

Individual Paper Session 26
Lexicon/Vocabulary
Thursday, July 6
1:45-2:15pm

**Learning Prepositions as Part of Fixed Phrases in Phrasal Verbs and Collocations:
The Case of “On” in the EFL Classroom**

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Phrasal verbs are a category of multiword units that are used in everyday English. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students wanting to improve their communication skills, the study of multiword units can be frustrating, interesting, and when understood and mastered, a great confidence builder. A multiword unit (MWU) is a string of words that are considered semantically and syntactically inseparable, and thus become a unit of words that together has a unique meaning. Accordingly, phrasal verbs are a type of MWU consisting of a verb that is followed by an adverb or a preposition. EFL students often make errors grammatically when placing, or omitting, the correct preposition or adverb with verb to form a suitable phrasal verb.

This study was conducted to determine what type of input could more effectively reinforce learners' familiarity with the proper combination of verbs and prepositions. For this comparative study, a sample of eighty-eight freshmen, from the same university in southern Taiwan participated. In the first phase, all were administered a pretest of twenty phrasal verb questions. Afterward, one group was provided with extensive reading material and the other group a corpora/concordance printout with distinct examples and texts. Each was given less than forty minutes to finish studying the material. This was followed up with a posttest with the same questions as the pretest.

A statistical analysis calculating the difference between pretest and posttest for each group and between the two groups was performed. A review of the findings determined that quantity does not equal quality, and that studying a large quantity of reading material, doesn't ensure increased competency when learning phrasal verbs. And while the role of extensive reading shouldn't be ignored for long term learning, the mastering of phrasal verbs requires patience, diligence, and consistency.