


EFL Learners' Receptive Knowledge of Congruent and Non-Congruent Delexical Verb-Noun Collocations

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Abstract

Vocabulary acquisition remains a fundamental yet complex area in language learning, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Among the various challenges, delexical verbs stand out due to their abstract nature and diverse usage. Understanding these verbs is crucial for achieving fluency and comprehension in English. The aim of this study was to investigate challenging aspects of vocabulary acquisition, focusing specifically on delexical verbs. It assessed the receptive knowledge of university learners regarding both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb-noun combinations. To achieve this, a multiple-choice test comprising 10 items on delexical verbs was administered to evaluate the learners' understanding of these combinations. The sample consisted of 15 EFL learners in their fourth year at a public university in Yemen. The findings revealed that learners exhibited a higher level of receptive knowledge in congruent delexical verbs compared to non-congruent ones, which can be attributed to their limited exposure to these verbs in real-life contexts. Consequently, the study emphasizes the necessity of explicitly teaching delexical verb combinations to second language (L2) learners. It advocates for the integration of vocabulary teaching into English Language Teaching (ELT) materials to enhance learners' proficiency and understanding of delexical verbs. This research underscores the importance of targeted vocabulary instruction in improving the overall language competence of EFL learners.

Keywords: congruency, delexical verbs, non-congruency, receptive knowledge

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Introduction

Congruent and non-congruent delexical verb and noun combination is one type of collocation. It makes learning an obstacle for L2 learners like the other kinds of English collocation, such as noun + noun, adverb + adjective and adjective + noun collocations (e.g. Chi et al., 1994; Liao, 2010; Miyakoshi, 2009; Wang, 2013). As a result of this difficulty of learning, learners always commit common errors in both receptive and productive aspects of this combination, which contain the most used delexical verbs (*do, get, give, have, make, take*). Another difficulty concerns the restricted use of delexical verbs, so learners are unable to choose a proper verb and a suitable noun to make a verb + noun combination. For example, the verb *make* in the phrase *to make a mistake* is not be substituted by the verb *do* to form the phrase **to do a mistake*, although both the verb *make* synonymize with the verb *do*. Sanguannam (2016) divided delexical verb + noun combinations into two types: congruent and non-congruent. Congruent combinations can be defined as "the English collocations that can be translated equivalently to the learners' first language", (p.6), whereas non-congruent combinations are "the English collocations that cannot be translated equivalently to the learners' first language", (p. 7).

Many studies were carried out about both productive and receptive knowledge of delexical verbs (Juknevičienė's, 2008; Liao, 2010; Dongjin, 2011; Kittigosin, 2013). Juknevičienė (2008) indicated that English native speakers did better than non-native ones in the production of delexical verbs; they almost produced delexical verb + noun combinations twice that the non-native did. Liao (2010) investigated the influence of L1 transfer on Chinese EFL learners trying to produce delexical verbs in three proficiency levels. She found out that the advanced learners did well, while the lower-level learners depended on their L1 in production. Dongjin (2011) carried out an experimental study to mark L1 influence on the delexical verb + noun combinations among intermediate levels of Chinese learners of English. The researcher used four various levels of delexical verb relations between English and Chinese. They are discrimination, harmonization, new class, and complete difference. In the study, the discrimination type was the most difficult structure for learners. Kittigosin (2013) conducted a study about both the production and reception of delexical verbs by using both (a translation test) and (a multiple-choice test), respectively. The Oxford Placement Test to compare low and high-proficiency groups. The study indicated that on the one hand, the low proficiency group did well in the receptive (multiple-choice test), but did badly in the productive test (translation test). On the other hand, the high proficiency group did better in the productive than in the receptive test. In the Thai context, Khantiwong and Thienthong (2022) explored learners' knowledge of congruent and incongruent academic L2 collocations. The results indicated that while exposure to academic discourse increased the acquisition of academic collocations, learners demonstrated insufficient knowledge, especially of incongruent L1-L2 combinations. This was due to their reliance on the L1 lexicon and general L2 lexis. The study suggests that explicit instruction on L1 and L2 meanings of academic collocations is crucial for EFL learners. In light of previous studies, this study aims to investigate the receptive knowledge of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verbs + noun combinations among university students by giving them a multiple-choice test.

