EĞİTİMDE YENİ YAKLAŞIMLAR DERGİSİ
JOURNAL OF NEW APPROACHES IN EDUCATION
Cilt/Volume: 8
Sayı/Issue: 2
Research Article
Yıl/Year: 2025
ISSN: 2667-5390

HIGH-FREQUENCY VERBS IN WORD COMBINATIONS: AN ALTERNATIVE ERROR ANALYSIS[1]

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Makale Bilgisi (Article Info): Geliş (Received): **05.08.2025**, Kabul (Accepted): **11.11.2025**, Yayın (Published): **29.12.2025**

ABSTRACT

It is often argued that high-frequency verbs are challenging for learners, especially when combined with other words. The present study aims to reveal the use of high-frequency verbs "make" and "do" when they occur in a verb+noun combination in the argumentative essays of Turkish learners of English. In this context, the present study investigated the deviant productions in the learner corpus. The investigation utilized a compilation of essays collected from first-year students studying at an ELT department of a state university in Turkey. Deviant productions were analyzed in three parts: error spots, error types and strategies. The findings of the study showed that learners have some problems with make and do verb+noun combinations. Based on the outcomes of the current study and previous studies, the present study shared theoretical and practical implications, particularly for language teaching settings.

Keywords: Collocations, corpus, error analysis, high-frequency verbs, word combinations.

Kombinasyon Halindeki Yüksek Frekanslı Fiiller: Alternatif Bir Hata Analizi

ÖZ

Yüksek frekanslı fiillerin, özellikle başka kelimelerle bir arada kullanıldıklarında, öğrenciler için yanıltıcı olduğu sıklıkla tartışılmaktadır. Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrenenlerin tartışmacı yazılarında geçen fiil+isim kombinasyonları arasında, yüksek frekanslı "make" ve "do" fiillerinin kullanımını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma öğrenen derlemindeki olağan dışı üretimleri araştırmıştır. Araştırmada Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümünde okuyan birinci sınıf öğrencilerinden toplanan makalelerin bir derlemesinden yararlanılmıştır. Olağan dışı üretimler üç bölümde analiz edilmiştir: hata yerleri, hata türleri ve stratejiler. Araştırmanın bulguları, öğrencilerin "make" ve "do" fiil+isim kombinasyonlarında bazı sorunlar yaşadıklarını göstermiştir. Mevcut çalışmanın ve önceki çalışmaların bulgularına dayanarak, mevcut çalışma, özellikle dil öğretimi ortamları için teorik ve pratik çıkarımları paylaşmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eşdizimli sözcükler, derlem, hata analizi, yüksek frekanslı fiiller, kelime kombinasyonları.

Atıf için (To cite this article):

Kahraman, M., & Subaşı G. (2025). High-frequency verbs in word combinations: An alternative error analysis. *Eğitimde Yeni Yaklaşımlar Dergisi (EYYAD), 8*(2), 146-162. https://doi.org/10.70325/eyyad.1758858

[1] This paper is based on the doctoral dissertation titled 'An Analysis of Verb-Noun Combinations in High Frequency Verbs in Argumentative Essays of Turkish ELT Students: The Case of "Make" and "Do"' of the first author.

INTRODUCTION

It was evidenced that some learners avoid using high-frequency verbs while others just ignore the collocational restrictions with them (Altenberg & Granger, 2001; Källkvist, 1998; Nesselhauf, 2005; Sinclair, 1991). High-frequency verbs such as do, make, have, take, and get, etc. can pose problems for learners of English. In particular, make and do are highly challenging for Turkish learners, since their Turkish equivalents, "yapmak (make/do)" "etmek (make/do)" do not match perfectly (Öztuna, 2009; Shibliyev, 1993). The problem can be linked to two interrelated areas of phraseological study: word combinations and high-frequency verbs.

Firstly, word combinations have been subject to many studies (Deveci, 2018; Dinçer et al.,2022; Greenbaum, 1974; Halliday & Hassan, 1976; Kayaer, 2023; Koya, 2005; Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Richards, 1976; Sinclair, 1991; Yuvayapan & Yükselir, 2021) with the major emphasis on collocations. Some studies have shown new directions in vocabulary learning. According to Brown (1974), vocabulary learning through word lists is dull, and might be dangerous due to potential problems with concept formation and use. Coursebook exercises, on the other hand, force students to write and speak in complete sentences. Therefore, the researcher suggested that choosing between the word and the sentence is not mandatory; we can instead choose collocational groups, since we normally write and speak in chunks of language. Later studies also reinforced the significance of the word combinations. For example, Howarth (1998) found in a 240000-word corpus that there were 5000 verb-noun combinations, and Nesselhauf (2005) argued that the large number of prefabricated units decreases the processing effort in the human brain and thus provides the speaker with fluency. Since then, many scholars have compared collocation teaching to traditional vocabulary teaching, and they also found strong evidence indicating that collocation teaching resulted in better outcomes in terms of number, retention or time spent (Chan & Liou, 2005; Chen, 2024; Gilquin, 2007; Kennedy, 2010; Sun & Park, 2023; Şimşek, 2008; Vural, 2010).

