



SNAP TO READ

MULTIWORD-LEXIS AND NON LITERAL USES FOUND IN THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE

Dwi Wahyuningtyas
UPN “Veteran” Jawa Timur
dwi.wahyuningtyas.ih@upnjatim.ac.id

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Abstract:

In mastering vocabulary, language learners often face some challenges, one of which is the occurrences of multiword-lexis and non-literal uses that consist of polysemy, collocation, phrasal verb, idiom, metaphor, and metonymy. This paper will then analyse multiword-lexis and non-literal uses found in a newspaper, the Guardian. Descriptive qualitative research design was employed in this research. The findings showed that there are two (2) occurrences of polysemy, fifteen (15) occurrences of collocation, nine (9) occurrences of phrasal verb, three (3) occurrences of idiom, two (2) occurrences of metaphor, and two (2) occurrences of metonymy with the total thirty three (39) occurrences. The occurrences of non-literal meaning can be grouped into idiom, metaphor, and metonymy.

Keywords: *multiword-lexis, non-literal uses, guardian article*

INTRODUCTION

L2 learners are imposed to gain much vocabulary to comprehend texts and conversation they encounter in their foreign or second language learning. The more vocabulary they can master the easier for them to understand what the utterances mean. As what is stated that general proficiency claims to set the amount of vocabularies as its predictor (Iwashita, Brown, McNamara, & O'Hagan, 2008; Schmitt,

Jiang, & Grabe, 2011; Staehr, 2009, as cited in Boers & Lindstromberg, 2012).

In regards with the use of vocabulary, it is also discussed that single words and multiword expressions are the components of vocabulary as given by Fernando (1996, p. 33), while it is specified into idiom and habitual collocations. Being frequently used by students in their daily learning, however, multiword-lexis and non-literal uses may cause confusion, due to the students' lack of knowledge. In this paper, the writer presents the text intended to first semester International Relations Student for Reading Comprehension subject to be analyzed.

Challenges for Comprehension

Recognising multiword lexis and non-literal uses by memorising can be a serious hamper as students have limited memory traces. The frequency of a certain exposure for comprehension also becomes a core factor. As argued if they are just able to take notice of a given word once or twice, it is difficult to memorize well (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2012).

The next challenge is also imposed by polysemy. As using highly frequency words and having some meanings are the characteristics of polysemy (Kennedy, 2003, p. 67), in this point, the meaning and sense difference may be found by learners as challenges to learn this kind of lexis. They must know the context, where a certain term is applied, as checking meaning in vocabulary is quite time consuming for them.

For collocation, learning it has a huge part as a task of language learner (Palmer, 1938, and Pawley, & Syder, 1938, as cited in Kennedy, 2010, p. 81). Collocation carries literal meaning, but it does not mean learners can comprehend it easily. Other than that, some of illogical traits of collocation may impose learners to learn them as fixed or semi-fixed phrases (Kennedy, 2003, p. 81). Consequently, assumption of arbitrariness in formulating collocation may also be tricky. As, for instance, learners will ask, "why must we say, make a mistake, instead

of do a mistake?” Interference from L1 is challenging also as learners will tend to refer to the formula or pattern they usually say or write in L1 and carries these traits into their L2 learning. As what has been argued that collocation carries a trait to own semantically related words, it also imposes learners learning burden (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2012).

Next challenges are in phrasal verb. Instead of recognizing its word one by one, it must emerge and be understood as a unity to obtain its real meaning. Learners may also find it confusing as Sinclair (1991, p. 68) argues that the creation of words may form a meaning which seems not systematically related. Another challenge is offered by idiom. Comprehending idiom is not an easy task especially for L2 learners. They cannot pick any words easily. As what is uttered by Sinclair (1991, p. 110) there is no random formation or occurrence of words in a text. Moreover, Crystal (2008) also defines that idioms are semantically and often syntactically restricted. Different culture between L1 and L2 may affect, as what is assumed to represent a certain meaning in a culture may be different in the other one, for instance, love is symbolized by heart but in another culture love might be depicted by other things.

For figurative language, as explained by Low (1988, as cited in Boers, 2000), figurative sense is where polysemous lexical items more frequently happen than its literal meaning. As metonymy involves conceptual change in the same domain (Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 12), learners will be required to locate the domain, which they may be hindered by the change in the domain. Consequently, it leads them to misinterpretation of meaning. On the other hand, metaphor changes concept across domain (Radden and Dirven, 2007, p. 13). Littlemore et al. (2012) assumes learners may face difficulty in comprehending metaphor in lecture. Ironically, as what has been argued by Littlemore et al. (2010). Metaphor has never been explained to students.

The Importance of Multiword-Lexis and Non Literal Uses

In figurative language, as argued by Littlemore et al. (2010), the contact is established by metonymy, while in metaphor, it is intended to see an analogical term in another context. Another perspective uttered by Verspoor & Boers (2012) declares that metaphor depicts abstract concept in a more understanding definition. Learners will also kindly need and use metaphor and other figurative languages, as they will appear in lecture and in communicative functions (Littlemore et al., 2010). Another with non-literal meaning, idiom also carries a certain function, depicting socio-cultural background (Boers, 2000a).

