
Applied Linguistics Colloquium Series

Measuring Knowledge of Lexical Collocation: Comparing Item Types on Web-Based Tests



Erik Voss

Micro level impacts of a foreign language test (university entrance examination) in Turkey: A washback study



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Date: Thursday, September 18, 2008

Time: 3:40 p.m.

Location: 212 Ross Hall

This presentation will describe the design and comparison of two item types on web-based tests intending to measure Mandarin speaking ESL learners' knowledge of verb-noun lexical collocations. Two different proficiency groups participated in the study. Two tests were created, one using a cued constructed response translation item type which is a combination of a translation task and a constructed response task, the other made up of common sentential gap-filling items. Responses from the modified translation test were compared with responses on the traditional sentential fill-in-the-gap test to uncover evidence of guessing, and effects of sentential context on production of verb-noun lexical collocations.

The purpose of this study is to find out whether the foreign language examination - university entrance test- influences the way teachers teach and students learn in senior three classrooms (the last grade of high school) in Turkey. A secondary goal is to see the products of teaching to the test and attitudes of different stakeholders towards the test and senior three English teaching in general. The data were collected through online surveys, and participants comprise of four major groups. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the responses of the participants.