Secondly, high-frequency verbs make up the other half of the background of the present study. Lennon (1996) provides evidence that although learners know the meaning of a verb, that knowledge is hazy when it comes to polysemy and the grammatical, phrasal, contextual, or collocational restrictions of a high-frequency verb. The problem seems to be twofold. Firstly, high-frequency verbs such as do, make, have, take, get, etc. are among the most common verbs and usually learned in the early days of language learning, yet they are still difficult to gain full attainment because they often appear in various fixed collocational phrases in addition to their other properties (Liu & Lei, 2009). Altenberg and Granger (2001) state that high-frequency verbs are often neglected by teachers and learners once they have been taught. Because these verbs are extremely complex and learners cannot deeply understand their grammatical and lexical patterning, it is possible to observe overuse, underuse, or deviant forms in learner language.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies on collocations and high-frequency verbs have addressed errors in the learner's language. Considering the issue in phraseological terms, Howarth (1998) suggested that, for both learners and teachers, there are free combinations on one side and idioms on the other, and that they do not know there are collocations just in between. Therefore, learners often have problems. Further studies (Borgatti, 2006; Gilquin, 2007) showed that learners tend to use only congruent collocations that sound more familiar to them in their L1. In fact, the impact of L1 on the target language has already been argued in collocation studies that compare learner corpora to native corpora. To illustrate, Nesselhauf (2003) collected data from German learners of English and attempted to examine erroneous collocations in their free-writing essays. The results showed that although the degree of restriction on collocations predicted some portion of their mistakes, L1 interference was the most operative factor of their erroneous collocation productions.

In another study, Laufer and Waldman (2011) focused on both the learners' proficiency levels and erroneous/overused productions. For this purpose, they compared three learner corpora to a native corpus as the reference. The study revealed that all three non-native corpora were lower than the native corpus in terms of collocation frequency and accuracy; moreover, although the advanced-level corpus had fewer errors than the other two non-native corpora, L1-based errors persisted across all non-native corpora. Hugon (2008) examined the use of make by French learners of English across different semantic and syntactic categories through a corpus comparison. The learner corpus showed a varied degree of accuracy in semantic categorization; however, delexical combinations of make had many deficiencies.

Recent studies on data-driven learning (DDL) also showed a positive correlation between vocabulary and collocational learning. Huang (2014), for instance, conducted a study to test the effectiveness of DDL with 40 participants in China. The results showed that the experimental group's written productions contained a greater variety of collocational and colligational patterns than the control group's. In addition, the experimental group had fewer linguistic errors in using the target abstract nouns. Men (2020) also tested the effectiveness of the DDL model in comparison with traditional techniques. The participants were 52 first-year university students majoring in English in China. The results suggested a significant increase in the experimental group's performance on collocation production, thanks to the differentiation among the synonymous words by using extractions from the concordance lines. Moreover, the experimental group completed the test in less time than the control group. Finally, the majority of students found the DDL model useful. In a more recent study, Sun and Park (2023) pinpointed that corpus-based DDL fosters learners' awareness of the target language and maximizes exposure to authentic texts via concordance, leading to more autonomous and independent students. Aside from DDL, cross-linguistic priming and cross-linguistic inhibition were examined across collocations. Cangır and Durrant (2021) observed collocation performance among Turkish learners of English in terms of priming and inhibiting. The results revealed that collocations were processed from L1 to L2 faster than in the reverse direction. Also, due to incongruence in word order between Turkish and English, the inhibition effect was more dominant than priming.

Overall, one can conclude that learners tend to err in collocations. Some studies shed light on why learners make mistakes, while others attempt to explain how they try to deal with this challenge. As can be concluded from DDL studies, lack of exposure is a big problem for learners. On the other hand, although these studies discuss that collocations are where the errors occur, they do not specify exactly what part of a collocation is more challenging. For example, L1 is considered the cause of the error in Laufer and Waldman (2011), in fact, it can also be considered as a strategy that learners use to produce some collocations, though they fail in incongruent ones.

Taking earlier and recent studies into account, the present study aims to investigate errors in the natural use of "make" and "do" verb-noun combinations in a learner corpus. The term "word combination" was deliberately chosen due to the fact that the present study did not distinguish between word combinations in terms of their restriction levels. In other words, free combinations, collocations, and idioms were all included in the current study. Unfortunately, the terminology and the way some other studies treated the errors do not follow a clear categorization. Aside from the term "collocation", where the error occurs, what is missing in a learner's interlanguage, or which strategy is used by a learner, are somehow elusive in the error analyses in some other studies. A lack of a clear categorization might have vague implications. Therefore, the present study is an effort to provide the literature with a more comprehensive and analytical understanding of the errors.

Research Questions

The natural uses of "make" and "do" verb-noun combinations in a learner corpus were investigated by taking a native corpus as the reference. Identifying errors and examining them in detail were the key motivations for this study. Within this framework, the study attempted to answer the following research question:

What are the error spots, error types, and possible strategies resorted to the deviant "make" and "do" verb+noun combinations in the learner corpus?

METHOD

Research Design

In order to describe and explain variations and uses of linguistic patterns, the current study was designed as a corpus-based analysis. Corpus-based research aims to discover how pre-recognized linguistic features govern systematic patterns of use rather than to discover new linguistic features (Biber, 2010). To this end, a learner corpus was analyzed.

The learner corpus was a compilation of argumentative essays written by university students studying ELT

at a state university in Türkiye. The argumentative essays were part of their academic writing courses offered to the first-year students between 2009 and 2019. The students were at B1-B2 CEFR in English regarding their end-term exam scores. The data consisted of 166 essays totaling 150,404 words. The writing prompts of the essays varied across the years. Although it was a process-approach-implemented course, only the first drafts of the students' essays were collected, so their natural productions without any feedback were gathered. The themes of the writing prompts were education, technology and social life, health, media, and art. The essays were obtained from an electronic assignment submission system in accordance with the required ethical procedures.