Problem Statement

A linguistic spoken or written product is made by two types of constraints. These two constraints are termed by Sinclair (1991) as "open-choice principle" and "idiom principle" (pp. 109-110). So, by applying these two constraints a sentence can be defined as a systematic group of words ordered according to certain basic rules. The verb in the sentence is the cornerstone. Verbs in English are of three types: transitive, intransitive and copular. One form of the transitive type is called a delexical verb which is also semantically called by many names: empty verbs, light verbs, weak verbs ...etc. The most frequent delexical verbs are: *do, give, have, make, take*...etc. When these verbs are combined with certain nouns, they make a learning difficulty for EFL learners. Therefore, it is deemed that the learners are unable to understand the meaning of these verbs, even when they are

used in sentences, especially the verbs of the type non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations.

The basic intent of this study is to explore the Yemeni university students' challenges that face them in comprehending the delexical verbs + nouns collocations when they encounter them in context. To achieve this, the fourth-year university students in Yafea University College are asked to undertake a multiple-choice task consisting of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun collocations.

Research Question

The study tries to answer the following research question:

Is there a difference in the level of the Yemeni university students' receptive knowledge of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations?

Literature Review

From a semantic perspective, verbs are divided into two classes: lexical verbs and delexical verbs. Lexical verbs are those which have full meanings in themselves, for example, the verbs *do* and *make* are lexical verbs in the sentences:

- 1- He *did* his homework.
- 2- She *made* cakes.

Here these two verbs do not make a learning difficulty for learners. On the other hand, the same verbs can be delexical, that is, they have very weak meanings since they do not participate in the overall meaning of the combination consisting of a delexical verb + a noun, such as:

- 1- He *did* me a favour.
- 2- Students always *make* a noise in the classrooms.

Hence delexical verbs make a learning difficulty for the learners. According to many studies, L2 learners encounter the most difficulty in this category compared with the other types of combinations, i.e. adjective + noun, adverb + adjective, noun + noun combinations (Liao, 2010; Miyakoshi, 2009; Wang, 2013 among others).

There is a wide terminology for delexical verbs. According to Butt (2003), Elenbaas (2011) and Huddleston & Pullum (2002)) they are called *delexical* verbs or *light* verbs; Hill (2000) and Lewis (1993) named them *delexicalised* verbs; Dura and Gawronska (2008) called them *support/supportive* verbs; Live (1973) termed them *lexically empty* verbs; Akimoto (1989) named them *verbo-nominal* phrases and Dušková (2003) called them *verbo-nominal* predication. Although this varied terminology, they contain very weak meaning, as opposed to their complements. Their meanings are extracted from the following nouns. For example, the meanings of the following verb + noun collocations: *do talking*, *get the feeling*, *has the experience*, *make an investment*, and *take a rest* have the same meanings as the meanings of the single verbs *talk*, *feel*, *rest*, *experience* and *invest* respectively. Guňková (2011) indicates that these verbs are called delexical because their lexical meaning is reduced since the noun carries the semantic content of the phrase. In addition to the above-mentioned most frequent delexical verbs, Guňková (2011) denotes that "there are other verbs which exhibit similar semantic and syntactic features: pay (to pay a visit), do (to do a dance), throw (to throw a smile), etc. (p.7). *Collins Cobuild Grammar* (1990) defines it "Delexical verb is a verb which has very little meaning in itself and is used with an object that carries the main meaning of the structure" (p. xix).

Semantic Meaning of Delexical Verbs

Delexical verbs in themselves have little or no meaning, hence they form a learning difficulty for learners. Sinclair and Fox (1990) explained that "when they (delexical verbs) are used with nouns as their object to indicate simply that someone performs an action, not that someone affects or creates something" (p. 147). The noun in the verb + noun delexical collocation carries the main collocational meaning, while the verb participates with little or no meaning in the combination, (Nesselhauf, 2005). For example, the verbs *have* in *have an effect*, *do* in *do count*, *give* in *give a name*, *make* in *make a decision*, *get* in *get an impression*, and *take* in *take the lead*, carry very little meaning in the verbs

themselves, and the meanings of the collocations are carried by the nouns". (Nesselhauf, 2005, p. 20). Likewise, Lewis (1993) indicated that although delexical verbs are simple in their forms, they contain heavy meanings when they co-occur with other lexical words. Similarly, Hill (2000) argued that there is a need for L2 learners to enhance their combinational competence of delexical verbs in order to improve their overall ability in the second language. Another aspect of delexical verbs is that the synonyms of a delexical verb cannot be used instead of it, for example, Akimoto (1989) indicated that "synonymous verbs such as *produce*, or *create* cannot be substituted for the verb *make* in the phrase *make an appointment*".

