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**The Effect of Extensive Reading on Iranian EFL Learners'
Lexical Bundle Performance: a comparative study of adaptive and
authentic texts***

Seyyed Ayatollah Razmjoo**

Professor, University of Shiraz (Corresponding Author)

Zahra Montasseri

PhD Candidate, University of Shiraz

Abstract

Formulaic language and sequence as the core characteristic of real-life language and native-like fluency, has been a subject of inquiry in recent decades. The aim of the present study is to investigate the effects of two extensive reading text types, i.e., adaptive and authentic, on Iranian EFL learners' development of lexical bundles. To this aim, 20 intermediate EFL learners were chosen to participate in a time-series experiment, in which one class received adaptive texts as their extensive reading project, while the other experienced authentic texts of graded readers. The learners were required to read texts and write summaries, out of which the frequency and percentage of lexical bundles were extracted. The results of frequency and t-tests revealed that learners who benefited from adaptive texts were more successful in lexical bundles progress. While the other group also indicated to have improved in terms of multi-word chunks, the shift was not statistically significant. It is recommended that teachers allocate more class time to explicit and implicit instruction of lexical bundles.

Keywords: lexical bundles, extensive reading, adaptive material, authentic material

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**Email: arazmjoo@rose.shirazu.ac.ir

Introduction

Phraseology or formulaic expression/language refers to the multi-word chunks of language which are fixed units with prevalent pragmatic functions in form of idioms or non-idiomatic phrases such as lexical bundles and recurrent words (Biber & Barbieri, 2007). One deterministic characteristic of lexical bundles is their frequency of occurrence, i.e., for a word combination to count as a lexical bundle, it must at least occur ten times in a one-million-word corpus (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, Finegan, 1999). Other core features of lexical bundles, as Biber and Barbieri (2007) put it, include their prevalence, the fact that they are not idiomatic, they lack conceptual importance, and they usually are not in form of complete syntactic units, but they link these units.

Lexical bundles, as Biber and Conrad (1999) asserts, should be discerned from other aspects of phraseology including idioms and collocations. Idioms are a set of complete units that have immutable patterns, the meaning of which cannot be anticipated from the meaning of single words. Collocations are combination and association between two or more words that go together oftentimes. Dissimilar to idioms, collocations are not invariable expressions and individual words maintain their meaning. Lexical bundles are similar to extended collocations, i.e. concatenation of three or more words that usually occur simultaneously in natural discourse (Biber et al., 1999). Lexical bundles, Biber and Conrad (1999) maintain, are more frequent than collocations and idioms.

Lexical bundles have been categorized based on their functions in meaning, functions of discourse, and functions of language purpose (Cortes, 2001). Biber et al., (1999) developed a taxonomy for lexical bundles based on their occurrence in academic prose and conversation, which consists of four main classes of bundles, namely, referential bundles, text organizers, stance bundles, and interactional bundles (Ranjbar, 2012). Hyland (2008) proposed another taxonomy for lexical bundles and put them into three categories of referential bundles, discourse organizers, and attitudinal bundles. Referential bundles demonstrate ideational meaning, dealing with time, place, topic, etc.;

discourse organizers indicate textual meaning, conveying relation bundles, reference bundles, and framing bundles; and attitudinal bundles show interpersonal and interactional meanings (Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2012).

As already pointed out, lexical bundles are very common in language, which might be assumed that their acquisition is also simple and easy. However, Biber and Barbieri (2007) and Cortes (2006) assert that learning and appropriate application of lexical bundles does not occur naturally and straightforwardly. In other words, acquisition of lexical bundles should happen both implicitly and explicitly in a variety of opportunities (Cortes, 2004). One of the main activities to help learners acquire formulaic language is through utilization of large amount of texts, i.e., extensive reading. In recent years, a number of studies have focused on the significance of formulaic expressions through a corpus-driven approach. Yet, there has not been a study conducted on the effects of extensive reading on Iranian EFL learners' development of lexical bundles.