Table 1. *The Corpora Used in the Study*

	Learner Corpus
Contributors	Turkish university students at the intermediate level of proficiency
Essay Genre	Argumentative
Number of Essays	166
Total Corpus Size	150,404 words
Average Essay Length	906 words
Topics	Education Technology and social life Health Media Art

Procedure

All the extracted do+noun and make+noun combinations were examined, considering their semantic and grammatical properties. To define a combination as unacceptable, the researcher and another language expert, an experienced English instructor with L1 Turkish, carefully examined all the concordance lines. Inter-rater reliability was calculated as 95% using the point-by-point method. Then, the problematic occurrences were checked in the online versions of mainstream dictionaries, namely Cambridge Dictionary and Macmillan Dictionary, and in order to be sure about the collocational errors the Online Oxford Collocation Dictionary and The BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations (Benson et al., 1990) were used. After all, there was still a need for a native speaker's judgement, since language is like a living organism that might give rise to new varieties over time. Therefore, a list of problematic combinations and the full text of learners' essays were sent to a native English speaker, an American teaching English in the U.S. After some negotiations, a final list of unacceptable combinations was reached. Both dictionary entries and native speaker judgement were needed because sometimes there are contradictions among native speakers on the judgement of the same linguistic unit, which implies the need for resorting to the dictionaries and native judgements as a two-step verification (Juknevičienė, 2008; Nesselhauf, 2005).

The deviant uses of word combinations and their possible reasons were investigated, considering the approaches adopted by Blum and Levenston (1978), Farghal and Obiedat (1995), and Nesselhauf (2005). In her study, Nesselhauf (2005) investigated deviant verb-noun collocation productions, considering verbs, nouns, determiners, and other more global aspects. Blum and Levenston (1978) and Farghal and Obiedat (1995), on the other hand, focused more on the strategies employed by the non-native speakers in their problematic productions of formulaic language units. However, since the scope of the present study is limited to make and do verb+noun combinations, and an attempt to analyze the error types and strategies used, the categories suggested in previous studies were tailored accordingly. For example, Nesselhauf's (2005) categories were not taken as error types but as error spots, which indicate which part of the combination is problematic (noun, verb, etc.). The term error types in this study implies what type of knowledge is missing (lexical, collocational, etc.). Also, the strategies highlighted by Blum and Levenston (1978) and Farghal and Obiedat (1995) are not entirely applicable here, as the current study concerns combinations, not non-combinations. Thus, "avoidance" the strategy used by non-native speakers when a target combination cannot be produced was ignored here. A final template of the error analysis is presented below (see Table 2).

Table 2. *The Template of Error Analysis*

Error Spots	Error Types	Strategies
Noun	Lexical	L1 translation
Verb	Collocational	Synonymy
Determiner/Modifier	Grammatical	Paraphrasing
Whole Combination Error	Spelling	Not Observable

The current study is an attempt to handle the deviant uses in a more qualitative manner. Hence, the deviant occurrences of the learners were scrutinized in detail. As stated above, each deviant occurrence was examined across three dimensions: error spot, error type, and strategy. It should be noted that there were some guidelines about these dimensions to keep in mind during the analysis:

1. A typical combination is made up of a verb, a determiner or modifier, and a noun; no determiner or modifier is also possible (Hiltunen, 1999).

2. The problem might be with one or more elements of a combination. Thus, some overlaps among the error spots are possible.

3. Although an erroneous combination in a sentence is possible to make acceptable by simply changing one or more elements of the combination, the sentence might still be unacceptable due to the combination preferred. Therefore, in some cases, the whole combination might be problematic considering the context. The sentence might need another combination or none at all. In such cases, the whole combination of inappropriate code was assigned. The approach is adopted from Nesselhauf (2005).

4. Error types refer to the source of the errors. Considering the references (non-native judgement, native judgement, and grammar resources), an error might stem from more than one origin. Hence, it is possible to observe some overlaps among the error types.

5. Categories of strategies are fundamentally adopted from Blum and Levenston (1978) and Farghal and Obiedat (1995). Since asking students back about their essays is not possible in this type of corpus analysis (Nesselhauf, 2003), the interpretation of the strategies was determined by resorting to non-native judgement (L1 Turkish), native judgement (L1 English), and grammar and academic writing resources.

6. In the analysis of strategies, there was no clear strategy observable in some cases. They were coded as "not applicable, (NA)"

This analysis is intended to reveal errors in the learner corpus qualitatively enabling us to better understand the challenges posed by high-frequency verbs in verb+noun combinations. All in all, the current study aims to shed light on errors across three pillars.

Research Ethics

Student essays were used as the research data. The essays were extracted from an online submission system. The professors, having compiled the essays, were informed about the research. Upon obtaining their permission via e-mails, the researchers submitted an application to the University Ethics Committee for written approval. Afterwards, the Committee's approval was received before the data collection began.

FINDINGS

The aforementioned research question sought to identify the possible sources of deviant "make" and "do" verb-noun combinations in the learner corpus. To this end, as detailed in the methodology section, the deviant productions of the NNSs were determined by consulting a Turkish instructor of English, several dictionaries, and a native speaker. Finally, a list of deviant combinations was reached. The deviant uses were examined across three aspects: error spot, error type, and strategy used. It is worth noting that some errors overlap across categories; i.e., a combination is erroneous both grammatically and collocationally, or there are mistakes in the verb and determiner within the same combination. An overall illustration of the errors and percentages of both do+noun and make+noun combinations is given below (see Table 3).

Table 3. *Overall Distribution of the Deviant Uses in the Learner Corpus*

	Total Occurrences	Deviant Occurrences	%
do+noun	102	17	16.6
make+noun	170	28	16.4
TOTAL	272	45	16.5

Firstly, Table 3 shows that the learners produced 102 do+noun combinations. Of all these combinations, 17 productions were deviant, which makes up 16,6 % of all do+noun combinations. Secondly, the learners produced 170 make+noun combinations in total. Of all these combinations, 28 productions were deviant, which makes up 16,4% of all make+noun combinations. When the deviant do+noun combinations and make+noun combinations were compared quantitatively, the percentages were similar. (16,6 % and 16,4 %, respectively). However, the errors needed to be elaborated for the do+noun and make+noun combinations, individually, in terms of error spot, error type, and strategy used. The detailed categorization of the errors in do+noun combinations is given below (see Table 4).