Semantic Criteria of the Delexical Verb + Noun Combinations

There are more comprehensive criteria suggested by Wang (2013, p.24). these criteria are used to show the nature of semantic characteristics of the delexical verb + noun combination. These criteria have led to the creation of four various semantic levels of the delexical verb + noun structure:

1. The first level is that both the delexical verb + noun combination and the lexical verb in the combination contain the same meaning. For instance, the delexical verb + noun combination *have an effect* that contains the same meaning as the lexical verb *effect*.
2. In the second level the delexical verb + noun combination contains a similar meaning to a linking verb + adjective structure, e.g. *give an impression – be impressive (in)*, *have power – be powerful*.
3. The semantic aspect of the third level is that the noun in the combination has an abstract meaning, e.g. *give a chance*, *have a right*, *make a mistake*.
4. The noun in the fourth level has a figurative meaning, e.g. *do the trick*. (p. 24).

Learning Difficulties of Delexical Verbs

Scholars indicate that the delexical verb + noun combination is considered the most difficult learning type of all various types of lexical combinations since L2 learners consider it the most difficult one for them (Guňková, 2011; Liao, 2010; Miyakoshi, 2009; Wang, 2013). Likewise, Hyun and Youngsu (2013) indicated that "among the verb-noun collocations, delexical verb collocations are tricky to acquire for L2 learners since they have diverse meanings and usages in texts depending on their combining words (mainly their objects)", (p.45). They also indicated that delexical verbs are difficult to acquire since they have polysemous meanings, and the learners always concentrate only on their direct lexical meanings.

The learning difficulty inherent in delexical verbs that face EFL learners. Guňková (2011) presented many learning difficulties of delexical verbs that face EFL learners. First, many learners are unable to identify them as a single unit in both speech and writing. Second, delexical verbs are arbitrary. They are not used interchangeably, that is, it is not which a delexical verb collocates with which noun, therefore, many of them constitute idioms (Alkadi, 2015; Khantiwong & Thienthong, 2022), which are considered very difficult elements for learners in understanding, production and translation. Third, according to Howarth (1998), EFL learners encounter a problem in producing delexical verbs + noun combinations in proper contexts. Learners may use the analogy strategy in production; for example, they may produce **pay care* as an analogy to the delexical verb + noun combination *pay attention*. (p.29). Fourth, Verde (2003) mentions another restriction in using delexical verbs, which is context restriction. This restriction is related to the appropriateness of grammatical categories. For example, the combination *gives a ring* is only used with first person singular, with will-form and with an indirect object in active voice and without modifiers: *I will give you a ring*. Fifth, delexical verbs are studied in course books randomly; they are not studied sufficiently and explicitly, and not recycled well in proper contexts. According to Fan (1991), "the storage and retrieval of vocabulary is not only related to image and depth but also associated with organization" (p.462). Lastly, learners face a translation difficulty when they translate the delexical verbs + noun

combinations from L2 to L1, since there are no equivalent delexical verbs in L1. (Altenber and Granger, 2001).

Previous Studies

In this section, four studies are to be presented to denote how this linguistic phenomenon has been tackled. The first study, which is a qualitative study, was carried out by Juknevičienė (2008). It compared native and non-native speakers' production of verb + noun combinations. He used two types of university learner corpus: Lithuanian sub-corpus (LICLE) of the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) and LOCKNESS (non-native vs. native corpus). He chose the verbs (*do, give, have, make, take*) and noun combinations from literary and argumentative essays. The concordances of each delexical verb lemma were counted by Wordsmith Tools software (v. 5), whereas using the verbs *do* and *have* as auxiliaries and causative verbs, and using all these verbs as causative ones were neglected from counting as delexical verbs. Results indicated that the native speakers of English did better than non-native ones; they almost produced delexical verb + noun combinations twice that the non-native did. For example, non-native speakers of English used the verbs *make* and *give* little. Another finding is that the researcher discovered the non-native Lithuanian speakers used the strategy of one-to-one translation from Lithuanian to English, which in turn led to wrong verb + noun delexical combinations, therefore, they were unable to distinguish between the verbs *make* and *do* since they are translated into one Lithuanian word DARYTI.