Distinguishes between two types of text, namely, authentic and adaptive texts. Authentic text refers to materials written by native speakers, which students encounter in their daily lives; They are not created specifically to be used in the classroom. In these texts, language and structure are not simplified in any way; for example, address forms, job applications, menus, voice mail messages, radio programs, newspaper, TV guides, novels, movies, and videos. Adaptive text, on the other hand, refers to materials specifically defined and designed for EFL learning context. These texts have simplified structure and vocabulary, which facilitates instruction. They are adapted to the learning preferences and expectations and are aligned and suited with the planned course objectives. Instances are cassettes, DVD's, CD's, dictionaries, grammar books, workbooks, etc.

Objectives of the Study

The present study has three main objectives, first of which is to investigate whether or not extensive reading of adaptive and authentic texts has any impact on development of lexical bundles. It also aims at

examining the effects of adaptive text on development of lexical bundles in the learners' writing. Finally, it targets at perusing the effects of authentic texts on EFL learners' use of lexical bundles in writing.

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Does extensive reading of adaptive and authentic texts have any impact on development of Iranian EFL learners' lexical bundles?
2. Do extensive reading of adaptive texts have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' use of lexical bundles in writing?
3. Do extensive reading of authentic texts have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' use of lexical bundles in writing?

Significance of the study

This study holds significance in that it is the first attempt to investigate the effects of application of authentic and adaptive texts of extensive reading on Iranian EFL learners' development of lexical bundles and their use in spoken and written language. It also enjoys significance in that the results may give teachers a better picture of advantages and disadvantages of reading authentic and adaptive texts and the impacts they may bring about in learning lexical bundles. It also helps them to decide which kind of text is more beneficial with regards to improvement of lexical bundles. Furthermore, the learner also can benefit from the results of the study so as to ameliorate their knowledge of formulaic expressions through extensive reading of the aforementioned texts. The textbook developers may also derive a profit from this study by choosing the most appropriate types of texts in English textbooks.

Literature Review

Following the prevalent use of lexical bundles in academic teaching in form of discourse functions, Biber and Barbieri (2007) conducted a study to extend this line of research by perusing the occurrence of lexical bundles a non-academic register. Their study entailed investigation of instructional as well as student management registers

such as class management talk and the written syllabus. The findings of their study revealed that lexical bundles were more commonly used in non-academic registers in comparison to instructional contexts. Also, unlike the previous studies, lexical bundles were found to be more frequent in written texts rather than in spoken language. Accordingly, Biber and colleagues in a chain of studies regarding lexical bundles demonstrated a number of differences between spoken and academic texts in terms of distribution of bundles (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2003, 2004; Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999). For instance, they indicated that bundles in conversations are mostly clausal, while in written academic texts they are usually phrasal.

A number of studies have investigated and compared use of lexical bundles in expert and non-expert texts. Cortes (2002), for example, investigated the grammatical and functional four-word bundles in native freshmen composition in comparison to published academic expert prose. The results of the study showed that freshmen compositions differed from published expert texts functionally, but not structurally. In another study, Cortes (2004) compare the employment of lexical bundles in in published articles of history and biology. He concluded that learners seldom employed the recognized article writing lexical bundles and even if they did, they used such bundles in different styles.

In another mixed method study, Ädel, Erman (2012) investigated the use of English lexical bundles in advanced writing of undergraduate university Swedish students as well as English native-speakers' writings. The material used in the study was taken from the Stockholm University Student English Corpus, containing more than one million words. The results of the analysis indicated that native speakers benefited from a higher knowledge of lexical bundles such as hedging bundles and negation bundles.

Ranjbar, Pazhakh, and Gorjian (2012) examined the impact of lexical bundles on 120 Iranian EFL learners' paragraph writing fluency. The participants were divided into two experimental and control groups. The experimental group received lexical bundles instruction

and the control group received placebo. The findings obtained from the post-test conveyed that the experimental group had a statistically significant improvement in use of lexical bundles while the control group did not change much. Similarly, Amirian, Ketabi, Eshaghi (2013) pursued the use of lexical bundles in in native and non-native graduate students' thesis. To this aim, an Iranian students' theses corpus of about one million words was compared to a native corpus of the theses of about the same size. The results demonstrated higher use of lexical bundles by native speakers. Wei (2015) also conducted a piece of corpus-based study on use of lexical bundles on native and non-native scientific writing. The findings of his study accorded the previous mentioned ones.