Table 4. *The Detailed Categorization of the Errors in Do+Noun Combinations*

Error Spots	Verb	Noun	Det/Mod	Whole Comb.
	11	3	1	4
Error Types	Lexical	Grammatical	Spelling	Collocational
	2	3	0	13
Strategies	L1 Translation	Synonymy	Paraphrasing	NA
	5	9	3	0

According to Table 4, among the error spots, 11 combinations were unacceptable due to problems with verbs, accounting for the great majority of the deviant uses. There were also 4 occurrences in which the whole combination was inappropriate and 3 occurrences in which nouns were not acceptable. Finally, there was 1 occurrence in which the determiner or modifier was problematic, which was also problematic in terms of its verb, as well. In order to illustrate the analysis more clearly, one sample occurrence from the learner data for each error spot is provided below (see Table 5).

Table 5. *Sample Occurrences for the Error Spots in Do+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Error Spot	Suggested Correction
one of the most important mistakes we do while teaching English is that ….	Verb	*… mistakes we make*
government knows the events before done	Whole comb.	*The government knows the events before they happen*
if you do not do illegal works, ….	Noun	*… do illegal things*
it is unnecessary to do such change	Det/Mod	*… make such a change*

As for the error types, Table 5 shows that collocational errors accounted for the largest proportion, with 13 occurrences. There were also 3 occurrences of grammatical errors and 2 occurrences of lexical errors. Finally, there was no spelling mistake in the do+noun combinations of the learners. One sample occurrence from the learner data for each error type is provided below to clarify the points (see Table 6).

Table 6. *Sample Occurrences for the Error Types in Do+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Error Type	Suggested Correction
they believe that while doing material, they waste time in vain	Collocational	*… designing a material*
It has been done some researches	Grammatical	*Some research has been done*
they do their works that they suppose to do with internet	Lexical	*… do their things*
-	Spelling	-

In the third dimension, the study examined the strategies learners employed. Table 6 reveals that synonymy was the most resorted strategy with 9 occurrences. There were 5 cases of L1 translation and 3 cases of paraphrasing. Finally, there was no utterance for which a strategy could not be assigned. One sample occurrence from the learner data for each strategy used by the learners is illustrated below (see Table 7).

Table 7. *Sample Occurrences for the Strategies in Do+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Strategy	Explanation/ Correction
We had to paint, do music and learn role-playing	Synonymy	"*do*" was used instead of "make"
They can not study the next day lessons and do homeworks (ödevleri yapmak)	L1 translation	"*homework*" is a singular noun in English, but both ways are possible in Turkish. (*ödev-ödevler*)
It can be deterrent to stop people from doing criminal events	Paraphrasing	Committing crimes
-	NA	-

The following table shows the detailed categorization of the errors in make+noun combinations (see Table 8).

Table 8. *The Detailed Categorization of the Errors in Make+Noun Combinations*

Error Spots	Verb	Noun	Det/Mod	Whole Comb.
	17	2	4	6
Error Types	Lexical	Grammatical	Spelling	Collocational
	6	9	1	17
Strategies	L1 Translation	Synonymy	Paraphrasing	NA
	16	7	0	4

According to Table 8, when error spots are considered, 17 combinations are unacceptable due to the verbs in those combinations. As in the do+noun combinations, verbs were the parts of the combinations where the number of errors was the highest. There were 6 occurrences of whole combination error and 4 occurrences of determiner/modifier error. The number of errors in nouns was only 2. To illustrate the analysis more clearly, one sample occurrence from the learner data for each error spot is provided below (see Table 9).

Table 9. *Sample Occurrences for the Error Spots in Make+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Error Spot	Suggested Correction
while trying to escape, she made an accident and died	Verb	*… she had an accident...*
Many inventors, before inventing, they made imagination.	Whole comb.	*…. they imagined.*
…it made great impact to our social life	Det/Mod	*…it made a great impact…*
one has been enabled to make video callings through the world	Noun	*…make video calls …*

When the second dimension, error types, was considered, Table 9 shows that collocational errors accounted for the greatest number of errors, with 17 occurrences. There were also 9 occurrences of grammatical errors and 6 occurrences of lexical errors. Finally, there was 1 spelling mistake in the learner's make+noun combinations. One sample occurrence from the learner data for each error type is provided in the table below to better illustrate the error types in the data (see Table 10).

Table 10. *Sample Occurrences for The Error Types in Make+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Error Type	Suggested Correction
Exams should be made in formal classrooms	Collocational	*Exams should be taken ….*
They find their old friends by looking other people's information and make contact them	Grammatical	*….. making contact with them*
World revolves, time flies, human changes and make change everything on the earth.	Lexical	*… changes everything*
… therefore, they make no personal efford to help the environment	Spelling	*effort*

The current study also examined the strategies learners used. Table 10 reveals that L1 translation was the most resorted strategy, with 16 occurrences. There were 7 cases of synonymy. The strategy of paraphrasing was not observed in this part of the analysis. However, there were 4 occurrences for which no strategy could be assigned (NA). One sample occurrence from the learner data for each strategy used by the learners is provided in the table below (Table 11).

Table 11. *Sample Occurrences for The Strategies in Make+Noun Combinations*

Sample Case	Strategy	Explanation/ Correction
To raise a healthy children, their vaccinations should be made regularly	L1 translation	It is "*aşı yapmak*" in Turkish, which entails "*make*" as the equivalent for "*yapmak*". "*Given*" should replace "*made*" as the correction.
make strong relationships with real individuals not with virtual and fake ones	Synonymy	"*build* strong relationships …" make was used for build as a perceived alternative.
Moreover, Facebook makes antisocial person.	NA	"*makes a person antisocial*" could be suggested as a correction. No strategy was observed here.
-	Paraphrasing	-

In conclusion, these results indicate that there are commonalities in both do+noun and make+noun combinations, as well as differences. One shared outcome revealed here is that the great majority of errors occurred in the verb part of the combinations, in both do+noun and make+noun. Secondly, considering both do+noun and make+noun combinations, the errors were mainly collocational. As a final commonality, grammatical problems were observed more frequently than lexical ones. Do+noun and make+noun combinations differed in the strategies learners used. The most distinctive feature is that learners used synonymy as their primary resort, with do+noun combinations and L1 translation as secondary strategies. However, when it comes to make+noun combinations, the learners were observed to follow the opposite direction. They used L1 translation as the primary strategy and synonymy as the second resort.

