the occasion when it was learned (Nadel & Hardt, 2011; Tulving, 1972). We know of five studies that have investigated the storage and relative accessibility in semantic memory of previously unknown L2 sound-repeating and non-sound-repeating phrasal expressions, including figurative idioms. That is, the tests of recall used in these studies did not require participants specifically to remember whether they had encountered the targeted expressions on a particular list or in any other context specified by researchers. Each of these five studies found evidence that alliteration facilitated participants' ability to recall phrasal expressions that had either been unfamiliar to them before the study began or that were at least unlikely to have been familiar to them in view of their level of English. However, one of these studies (29 learners, 12 lexical items) was a good deal smaller in scale than the study reported here (50 learners, 26 lexical items), while the other four studies involved analysis of data originally collected for a different purpose than that of investigating effects of phonological similarity on L2 phrase learning.

Moreover, none of these five studies explicitly included assonance in its focus and none explicitly addressed the possibility that teacher-led direction of attention to sound repetition may facilitate the acquisition of sound-repeating forms but at the same time interfere with learners' attention to any non-sound-repeating forms and thereby retard their acquisition. Thus, a new study was carried out in which data was collected with the express purpose of investigating effects of alliteration and assonance on the learning of the forms of English L2 phrases (specifically idioms) both when there is teacher-led awareness raising and attention direction and when there is not. This new study also sought evidence of a trade-off effect such that a pedagogical focus on alliteration and assonance in

targeted idioms is counterproductive with respect to idioms encountered at the same time which do not show these patterns of sound repetition.

With respect to what was worked on in these studies, the researcher tried to examine the effects of L1 and alliteration of lexical phrases on their recall, she employed two groups of EFL learners asked to study a set of verb-noun expressions containing (a) items that are congruent and that are non-congruent with their L1 and (b) items that alliterate and that do not alliterate.

One group was asked to study the items that were congruent and that are non-congruent with their L1, while the other items that alliterate and that do not alliterate. Intended to promote their engagement with the composition of the expressions, one group was asked to decide if the verb was different from the translation equivalent in L1; the other group was asked to decide if the verb alliterates with the noun.

CONCLUSION

This paper explains theory of this study from Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) theory that was developed as the Involvement Load Hypothesis for L2 vocabulary learning. They believed that tasks with different involvement load will lead to different incidental acquisition. And the empirical studies were studied. Then the effect of I1 was discussed in which it was justified that I1 has semantic effect on the I2 learning and the empirical studies were evaluated. Then the effect of I1 and lexical phrases were studied in which the researcher summarized from the studies showing how it might have facilitated the process of lexical phrases learning. Finally the effect of repetition on the lexical phrases was investigated in a number of studies.

Alliteration: alliteration is defined as two consecutive words that have the same word-initial sound (consonants) in which one of word combinations alliterates with the other one (Schmitt, 2000). In this study, those lexical phrases that alliterate with their initial letters are considered to be one example of alliteration. Like slippery slope; time will tell; make a mess.

L1 translation (or L1 use): the use of L1 equivalent for the lexical phrase in which the equivalent signifies the whole meaning of the lexical phrase. In this research the researcher adopted the above definition and for each lexical phrase the L1 equivalent was given to the learners. And any mistake in the exercises for each lexical phrase, the researcher considered one minus point.

Lexical phrases: They are types of collocations which are more or less idiomatic. (e.g., more so in by the way, how do you?, give me a break, but less so in the higher the mountain, the harder the climb). However, they differ from idioms and other ordinary collocations in that they are also associated with a particular discourse function, such as expressing time, greeting, relationships among ideas, or condition. In this study, the phrasal verbs and verbs with their own particles and prepositions were lexical phrases.

Vocabulary recall: the ability to remember things after an interval of time. In language teaching, retention of what has been taught (e.g. vocabulary) may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaning fullness of the materials, (Richards, Platt and Platt, 1992). In this research, the ability of EFL learners in recognizing and writing the meaning of lexical phrases in the tests were their recall capability.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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