Jalali and Zarei (2016) studied the use of lexical bundles qualitatively in master and doctoral applied linguistic university students' writing. The findings showed that these students were able to use bundles as much as published writers used. However, there were some differences between master and doctoral students regarding application of bundles. Similarly, in a qualitative study, Jalali and Ghayoomi (2010) examined three genres of academic prose in both doctoral and master theses. The obtained evidence revealed nearly alike use of target bundles by master and PhD students in all three genres. Furthermore, focusing on the difference between doctoral and master university students' use of lexical bundles, Jalali (2013) studied master theses and doctoral dissertations in different registers of conversation, classroom teaching, and lectures in two fields, i.e., history and biology. The findings showed dramatic differences between registers and students' levels regarding use of lexical bundles.

Having conducted a corpus-based study, Rafiee, Tavakoli, and Amirian (2011) investigated four newspapers, two of them published in Iran, written by non-native speakers and the two other papers published in England by English native speakers, in order to identify frequency of lexical bundle occurrence and their type distribution. The outcome of their analysis proved Iranian journalist abundance of lexical bundle employment in newspapers; however, Iranian and English journalists used approximately the same categories of multi-word phrases. Similar

to this study, Rafiee and Keihaniyan (2013) analyzed more than two million words of journalistic Persian and English corpus to compare and contrast the most frequent types of lexical bundles. They found out that referential bundles were the most prevalent ones in journalistic genre.

In another study, Kazemi, Katiraei, and Rasekh (2014) probed the significance of use of lexical bundles in students' writing materials. To this aim, 20 TEFL university students received 40 most frequent and prevalent lexical bundles instruction during a writing course. The comparison between their performance on pre- and post-test revealed statistically significant difference in the participants' use of lexical bundles. The researchers stressed the important role of lexical bundles and necessity of allocating class time to practice them.

Ahmadi, Ghonsooly, and Fatemi (2013) conducted a piece of research on frequency and function of lexical bundles by investigating research paper abstracts. To this aim, 200 article abstracts of applied linguistics written by Iranian researchers were compared to the same number of abstracts written by native speakers of English. The results demonstrated that Iranian authors were more interested to deploy four-word formulaic sequence than English writers and they use these multi-word units as token of genre shift. Also, Iranians tended to use subordinate and clausal elements, while English researchers employed more phrasal bundles. Having investigated four-word lexical bundles, Jalali, Moini, and Alaei (2015) extracted a large number of words out of 790 research article abstracts. The results suggested that the identified bundles were totally different in terms of their function and structure.

As the literature suggests, most studies conducted on lexical bundles pertain to writing or are corpus-based; however, few studies tackled lexical bundle acquisition through extensive reading programs. Hence, this study is an attempt to shed light on the effect of adaptive and authentic texts of extensive reading on development of Iranian EFL learners' lexical bundles.

Method

Design

This study benefits from a quantitative quasi-experimental design, for the researcher used two intact classes of participants. Also, since the data is gathered in different time intervals, this study follows a time-series design.

Participants

The participant of this study were about 40 learners of two intact EFL intermediate classes (only female) studying English at Shokouh Language Institute. One class experienced authentic material for extensive reading program (N=20), while the other one received adaptive texts to read extensively (N=20). The two classes were held twice a week, each session lasting for 100 minutes, ending up to 20 sessions.

Materials and Instruments

The material used in this study was a textbook taught in Shokooh language institute, *Top Notch*, the second edition of *English for Today's World:2B* (Saslow & Ascher, 2011).

The instruments used in this study were the writing tasks that learners are ask to do. Each student was expected to write a summary of the text written during a number of sessions in her own words. The overall number of the writings would be four for each learner, as well as the primary description of themselves learners were requested to write at the beginning of the course, comprising five pieces of data for each learner.