DISCUSSION

The results section showed that the percentages of the deviant do+noun and make+noun combinations in the learner corpus were almost equal (16,6 %; 16,4%, respectively). According to Kurtböke (1998), bilingual dictionaries are far from providing target delexical meanings for the Turkish equivalents (most notably yapmak or etmek); thus, learners are supposed to find the best option in the context on their own. Mostly, because of the Persian and Arabic words, it is even difficult to find a consistent match in Turkish. For example, tamir (repair) is used with etmek, while the plural form tamirat is used with yapmak. (Kurtböke, 1998). Therefore, it can be concluded that "make" or "do" might not constitute individual delexical senses for Turkish learners of English, which makes them potentially and equally error-prone. Juknevičienė (2008) also provided evidence for this in her study, while Altenberg and Granger (2001) found evidence both for and against this malformed L1 matching.

Another finding from the study was that total deviant uses of do+noun and make+noun accounted for 16,5% of the learners' total productions, who were at intermediate proficiency. Contrary to the current study's findings, Nesselhauf (2005) examined advanced German learners of English, and found that 1/3 of the total combinations were deviant. Also, Bıçkı (2012) found that more than 75 % of the collocations were problematic in a corpus of Turkish learners of English at advanced proficiency. Given that the current study examined intermediate-level learners' productions, it yielded highly contradictory results. However, it should be noted that above-mentioned two studies were not restricted to make and do combinations only; rather, they took all kinds of verb+noun combinations into account. Hugon (2008) focused solely on "make collocations" and found 17,2% of the collocations problematic, which is in accordance with the current study's findings. The discrepancy among the findings might be ascribed to the nature of high-frequency verbs. High-frequency verbs such as make and do are learnt at the very beginning of the instruction, and thus they are perceived as relatively more usable and safer for the students (Hasselgren, 1994).

The present study examined the deviant uses in three dimensions. They are error spots, error types, and strategies. Discussing the study findings with relevant literature, it should be noted that the high-frequency verbs analyzed across studies, the categorization of the errors or, the terminology used do not entirely overlap across the studies mentioned here; thus, some sort of adjustment and recalculation should be taken into account.

The first dimension of the errors was the analysis of the error spots. The analysis revealed that, in both do+noun and make noun combinations, it was verbs that accounted for the great majority of the deviant uses (nearly 58,3%). This result confirmed some previous studies (Altenberg and Granger, 2001; Boonraksa & Naisena, 2022; Bıçkı, 2012; Boers, Demecheleer, Coxhead and Webb, 2014; Nesselhauf, 2003; Üstünalp,

2013). Nesselhauf (2003) explains this by referring to her definition of collocation in which the restrictedness of the verb choice is emphasized. Bıçkı (2012) supported this argument in his study by stating that learners overextended verb meanings, especially with light verbs. Üstünalp (2013) also reported 68,88% of verb errors, and the problem was ascribed to learners' ignorance of restrictedness. Although there is no error analysis in their study, Altenberg and Granger (2001) emphasized the treacherous side of high-frequency verbs by taking make+noun collocations as an example. Their study highlighted that although high-frequency verbs often share semantic common ground across languages, they still develop language-specific characteristics. Boers et al. (2014) reinforced this argument by stating that when a high-frequency verb is employed in a verb+noun combination, the noun carries most of the meaning in the combination. Secondly, the verb seems well-familiar to the learners, and they concentrate more on the noun element of the combination. Therefore, they often fail to produce the correct verb. Considering all the explanations above, it can be argued that learners might be unaware of the restrictions on high-frequency verbs do and make, and might tend to apply an L1-motivated semantic framework to the target language, ignoring its language-specific features.

Boers et al. (2014) can also be confirmed by examining noun errors in the current study. The current study revealed that only 10,4 % of the errors were related to nouns, which is equal to the determiner/modifier errors and just half of the whole combination errors. Thus, it can be concluded that learners might have paid more attention to the nouns in the combinations. Üstünalp (2013) contrasted the determiner errors in his study to those of Nesselhauf (2003) and Nesselhauf (2005). It was hypothesized that, since English has more commonalities with German than Turkish in terms of determiner usage, Turkish learners of English might be more error-prone than German learners. Regarding the ranking of error spots, the hypothesis might be supported because determiners were the second most frequent error spot in Üstünalp (2013) and the current study, whereas they were the fifth and sixth most frequent in Nesselhauf (2003) and Nesselhauf (2005), respectively. However, when the percentages of determiner errors within the total erroneous productions are considered, the hypothesis is not confirmed, as determiners account for 16,9% in Nesselhauf (2003), 13,8% in Üstünalp (2013), and 10,4% in the current study. Therefore, in a closer statistical view, these inconsistent results can only tell us that the distribution of error spots is not homogeneous across the writings of Turkish learners of English, unlike in the writings of German learners.