The second study was carried out by Liao (2010). It is a quantitative study. The researcher also tackled the influence of the L1 effect on EFL learners' competence in phraseology, concentrating on delexical verbs (*do, have, get, make, take*) and noun combinations. These delexical verbs were chosen from different sources: textbooks, previous studies, corpus and dictionaries. The researcher concentrated on the relation between levels of the university learners' proficiency, the influence of the tool used, the effect of L1 interference and learners' phraseological competence in combinations. The Chinese participants in the study were divided into three proficiency levels (intermediate, high-intermediate, and advanced levels). They were given multiple-choice and grammaticality judgment tests, containing half congruent and half non-congruent delexical verbs. The results of the study indicated that there was an effect on delexical verbs + noun combination competence related to learners' proficiency levels and L1-L2 congruency. The outcomes of the study indicate that the learners who had higher proficiency levels were able to achieve well than those with lower proficiency levels in both congruent and non-congruent combinations. In addition, the learners with high proficiency levels could do well in the production task.

The third study was experimental. It was conducted by Dongjin (2011). Its objective was to investigate the L1 influence on the delexical verb + noun combinations among the intermediate levels of Chinese learners of English. The researcher used four different degrees of delexical verb relations between Chinese and English. They are: discrimination, harmonization, new class, and complete difference. First, the discrimination kind is "a form used in L1 matches several forms in L2." For example, the Chinese delexical verb *Zuo* has several harmonized light verbs in English):

zuo yanjiu – **do** research
zuo gongxian – **make** contribution
zuo biji – **take** notes
zuo meng – **have** a dream
zuo yanjiang – **give** a lecture

Second, the harmonization type is "a form can be used in both L1 and L2" (That is, a delexical verb + noun can be found Chinese and English, and the noun in the combination can be a lexical verb in both languages.) for example:

zuo jue ding / *jue ding* – **make** a decision / decide
jinxiang tanhua / *tanhua* – **have** a talk / talk

Third, the new class type is "a form absent in L1 but present in L2". (that is, in L1 Chinese there is only found the delexical verb + noun, while in L2 English there are both the delexical verb + noun and main verb), such as:

da dianhua – **make** a call / call

kaiwanxiao – **make** a joke / joke

The last category, the complete difference is "entirely different forms are used in L1 and L2." (In Chinese is only a main verb, whereas in English is both a delexical verb + noun and a main verb), such as:

weixiao – smile / **give** a smile

tigong – offer / **make** an offer

The outcomes of the study denoted there is an effect for L1 on the learners' acquisition and production of L2 delexical verb + noun combinations. Concerning difficulty, the discrimination type was considered the most difficult structure for learners with an error percentage of 44.01%. The new class type was the second difficulty for learners with an error percentage of 40.73%. For the harmonization type, learners found no trouble in acquiring the combinations since there are similarities between L1 and L2 combinations. For the complete difference type, learners had little problem in acquiring the L2 delexical verb + noun combinations. It was concluded from this study that the kinds of delexical verb + noun collocations; namely discrimination, new class and harmonization kinds respectively, make the most difficult for L2 learners.

The fourth study was by Kittigosin (2013) about the delexical verbs (*give, have, make, take*). It was a mixed-method study. The researcher focused on the production of these delexical verbs by using a (translation test) and using a (multiple-choice test) to investigate receptive knowledge. He used the Oxford Placement Test to compare Thai high and low proficiency levels. The outcomes of the study showed that the low proficiency group did better in the receptive test than the productive test. On the contrary, the high proficiency group did better in the production task than in the reception task. The researcher indicated that Thai EFL learners depended on learning strategies of L1 interference, synonymy and overgeneralization, which are considered the basic factors of combinational errors.

Method

The objective of this study is to identify the difference in the level of the university students' receptive knowledge of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations. This study is descriptive qualitative since it seeks to discover the learners' difference in receptive knowledge in both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations.

Participants

The participants of this study are fourth-year English male and female students at the Yafea University College, Lahej University, Yemen. They are in the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024. They are between 22- 25 years old. They all live in the areas near the College. They are doing their B.A. in English. They have been learning English as a class subject for nine years as a foreign language. The sample includes all the 15 students in the fourth year. They were chosen since they are expected to deal with a topic like this. According to Griffiee (2012), if the whole population is between five and sixty, it should be chosen as a sample for a study. Moreover, Dörnyei (2003) indicates that a study sample can be convenient when "if the researcher has a good relationship with the same class, they share many geographical proximities and they can be available in need" (p. 72). Therefore, all these features are available in our sample.