Moreover, in order to specify the lexical bundles used by the learners on their sheets, Hyland's (2008) taxonomy of lexical bundles was employed. This taxonomy, as mentioned before, comprises of three main categories, each including sub-categories as follows:

1. Referential bundle, which refers to ideational meanings and deals with the representation of reality, including three sub-categories of time and place, attribute bundles, and topic-specific bundles. Examples of

this category includes: *at the end of the, and the beginning of, a little bit of, the use of the, the interpretation of the, etc.*

2. Discourse organizers that illustrates textual meanings and is related to text organization. It encompasses three sub-categories, namely, logical relations bundles, intratextual bundles, and framing bundles. Instances of this category include: *as a result, it was found that, these results suggest that, in the present study, as shown in Table, regarding the, with respect to the, in the presence of, with the exception of, etc.*

3. Attitudinal bundles, which pertains to interpersonal relations present in a text, consisting of stance bundles and interactional bundles. The exemplar of this category could be: *the fact that the, it is possible to, are more likely to, it should be noted that, as can be seen, it is evident that.*

Data Collection and Analysis

As already mentioned, two classes of intermediate level in Shokouh Institute are chosen as the sample of the study. In one class, adaptive texts were practiced, in another class learners were asked to read authentic texts. At the outset of the study, the teacher explained the extensive reading program besides the textbook to be covered. The learners then, were asked to write a paragraph in the first session for further comparison with their writings at the end of the semester. As the sessions went on, the extensive reading program started in two classes, but with difference in their types of chosen texts. Each five sessions, as a story completed, they were required to write a page of summary and hand it in to the teacher. (The purpose of this procedure is to have equal data from all the students). The analysis of the data throughout the semester continued up to the end and the differences between use of lexical bundles in writings were taken into accounts in order to investigate their development.

Results and Discussion

The accumulation and analysis of the data from participants was used to shed light on comparability of impact of adaptive and authentic extensive reading texts on use of lexical bundles. First, the frequency

and percentage of lexical bundles in both groups were detected and reported; as shown in the following table, the change in employment of lexical bundles by learners was considered through time.

Groups	Statistics	Pre-test	Session 4	Session 9	Session 14	Session 19	Total
Adaptive	Frequency	123	139	172	201	252	887
	Percentage	13.8%	15.6%	19.4%	22.7%	28.5%	100%
Authentic	Frequency	117	128	103	131	146	625
	Percentage	18.7%	20.4%	16.5%	21%	23.4%	100

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of lexical bundles

The above table indicates the extent to which participants of the study went through a change in use of lexical bundles as a result of reading extended English stories. The class that received adaptive texts throughout the study, used 123 (13.8%) of lexical bundles in the primary session of the class as a post-test before treatment. The other class that took authentic texts employed 117 (%) at the beginning of the course, demonstrating a more or less homogeneity in the participants' knowledge of lexical bundles. As the sessions went by, the adaptive group showed a progress in using the bundles after accomplishment of each story, i.e., 139 (15.6%) after the first short story, 172 (19.4%) at the end of the second extended text, 201 (22.7%) in session 14th in which the third text was fully covered, and 252 (28.5%) use of lexical bundles in one session before their final exam, all adding up to 887 (100%) lexical bundles used by the learners.

The class that received authentic texts to read during the course, showed 117 (18.7%) of lexical bundles in the first session, as already mentioned. Then, a small change was observed in use of bundles by the learners after finishing the first story, i.e., 128 (20.4%). This number decreased to 103 (16.5%) after accomplishment of the second story, and once again proliferated to 131 (21%) in session 14th. The highest frequency of lexical bundles in this class was observed after reading the last short story one session before their final exam (N=146, 23.4%). According to Table 1, the adaptive reading group developed an abundance of lexical clusters after the treatment than the other group.

Hence, in order to provide a more detailed picture of lexical bundles used by the learners through time, the details of bundles percentages based on the aforementioned types of bundles deployed in the present study are presented; that is, referential bundles, discourse organizers, and attitudinal bundles. Table 2 indicates the results of bundle determination as well as their frequency and percentage.