Error types are the second dimension examined in the study. The term error type, as detailed in the methodology section of this paper, refers to what type of knowledge is missing or problematic within the learner corpus, i.e, grammatical, lexical, spelling, or collocational. The study's findings yielded similar results regarding error types in do+noun and make+noun combinations. Collocational errors were the most dominant error type observed in both the do and make combinations. The number of collocational errors was even higher than the total number of other error types. The frequency of the other types of errors was ranked as grammatical, lexical, and spelling errors in both types of combinations in the learner corpus. The collocational aspect was brought about in many studies previously, and the restriction was highlighted as a problematic issue (Bıçkı, 2012; Boers et al., 2014; Henriksen, 2013; Howarth, 1998; Laufer and Waldman, 2011; Lennon, 1996; Nesselhauf, 2003; Nişancı, 2014; Shibliyev, 1993; Sipayung & Saragih, 2023; Paris et al., 2023; Yılmaz, 2004). Howarth (1998) stated that when the restriction in combination is relatively low, as in free combinations or relatively high, as in idioms, the learners can deal with it. However, when the restriction is unpredictable, as in collocations, the learners face the greatest challenge because they need to be aware of the collocability of the items in their combinations. Nesselhauf (2003) and Laufer and Waldman (2011) also provided evidence for this argument with German and Hebrew learners of English. Similar results were found in some other studies with Turkish learners, as well (Bartan, 2019; Dinçer et al., 2022; Nişancı, 2014; Shibliyev, 1993; Yılmaz, 2004). The current study aligns with these studies in terms of collocational errors. Nevertheless, the present study does not distinguish among free combinations, collocations, or idioms. Thus, it is not possible to observe error types given the restriction levels; however, it is clear that collocational errors posed a significant problem for the learners. In particular, the incongruence between L1 and L2 created an important problem with word combinations, as evidenced by Cangır & Durrant, 2021.

Grammatical errors ranked second in the learner corpus. Especially with make+noun combinations, the problem with the grammatical aspect was much higher. It should be noted that most of the grammatical errors are caused by the deviant use of determiners and/or result in inappropriate whole collocation. This problem was observed in previous studies, even though the learner corpora used in those studies consisted of advanced- level English learners. Considering that the learner corpus used in the current study is of

intermediate-level learners, the grammatical problems are more understandable. Nonetheless, it should still be noted that malformed L2 collocations place a greater processing burden on the native readers of the language (Millar, 2010). Finally, there were a few lexical errors in the learner corpus. Such errors were found in nouns that do not signal a collocational deficiency. According to Lennon (1996), verb choice errors are just the tip of the iceberg. In fact, wrong verbs in a combination stem from a lack of semantic boundaries and collocational restrictions. Therefore, a more delicate examination was conducted to detect sole lexical errors in the corpus. Comparing make and do combinations in terms of grammatical and lexical errors, the learner corpus contained more errors in make+noun combinations than in do+noun combinations. It can be concluded that make is more problematic than do in combinations with a noun. In fact, Kaszubski (2000) previously highlighted the speciality of "make". Among six high-frequency verbs, including make, it was observed that higher- proficiency learners used make more frequently and accurately in their writing, whereas for the other five verbs, the trend was the opposite. Kaszubski explains this by referring to the higher percentage of restricted patterns with make. The current study confirmed this unique aspect of make.

Strategies were the third dimension examined in the current study. When do and make combinations are considered together, the most frequently used strategy was L1 transfer, followed by Synonymy. When examined individually, the do and make combinations show a discrepancy. In do+noun combinations, synonymy was the most frequently used strategy, whereas L1 translation was used at the highest frequency in make+noun combinations. The use of synonymy as a strategy has been highlighted in some previous studies (Blum and Levenston, 1978; Farghal and Obiedat, 1995; Lennon, 1996; Nesselhauf, 2005; Yan, 2010; Yılmaz, 2004). According to Blum and Levenston (1978), synonymy can be observed in different ways. One of these ways is that learners use true synonyms disregarding the collocational restrictions, which results in deviant collocations. Farghal and Obiedat (1995) conducted a translation study with Arabic learners of English. Although the translation task required adjective+noun collocations, the results were similar to the findings of the present study. They found that learners employed synonymy as the most frequent strategy, and it was argued that learners' using this strategy heavily implies their unawareness of the restrictions of lexical items in collocations. The same problem was also observed in other studies under different names. For instance, it is termed semantic similarity in Nesselhauf (2005), synonym copying in Yan (2010), and false concept hypothesising in Yılmaz (2004). As stated in the error spots analysis, Lennon (1996) accounts for such deviant uses as violations of semantic boundaries resulting from a lack of collocational knowledge. This explanation is in line with that of Farghal and Obiedat (1995) and is well applicable to the current study findings.

As for make+noun combinations, L1 transfer was the most commonly used strategy, followed by synonymy. When only make combinations are regarded, the L1 transfer strategy was observed in 59 % of all erroneous productions in the current study. The overall occurrences of L1-based errors (do and make combinations together) were 36%. It can be concluded that make+noun combinations led students to engage in L1 transfer more frequently. The literature provides several findings showing L1 effect on learners' interlanguage (Altenberg and Granger, 2001; Bartan, 2019; Bıçkı, 2012; Blum and Levenston, 1978; Gilquin, 2007; Gyllstad and Wolter, 2016; Juknevičienė, 2008; Laufer and Waldman, 2011; Nesselhauf, 2003, 2005; Nişancı, 2014; Shibliyev, 1993; Yan, 2010; Zhou, 2016). Laufer and Waldman (2011) reported that half of the deviant productions of Hebrew learners of English at three different proficiency levels stemmed from the L1 effect. Nesselhauf (2003) analysed overall verb-noun combinations and found a 45% L1 effect in a corpus of German learners of English at an advanced proficiency level. Another general analysis of verb-noun combinations was conducted by Nişancı (2014), with participants being Turkish learners of English. The findings yielded only 23,3 % of L1 effect. In a translation task study, Bartan (2019) found that 47% of the errors made by Turkish translators of English were L1-motivated. It seems that L1-based errors vary widely across studies, and one could argue that learners' native language is not a significant factor in this case. Moreover, the current study made the range of L1 effect even greater by make combinations particularly. It can be argued that "make" is a marginal verb in this context and thus warrants a closer analysis. Another explanation for this relatively high L1 influence could be that learners are at an intermediate level, unlike in many of the other studies in the field. Although the present study does not make a comparison among proficiency levels, comparing other study findings and the current study findings, it can be argued that a lower level of proficiency results in a greater propensity for L1 influence.