Instrument

A multiple-choice test is used to gather data from the participants. Schmitt (2002) defines a test as "the act of collecting information and making judgments about language learners' knowledge of a language and ability to use it" (p. 267). Four frequent delexical verbs were carefully chosen for this study. They are: *do, give, make* and *take*. They were

put in 10 sentence items. The correct answer for items 1 and 8 is *do*; for items 2,7 and 10 *take*; for items 3 and 4 *give*; and for items 5,6 and 9 is *made*. They were chosen since they cause a learning difficulty for ESL/EFL learners compared to lexical verbs (Chi et al., 1994; Juknevičienė, 2008; Liao, 2012). They are used as alternatives in a multiple-choice test consisting of ten items. Concerning the validity of the test, the ten items were taken from the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2000.) All these ten items examined the students' receptive knowledge of delexical verbs + noun combinations. They were used in simple sentence structures with simple words. The participants were asked to choose the correct alternative. The delexical verbs + noun combinations are divided into two main categories: **congruent** which makes the students able to translate the combination literally from English to Arabic. In other words, the L1- L2 **non-congruent** means that the combination of delexical verb + noun cannot be translated one-to-one from English to Arabic. Therefore, six items contain **non-congruent** delexical verbs + nouns combinations, while the other four items contain **congruent** delexical verbs + nouns combinations. The following table shows these two types of categories:

Table 1. *Congruent and Non-Congruent Delexical Verbs + Nouns Combinations*

Delexical verb + noun combinations	Congruent (C)/ non- congruent (NC)
1- Do work	C
2- Take opportunity	C
3- Give impression	C
4- Give chance	C
5- Make effort	NC
6- Make decision	NC
7- Take risk	NC
8- Do favour	NC
9- Make impression	NC
10- Take the view	NC

Data Collection Procedures

The test was distributed and supervised by the researcher to 15 male and female fourth-year students in the Department of English, Yafea University College, University of Lahej, Yemen. It was conducted to the participants during their regular English class time on the same day and 30 minutes was allotted to it. The purpose of the test was explained to the students. Some difficult words were clarified to some of the students. Although the test consisted only of 10 sentences, the participants' answering time took from 30 minutes to one hour. When they finished the test answers, the test papers were collected. The data were analyzed by comparing the participants' correct and incorrect responses of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verbs + noun combinations using frequencies/ percentages. The multiple-choice test was designed to have only one correct delexical verb + noun combination.

Results and Discussion

The test used in this study consists of 10 items to investigate the 4th-year EFL learners' receptive knowledge of delexical verbs + noun combinations in the Yafea University College, Lahej University. The participants tested were 15 learners (males and females). Therefore, the number of responses in the test is (15 learners x 10 items = 150 responses). The number of correct responses was counted as well as the number of incorrect ones. Only 68 responses were answered correctly (45.34%), and 82 responses (54.66%) were the incorrect responses. The percentage of correct delexical verbs + noun combinations shows that the learners have somehow limited knowledge in this field because learners depended on analyzing both delexical verbs and the noun complement separately, not as a whole.

Correct and Incorrect Delexical Verbs + Noun Combinations

The following table shows the participants' correct and incorrect delexical verbs + noun combinations. No. of items 10. No. of students 15.

Table 2. *The Participants' responses to the Delexical Verbs + Noun Combinations*

Item no.	Correct combination	No. of correct responses	Percentage %	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage %
1	Do the work	8	53.3	7	46.7
2	Take opportunity	7	46.7	8	53.3
3	Give impression	8	53.3	7	46.7
4	Give a chance	15	100	0	0
5	Make effort	2	13.3	13	86.7
6	Make decision	9	60	6	40
7	Take a risk	4	26.7	11	73.3
8	Did the honour	1	6.7	14	93.3
9	Make an impression	7	46.7	8	53.3
10	Took the view	7	46.7	8	53.3
Total		68	45.34	82	54.66

Table 2 shows the number of correct and incorrect delexical verbs + noun combinations responses produced by the students. The total number of correct responses is (68, 45.34 %), while the total number of incorrect responses is (82, 54.66 %). The highest percentage of the correct responses is in item 4 (100%), where the learners were able to choose the suitable delexical verb *given* to collocate with the noun *chance*. On the contrary, the lowest percentage of the correct responses is in item 8, where only one learner out of 15 could choose the correct delexical verb to collocate with the noun *favour*.