Bundle Types		Pre-test	Session 4	Session 9	Session 14	Session 19	Total
Referential Bundles	Frequency	76	91	103	119	131	520
	Percentage	14.6%	17.7%	19.8%	22.9%	25%	58.6%
Discourse Organizers	Frequency	29	35	42	49	65	220
	Percentage	13.8%	15.9%	19%	22.3%	29%	24.8%
Attitudinal Bundles	Frequency	18	13	27	33	56	147
	Percentage	12.2%	8.8%	18.3%	22.7%	38%	16.6%
Total	Frequency	123	139	172	201	252	887
	Percentage	13.8%	15.6%	19.4%	22.7%	28.5%	100%

Table 2. The shift of percentages of adaptive reading group

According to the table, all three bundle types were used the least by the learners in the rudimentary session of the class, 76 (14.6%), 29 (13.8%), and 18 (12.2%) respectively, except for attitudinal bundles that went through a decrease in session 4 (N=13, 8.8%). Referential bundles exerted from the paragraphs demonstrated an ascending shift, starting with 76 (14.6%) at the beginning, continuing to 91 (17.7%), 103 (19.8%), and 119 (22.9%) in between, and finally ending up to 131(25%) at its extremity. In a similar vein, discourse organizers elevated in number from 29 (13.8%) at first, 35 (15.9%) after the first story, 42 (19%) after the second one, 49 (22.3%) in the 14th session through time, and attaining 65 (29%) in the end. Attitudinal bundles, disregarding the 4th session in which a cutback occurred, expanded from 18 (12.2%) in the pre-test to 56 (38%) in the last evaluation. In its entirety, all three sorts of lexical bundles budged in number, expressing the impact of adaptive texts of extensive reading on utilizing lexical bundles over a considerable period of time.

With respect to the other class that experimented extensive reading of authentic texts, the impact on EFL learners' lexical bundles performance proved to have a nuance of contradiction to adaptive text reading group. The minute results obtained from performance of participants in this group are exhibited in Table 3.

Bundle Types	Statistics	Pre-test	Session 4	Session 9	Session 14	Session 19	Total
		Referential Bundles	Frequency	54	59	40	52
	Percentage	20.3%	22.4%	15%	19.7%	22.6%	42.4%
Discourse Organizers	Frequency	30	31	33	41	45	180
	Percentage	16.6%	17.2%	18.5%	22.7%	25%	28.8%
Attitudinal Bundles	Frequency	33	38	30	38	41	180
	Percentage	18.5%	21.1%	16.6%	21.1%	22.7%	28.8%
Total	Frequency	117	128	103	131	146	625
	Percentage	18.7%	20.4%	16.5%	21%	23.4%	100

Table 3. The shift of percentages of authentic reading group

The above table shows that the participants progressed in utilizing all bundle categories, as the least number of bundles appeared in the primary session before the treatment (N=117, 18.7%) and the utmost number was received at the end (N=146, 23.4%). Referential bundles were quite the most frequent type, 54 (20.3%) at the beginning and 60 (22.6%) in the final stage. Discourse organizers had an ascending shift from 30 (16.6%) in the pre-test to 45 (25%) in the final evaluation. Attitudinal bundles, also, raised in number as the sessions went by, from 33 (18.5%) at the outset to 41 (22.7%) in the end. Similar to the other group, learners who read authentic texts during the experiment tended to show an improvement in use of lexical bundles, which seems fair to suggest that authentic texts are effective on EFL learners' lexical bundle performance, yet with a lower strength.

The observed increase in number of referential bundles could be attributed to their prevalent function in English written texts, for they include impressions, time and place, and topic-specific bundles. Such language chunks are reiterated in narratives as they encompass a series of events happening in a specific time and place; examples of learners' use of referential bundles include: *at the same time, there is a lot of, a*

little bit more, at the beginning. As the learners would follow chain of events in the plot of the stories, they probably encountered a plethora of such bundles repetitiously.