There are also some more cautious approaches towards the L1 transfer strategy. Firstly, although the majority of the related literature provides evidence for L1 influence in some way, there are still studies showing little or no effect of L1, such as Leśniewska and Witalisz (2007) and Yılmaz (2004). Leśniewska

and Witalisz (2007) conducted an acceptability test on advanced Polish learners and found no influence of L1. The result was attributed to the learners' advanced proficiency level. Yılmaz (2004) also detected a little influence of L1 in her translation task study. The explanation for this result was that learners were at an advanced proficiency level; therefore, they were more aware of the influence of L1, and instead of giving an unacceptable response, they preferred not to answer tricky questions. This argument also implies that L1 influence can be controlled by an advanced learner. In fact, this idea was adopted methodologically in the current study, together with that of Blum and Levenston (1978). Thus, L1 influence was taken as a strategy (not a source of error) that is used (or not used deliberately) by the learners. Wang and Shaw (2008) supported this argument by stating that learners can have a say on the effect of L1 by considering the perceived similarities/dissimilarities between their L1 and TL. Moreover, L1 influence is not necessarily negative. Both positive and negative transfer are possible (Gilquin, 2007; Zhou, 2016).

The current study, first of all, cannot clearly show whether learners used a L1 transfer strategy consciously, since it is technically not possible (Nesselhauf, 2003). However, considering that the participants were intermediate level learners, unlike the participants in Yılmaz (2004), and they had too many errors, especially in make combinations in the present study, one can assume that they relied on their L1 more than enough. It might be because make is a high-frequency verb, and thus learners did not carefully consider its collocational aspects, although they had access to resources (dictionaries, the internet, reference books, etc.) and no time pressure. Taking Wang and Shaw (2008) into consideration, it might even be argued that they underestimated "make" and they did not perceive much difference between Turkish and English in that sense, which implies that L1-L2 congruency was delusional to the learners. Previous literature has evidenced that the learners have difficulty in dealing with collocations that are incongruent with their L1 (Gyllstad and Wolter, 2016; Nesselhauf, 2005; Yamashita and Jiang, 2010). However, taking the current study's findings on the one hand and Yılmaz (2004) on the other, one can observe that the same L1 (Turkish)-L2 (English) matching yielded conflicting results. It leads us to consider perceived congruency rather than congruency alone. Therefore, it can be concluded that an L1, itself, cannot be solely responsible for the erroneous productions. The learners' perception of congruency is more important. Since the participants in Yılmaz (2004) are advanced learners and the learner corpus used in the current study is at an intermediate proficiency level, it can be argued that proficiency level is a factor in this case (Bağcı, 2014; Xia et al.,2022). That is to say, the perception of L1-L2 congruency grows more mature as the proficiency level increases. This argument is also in line with the findings in Wang and Shaw (2008), which suggested that the factors within L2 are as important as interlingual ones.

CONCLUSION

The findings showed that the errors were mainly on the verb part of the combinations, and collocational errors were dominant in both the do and make combinations. The error analysis also focused on the strategies learners used. It should be noted that the strategies were distilled from the deviant uses. Hence, the strategies mentioned in the study were the ones that did not work well. In deviant do+noun combinations, the students used synonymy as the major strategy, followed by L1 translation. In deviant make+noun combinations, L1 translation was the most dominant strategy observed in the learner corpus. Overall, the error analysis suggests that learners have problems with the collocational uses of high-frequency verbs do and make, and that these problems are observable mostly with these verbs rather than with nouns, determiners, or modifiers in combinations. These outcomes revealed that learners are not very aware of the restrictedness and collocability of the high-frequency verbs examined. Also, learners seemed to be frequently misled by their L1, which raises the issue of congruency and/or perceived congruency.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that collocations, particularly with high-frequency verbs, pose a serious problem in language learning. As the first step, teachers and learners should be more aware of the significance of collocational uses in the target language. (Babanoğlu, 2014; Bıçkı, 2012; Cobb, 2003; Gilquin, 2007; Nesselhauf, 2004; Umair & Sarwat,2023; Toomer et al., 2024; Wray, 1999). To this end, teachers can make use of web-based concordance programs to observe and highlight various collocational uses of high-frequency verbs (Akıncı & Yıldız, 2017; Conrad, 1999; Daskalovska, 2015). To make learners

more familiar with the various collocational uses of the target vocabulary the DDL approach can be integrated into lessons to illustrate authentic language use in a more effective manner (Huang, 2014; Lay & Yavuz, 2020; Men, 2020; Otto, 2021; Sun & Hu, 2020). Also, rather than constantly teaching new vocabulary, digesting the imperfectly acquired items should be practiced. In particular, high-frequency verbs are crucial in this regard (Cobb, 2003; Lennon, 1996). It should also be noted that mere exposure may not work well in some EFL classes (Nesselhauf, 2003). Thus, explicit teaching of collocational uses and extended meanings should be considered. As evidenced in the present study, L1-L2 congruency was at play in many cases. Therefore, explicit teaching of incongruent collocations might be helpful (Bahns, 1993; Khantiwong & Thienthong, 2022; Uçman, 2024).

Ethical Statements

We, hereby, declare that the present research follows the principles of publication ethics. Anadolu University Social and Humanities Sciences Ethics Committee issued an approval certificate for the present research (Date: 13/03/2020, Protocol No: 23653). The authors of the current article declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Bu çalışma, fiil-isim kombinasyonlarında sık kullanılan iki fiil olan "make" ve "do" fiillerini incelemektedir. Özellikle, söz konusu çalışma Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinde İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümünde okuyan Türk üniversite öğrencilerinin yazdığı tartışma makalelerinde sıklıkla kullanılan bu iki fiili analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Analiz üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır: hata noktaları, hata türleri ve öğrencilerin stratejileri.