METHOD

This study employs descriptive qualitative research design. Ary (2010) described qualitative study as the type of research where “researchers seek to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it down into variables” (p.29). This statement is in line with design of this research, where the researcher only analyses an article in a newspaper and identify the multiword-lexis and non-literal uses in it. The researcher analyses the text first and group the multiword-lexis and literal uses found in the text into polysemy, collocation, phrasal verb, idiom, metaphor, and metonymy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Multiword-Lexis and Non Literal Uses in Text

Here, it will be discussed the occurrences of multiword-lexis and non-literal uses comprising polysemy, collocation, phrasal verb, idiom, metaphor, and metonymy in an authentic text titled, "Obama and the Art of Corridor Diplomacy" taken from The Guardian newspaper site.

No.	Words/Phrases	Polysemy	Collocation	Phrasal Verb	Idiom	Metaphor	Metonymy
1	The UN general assembly often sees. (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
2	The UN general assembly often sees ‘impromptu’ meetings between leaders who would otherwise rather not be seen with each other.	(the first word <i>see</i> means <i>think about something or consider</i> ; while the other one means see in literal meaning)					
3	All eyes are on the US and Iran						(Non literal meaning exists. <i>All eyes</i> represents the countries in the world. Eyes are made as comparison, as it is assumed that the world can see what is happening)

4	White House looking for a quick diplomatic victory (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meanig exists)				
5	White House looking for a quick diplomatic victory						(<i>White house</i> here means the US Presidents and his spokesperson. Non-literal meaning exists.)
6	White House looking for a quick diplomatic victory (Source: MacMillan Online English Dictionary)			(In phrasal verb, it must be inferred from the unity of the verb, cannot be interpreted separately)			
7	Barrack Obama might shake hands with Iran's president (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(<i>shake hands</i> has been patronized instead of <i>rubbing hands</i> or <i>touching hands</i> as part of collocation, literal meaning exists)				

8	<i>Could be well on the cards</i>				(Non literal meaning exists in idiom, as <i>could be well on the cards</i> can mean <i>could play the role or the game</i>)		
9	Since the 1979 <i>Islamic Revolution</i> (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
10	Women who have not quite <i>made up</i> their minds (Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
11	The late US <i>special envoy</i> on Afghanistan (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
12	Richard Holbrooke, <i>bumped into</i> Iran's deputy foreign minister (Source: MacMillan Online English Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			

13	Iran's deputy foreign minister (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
14	The two would stay in touch (Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
15	The time was definitely not ripe					(Non literal meaning exists, which means <i>suitable time to do something</i>)	
16	Tehran trying to play it down (Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
17	Iranian nuclear programme (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				

18	he “sidebar” is a <i>notch up</i> on the corridor meeting (Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner’s Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
19	The <i>bottom line</i> is that neither side is particularly committed					(Non-literal meaning exists, the idiom implies <i>the result</i> or <i>amount of the money made by a business</i>)	
20	As it <i>turned out</i> , that was the case in Geneva (Source: Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner’s Dictionary)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
21	Sometimes difficult to avoid <i>each other</i> (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				

22	Obama's security detail went out of its way (Source: Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verb)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
23	The two power ever since (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(the collocation belongs to restricted collocation)				
24	Obama's security detail went out of its way to make sure (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
25	He did not get cornered				(Having non-literal meaning, this idiom can mean <i>threaten by a certain condition or person</i>)		

26	Chávez not only managed to <i>sidle up</i> (Source: Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verb)			(The same point that phrasal verb cannot stand by itself without the pairing word to form a meaning)			
27	Former British <i>foreign secretary</i> Jack Straw (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
28	A historic <i>“chance encounter”</i> in the corridors of the UN general assembly (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
29	<i>Prime minister</i> was desperate (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				

30	<i>A historic "chance encounter" in the corridors of the UN general assembly and His team would have killed for some regular corridor diplomacy</i>	(The first word corridors means a long passage of the building or assembly, while the second meaning implies the kind of diplomacy. Both <i>corridors</i> have similarity in term of <i>corridors</i>)					
31	The <i>special relationship</i> was relegated (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
32	<i>Relegated to</i> out of sightt (Source: Corpus of Contemporary American English)		(as collocation, literal meaning exists)				
33	Political opportunity is forever <i>rubbing shoulders</i> (Source: MacMillan English Online Dictionary)				(Non-literal meaning exists, the idiom implies to <i>talk to someone important or famous</i>)		

From the text, it can be collected two (2) occurrences of polysemy, fifteen (15) occurrences of collocation, nine (9) occurrences of phrasal verb, three (3) occurrences of idiom, two (2) occurrences of metaphor, and two (2) occurrences of metonymy with the total thirty three (39) occurrences. The occurrences of non-literal meaning here can be seen from idiom, metaphor, and metonymy. The, chapter below will expose what I assume to be my learners' challenges for comprehension.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, vocabulary learning cannot be separated from recognising multiword lexis and non-literal uses. Each kind of word or phrase elicits each different challenge for learners to comprehend, and different culture may imply its own meaning. In this writing, there are thirty-three phrases, which elicit their challenges for learners to comprehend. Learners' limitation in comprehending such words can be caused by the classic method memorising, which relies much on their memory capacity. The crucial existence of multiword lexis may be able to be depicted by some examples, such as the existence of metaphor, which may bring abstract things into their concrete entities.

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