Furthermore, there is one likely cause of increment of discourse organizers through time, i.e., the mentioned bundles pertain to textual organization of the passage. On account of narrative genre of their extensive reading project as well as their chronological orders of events, learners were required to employ textual-related chunks of language in their writings. Examples of such bundles used by the participants embraces: *on the other hand, as well as, in order to be, is based on the, can be said that, is a kind of, it seems that, etc.*

Attitudinal bundles, on the other hand, were employed the least among all lexical bundles in the present study. One possible explanation for this result may be lack of occurrence of these chunks in stories. Because attitudinal bundles are related to stance and interpersonal bundles, it is probable that they reshewed less than other types in narrative genre, leading to participants' less exposure to them, and as a result, less production.

In order to determine whether or not the participates' shift in use of lexical bundles through time was significant, a set of t-tests were run by SPSS 16. To ascertain the effect of implementation of text types on each group, two paired samples t-tests were administered and the following table demonstrates the results.

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Adaptive	-6.45	1.60	.35891	-7.20	-5.69	-17.9	19	.000
Authentic	-.550	.94	.21120	-.99	-.10	-2.6	19	.057

Table 4. Paired Samples t-Test for Groups Pre-tests and Final test

The above table indicates the comparison between pre-test and last evaluation of participants who experienced adaptive and authentic texts of extensive reading during the study. As displayed in the table, there is a statistically significant difference between the learners' production of lexical bundles before and after the introduction of adaptive texts to the course ($p < .05$, $M = 6.4$, $SD = 1.6$, $t = 17.9$, $df = 19$). This is suggestive of the fact that reading a huge amount of extended adaptive passages is influential on language chunk acquisition. Contrarily, the results of the comparison between pre-test and the final examination of the group that received authentic texts revealed no statistically significant difference ($p > .05$, $M = 5.5$, $SD = .9$, $t = 2.6$, $df = 19$). The data appear to suggest that a mass of extensive reading of authentic texts brings about learning lexical bundles, but the effect is not dramatic.

To settle the change in performance of participants across groups at the beginning and end of the experiment, an independent t-test was performed, the result of which are given in Table 5.

	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-test	.15	.75	.198	38	.84
Final test	6.05	.81	7.404	38	.000

Table 5. Independent Samples t- Test for the adaptive and authentic Groups

The data generated in the above table reveal no statistically significant difference between the pre-tests of the groups; that is to say, both groups had more or less similar performances before the study began ($p = .84$, $M = .15$, $SD = .75$, $df = 38$, $t = .19$), underlining the homogeneity of groups at the outset of the study.

The second independent samples t-test was run to compare the difference between the ultimate writing performances of both groups. As indicated in Table 5, there was a statistically remarkable difference between the performance of the groups after the treatment ($p = .0$, $M = 6.05$, $SD = .81$, $df = 38$, $t = 7.40$). The obtained results may be indicative of similar performances of both groups before the study;

however, the discrepancy observed at the end of the experiment shows that one group did not develop its lexical bundles after the experiment as much as the other did. It is worth mentioning that both groups improved with regard to their language chunk use. In other words, the extensive reading project apparently affected the participants' knowledge of lexical bundle.

As already mentioned, the data reported appear to prove that learners who benefited from adaptive texts of extensive reading developed a better productive knowledge of lexical bundle after the experiment, while learners who received authentic texts, albeit an increase, did not show a statistically significant difference prior and after the implementation of extensive reading project. To put it in another way, adaptive texts are effective on Iranian EFL learners lexical bundle performance. One explanation could be related to the nature of adaptive texts deployed in this study. Since the participants were intermediate language learners, the adaptive texts selected for them were graded readers appropriate for their level. One characteristic of graded readers' series is that they are semantically and syntactically simplified to suit one level below the current level of the readers, so as to put no pressure on the learners. This simplification of lexical bundles may have probably been an asset for the learners to not only comprehend the text easily, but also acquire them incidentally through repeated exposure.

The accidental acquisition of lexical bundles in this group confirms the typographical salience of formulaic language learning. As Bishop (2004) claimed, unknown formulaic chunks of language must be typographically repeated for the learners to be acquired. Similar to vocabulary and grammatical points, prefabricated phrases are also holistically learnt through repeated eye-movements (Underwood, Schmitt, & Galpin, 2004).