Analizin sonunda ulaşılan sonuç, bu iki yüksek sıklıkta kullanılan fiilin, öğrencilerin İngilizce kelime öbeklerini öğrenmelerinde kritik bir rol oynadığıdır. "Make" ve "do" oldukça üretken fiiller oldukları için, hem sözcüksel hem de sözcüksel olmayan anlamlar taşırlar. Bu fiiller dil öğrenme sürecinin ilk aşamalarında sözcüksel anlamları ile nispeten kolay anlaşılsalar da, öğrencilerin "make" ve "do" fiillerini sözcüksel olmayan anlamlarında kullanırken hata yapma veya kullanmaktan kaçınma eğiliminde oldukları sıklıkla gözlemlenmektedir. İlgili literatüre göre, bu sorunlara neden olabilecek potansiyel faktörler arasında diller arası uyumsuzluklar, dile yeterince maruz kalmama, yetersiz öğretim veya pratiğe dayalı çalışmaların olmaması sayılabilir.

Metodolojik olarak, söz konusu üniversite öğrencileri tarafından düzenli akademik yazma derslerinin bir parçası olarak yazılan tartışma makalelerinden oluşan bir öğrenci metin derlemesi kullanılmıştır. Elektronik metin derlem araçları kullanılarak sadece "make" ve "do" ile oluşturulmuş fiil+isim kullanımları derlenmiş ve kullanımların doğruluğuna bakılmaksızın listelenmiştir.

Bulgular, İngilizce öğrenen üniversite öğrencilerinin yüksek yeterlilik düzeylerine sahip olmalarına rağmen, fiil + isim birleşimlerinde zaman zaman hatalar yaptıklarını göstermektedir. Bu hatalar, isim, sıfat ya da belirteçlerde değil; esas olarak fiil seçiminde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Hatalı kullanımlar incelendiğinde, hem do hem de make fiilleriyle hatalara rastlanmıştır. Hataların nedenleri arasında en yaygın olanı eşdizimsel (collocational) hatalardır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin kullandıkları stratejiler analiz edilmiş; hatalı kullanımlara bakıldığında, do içeren fiil + isim birleşimlerinde en sık başvurulan stratejinin eşanlamlı kelimeler kullanmak olduğu, make içeren yapılarda ise en yaygın stratejinin ana dilden (L1) çeviri yapmak olduğu görülmüştür.

Sonuçlar, make ve do fiilleriyle kurulan fiil + isim birleşimlerinde yer alan eşdizimsel kısıtlılıkların öğrenciler için önemli zorluklar yarattığını ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışmanın öğrencilerin kullandıkları stratejilere de odaklanması, eşdizimsel hataların olası nedenlerinin daha net biçimde belirlenmesini mümkün kılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda, ana dilin (Türkçenin) öğrencilerin yazılı üretimlerini belirgin biçimde etkilediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Öğrencilerin ana dilin yönlendirmesiyle bazı eşdizimsel ifadelerin İngilizcede de Türkçedeki gibi kullanılabileceğini varsaydıkları görülmüştür. Bu tür kullanımlar bazı durumlarda kabul edilebilir olsa da, bu uyumun aşırı genellenmesi öğrencileri zaman zaman hatalı kullanımlara sürüklemiştir.

Çalışmanın bulguları, ilgili literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır. Önceden yapılan birçok araştırmada da gösterildiği ya da ifade edildiği üzere, yüksek sıklıkta kullanılan fiillerle oluşturulan eşdizimsel yapılar, öğrenenlerin üretimlerinde önemli sayıda hataya yol açmaktadır. Bu yönüyle çalışma, mevcut literatürle örtüşmektedir.

Çözüm önerileri ve pedagojik çıkarımlar açısından bakıldığında, ilk adım olarak kelime öbeklerinin kullanımına yönelik farkındalığın artırılması gerektiği söylenebilir. Öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin, kelime öbeklerinin hedef dilde yaygın biçimde kullanıldığını ve bu yapıların sözcüklerin tek tek anlamlarından yola çıkılarak her zaman doğru biçimde çözümlenemeyeceğini bilmeleri önemlidir. Bu farkındalık, sınıf ortamında derlem (corpus) tabanlı araçlar kullanılarak, yüksek sıklıkta kullanılan fiillerle kurulan kelime öbeklerinin farklı bağlamlardaki kullanımlarının gösterilmesi ve vurgulanması yoluyla geliştirilebilir. Bu bağlamda, Veriye Dayalı Öğrenme (Data-Driven Learning – DDL) yaklaşımının derslere entegre edilmesi, öğrencilerin hedef kelime birleşimlerinin temel ve genişletilmiş anlamlarını daha iyi kavramalarına katkı sağlayabilir.

Bir diğer önemli sonuç, dil öğretiminde kelime bilgisi açısından neyin ve nasıl öğretilmesi gerektiğine

ilişkindir. Önceki çalışmaların da işaret ettiği gibi, bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin yeni kelimeleri öğretmeye hızla yönelmek yerine, mevcut kelime dağarcığının—özellikle sık kullanılan fiillerin—genişletilmiş anlamlarını ve bağlamsal kullanımlarını derinlemesine ele almaya öncelik vermesi gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Görünüşte basit olan kelimelerin hem sözcüksel hem de sözcüksel olmayan anlamlarının içselleştirilmesi, öğrencilerin hedef dili daha etkili ve doğru kullanmalarına yardımcı olabilir. Son olarak, çalışma, ana dil (L1) ile hedef dil (L2) arasındaki uyumsuzlukların hatalı üretimlere yol açtığını göstermektedir. Bu nedenle, diller arası farklılıklardan doğan hatalı kelime öbeklerinin doğru şekilde öğretimi yalnızca maruz bırakma yoluyla değil, açıkça gösterilerek ve farkındalık yaratılarak ele alınmalıdır.