This low percentage of receptive knowledge of delexical verbs shows that the students have not been exposed well to this category of verbs, therefore, they are not able to recognize them. It can be concluded that the students face difficulties at the knowledge-receptive competence level since the percentage of incorrect responses is higher than the percentage of correct. This indicates that the students are unfamiliar with this type of lexical combination.

RQ: Is there a difference in the level of the university students' receptive knowledge of both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations?

The delexical verb + noun combinations are divided in the test into two types: congruent delexical verb + noun combinations "the English collocations that can be translated equivalently to the learners' first language", (Sanguannam, 2016, p.6), and non-congruent combinations "the English collocations that cannot be translated equivalently to the learners' first language"(Sanguannam, 2016, p.7). According to these 4 items of the test are congruent, while the other 6 items are non-congruent, to discover the difference in the students' receptive knowledge competence in both congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations.

In comparing between congruent and non-congruent of delexical verb + noun combinations, Table (3) indicates that the participants did well in the congruent delexical verbs + noun combinations (Dongjin, 2011; Lio, 2010; Nesselhauf, 2003; Yamashita and Jiang, 2010; Yumanee and Phoocharoensil, 2013, among others). So, the percentage of the correct responses of the congruent delexical verbs is (63.3%), while the percentage of the correct responses of the non-congruent delexical verbs is (33.3%). This percentage difference is attributed to that the non-congruent delexical verbs + noun combinations cannot be understood depending on their constituent parts, so the learners face difficulty in choosing the noun that co-occurs with the suitable delexical verb. Moreover, the learners depend on their mother tongue in analyzing both congruent and non-congruent

delexical verb + noun combinations. Based on the study outcomes, the L1 effect is the source of errors for both types of delexical verb + noun combinations.

Table 3. *Participants' Correct and Incorrect Responses of the Congruent and Non-Congruent Delexical Verbs + Noun Combinations.*

Item no.	Correct combination	No. of correct responses	%	No. of incorrect responses	%
	Congruent				
1	Do the work	8	53.3	7	46.7
2	Take opportunity	7	46.7	8	53.3
3	Give impression	8	53.3	7	47.7
4	Give a chance	15	100	0	0
	Non-congruent				
5	Make effort	2	13.3	13	86.7
6	Make decision	9	60	6	40
7	Take a risk	4	26.7	11	73.3
8	Did the honour	1	6.7	14	93.3
9	Make an impression	7	46.7	8	53.3
10	Took the view	7	46.7	8	53.3
Total		30	33.3	60	66.7

Conclusion

This study identified the level of the learners' receptive knowledge in two types of delexical verbs: congruent and non-congruent delexical verb + noun combinations. It was observed that the learners depended on their first language in dealing with these two types of verbs. The learners' receptive knowledge of non-congruent delexical verbs is lesser than their knowledge of congruent delexical verbs since their exposure to these verbs is limited in real contexts. Therefore, as the learners improve their ability in L2, their dependence on their L1 will get lesser and lesser, and then their performance will enhance in both congruent and non-congruent delexical verbs. Based on the findings, course book designers and teachers are recommended to take into consideration the inclusion of these types of verbs in their teaching materials, concentrating much on non-congruent delexical verbs, which are considered the most difficult ones for EFL learners. Moreover, learners should know that there are many linguistic differences between L1, one of these differences is the delexical verb; and the teacher should concentrate on teaching on both lexical and delexical verbs. Hence concerning the above-reached findings, other researchers can expand their studies in this field by: first, to get credible results, researchers can do research by choosing a larger sample size to discover the causes of errors related to L1 interference and L2 overgeneralization. Other studies should include both EFL and ESL learners, infrequent delexical verbs, different proficiency levels, different tasks, different academic settings, and both receptive knowledge and productive knowledge to reach a clearer picture of learners' performance.

Disclosure Statement:

I, the author of this paper, hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. I take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of a dispute. I confirm that the manuscript has been created by the author and not an AI tool/Large Language Model (LLM).

Conflict of interest:

I declare that there are no conflicts of interest associated with this publication.

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