On the contrary, authentic texts were chosen from a number of American literature stories, compatible with intermediate level of the learners, but not simplified at any case. Due to their originality, the lexical bundles of these stories, hence, were not simple enough for

learners to grasp their meaning easily or to learn how to use. Such being the case, the participants did not show a significant change in use of lexical bundles.

One possible implication of this result may be that there is a need for drawing learners' attention deliberately to lexical bundles. In line with Jones and Haywood's (2004) study, recognition and production of formulaic sequences require awareness-raising activities through highlighting them, discussing their meaning, and assessing their exact form.

Seen in its entirety, lexical bundles as ubiquitous component of language must be given more attention both through intentional and incidental learning strategies. Since these language chunks help learners seem more fluent and native-like, it is of great significance for teachers to raise learners' awareness to them as much as vocabulary and grammar. Given their importance in communicative and pragmatic competence, it might be useful to allocate some class time to teaching and practicing these multi-word units.

Conclusion

The present study addressed the issue of effect of adaptive and authentic texts of extensive reading on Iranian EFL learners' development of lexical bundles. To this aim, two intermediate intact classes were chosen to receive the experiments, one class to read adaptive and the other to read authentic texts. Each class was offered four short stories as extensive reading project and the participants were required to write a piece of summary for each story during the course. The results of the time-series analysis of frequency of lexical bundles revealed that both groups improved regarding use of multi-word chunks. However, the results obtained from paired samples t-tests indicated that the group which received adaptive texts showed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the final written summary, while the other group did not show such a dramatic shift. It could, therefore, be concluded that reading massive amount of adaptive texts helps EFL learners develop a stronger knowledge of formulaic expressions.

Results of this study show ample support for the claim that extended passages are beneficial for incidental learning of language components such as vocabulary, grammar, and in this case, lexical bundles. Besides accidental acquisition of bundles, it is pivotal to practice them intentionally in class by drawing learners' attention to them in texts.

The results of this study can be helpful for teachers to implement extensive reading projects in classroom for their beneficial nature in shaping EFL learners' knowledge of language components. Also, teachers can concentrate more on the pervasive role of ready-made utterances of language as aids to flourish communicative competence. Learners, too, can avail from the results of this study by realizing the significance of learning prefabricated language chunks for their speaking and writing skills and can manage to focus on learning them in context. Additionally, curriculum designers and material developers to choose the most congruous text types and to insert more bundle-related tasks and activities in EFL text books.

Taken together, the observed results of the present study may be suggestive to have some implications. First of all, the eminence of formulaic sequencing has been addressed several times in this paper; thus, it is recommended that teachers keep up with the most recent approaches to teaching formulaic language and reach an awareness what texts to choose to be harmonious with learners' progress. Also, various techniques of bundle instruction must be taken into accounts, namely, intensive and extensive reading, adaptive and authentic texts, and incidental and intentional learning. Moreover, learners should know that lexical bundles are as important and practical as vocabulary and structures; therefore, they are recommended to spend time learning and practicing these conventionalized forms of language as well.

This study also suffers from a number of drawbacks. First, only the productive knowledge of lexical bundles was of interest as they were counted in the participants' writings. This is the case while it could be possible that learners had a vast knowledge of receptive holophrases, but could not use them productively. Also, the number of the stories given to the learners was very few, only four texts, while for an

extensive reading project to be fully accomplished, much extend of time should be allocated. Had this study taken longer, the results would have been more promising. Furthermore, along with extensive reading project, the participants received their usual intensive reading practice, which might have had an effect of development of lexical bundles. Additionally, as lexical bundles consist of multi word units, in some cases the participants used the bundles with one word mistaken or missing. Such bundles were considered as wrong by the rater, while it is demonstrative of the fact that the learners had the partial knowledge of the bundles, but could not use them productively. Another limitation of the study pertains to the proficiency level of the participants. They were intermediate EFL learners with a moderate knowledge of formulaic expressions; however, most studies conducted on lexical bundles are related to an academic level of proficiency. Therefore, compatible learning and use of formulas might have not been an easy task for the learners.



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