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Effects of the Use of Lexical Chunks on Practical English Proficiency*

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The present case study explored the effects of utilizing lexical chunks in individualized coaching on university students' practical English proficiency. Four participants took "Practicum for Practical English", a weekly English elective in the Spring of 2018. Research data consisted of TOEIC tests, open-ended questionnaires, activity logs, self-reflections, and one-on-one interviews. To identify the impact on the students' learning, coaching focused on windowing and shadowing. The qualitative case study method was utilized. The findings suggest that the two coaching strategies had a positive influence on students' reading and listening progress, empowering students' attitudes towards a practical English test, expressing greater autonomy related to self-improvement, building confidence, and facilitating a high willingness to communicate. Students, regardless of level, benefit the most when the teacher provides useful models of language phenomenon such as chunking, windowing, and shadowing. Autonomous learning through appropriate coaching demonstrated a wide range of applicable implementations. The implications for English education are that through this method, students become more self-reliant language learners and improve their ability to set customized learning goals. Furthermore, the teacher's role and autonomous learning aspects are discussed for further research.

[lexical chunks/chunking/windowing/shadowing/learner autonomy]

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the study of recurrent word combinations such as collocations, lexical chunks, or extended collocations has long captured the attention of

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many linguists and researchers, especially in corpus-based research (henceforth, lexical chunks: LCs) (Biber, 2006; Hyland, 2008; Lewis, 1993; Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Renouf & Sinclair, 1991; Wary, 2002). LCs are word-sequences of semantical and structural/syntagmatic cohesion which occur more frequently than expected, helping to store clustered meanings contributing to our sense of distinctiveness in a register. These combinations constitute useful building blocks that facilitate language production in authentic texts. The LC teaching method is based on a combination of awareness-raising activities and production exercises that help learners entrench the combinations of words in memory.

Natural language use also consists of prefabricated linguistic chunks or strings of frequently co-occurring words. These LCs play a crucial role in building cohesion and signaling discourse relation (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2004; Nesi & Basturkmen, 2006). Among its category, collocations play a rudimental and pivotal role in comprising all types of LCs. What interested researchers and teachers more was the question of how EFL learners use these multi-word strings. With the salient development of computer-related technology these LCs, as sequences of two or more words, occur frequently in a register. They have become an increasingly important component in English teaching in recent years. LCs may be the umbrella term of many different types of terminology related to lexical items. Language acquisition is the ability to comprehend and produce LCs as fixed or semi-fixed chunks. These chunks become daily utterances by which learners perceive patterns of language traditionally thought of as grammar (Lewis, 1993, 1997).

Combining words appropriately is one of the most difficult challenges of EFL learners. LCs or extended collocations have often been considered problematic for ESL/EFL learners (Bahns, 1993; Kim, 2008). That is, a verb is wrongly associated with a noun, or a noun is arbitrarily matched with an adjective. In addition, a preposition creates an improper use of nouns. One reason for such errors is the realization of collocational appropriateness which is often a matter of intuition and vocabulary learning habits (Kim, 2008). It is therefore not surprising that EFL learners, even at the advanced level, encounter great difficulty with these units since collocational competence may be acquired only through years of experience and exposure to the language.

The optimal application of these LCs leads to a higher proficiency level in a native-like register. Furthermore, learning to use more frequent English LCs contributes to fostering communicative competence. There are advantages in identifying these clusters to help learners acquire specific lexical learning practices in their fields of study.

Considering the above background, this study was designed to (1) identify EFL students' perceptions of LCs, and (2) seek strategies to be applied to EFL English classes in a productive manner, finding viable and proactive solutions to coach learners' learning

not only in spoken discourse but also in reading discourse.

Thus, the purpose of this study was (1) to investigate participants' perceptions of LCs and (2) suggest some applicable strategies for activating LCs in classrooms, focusing on the activities of four students who participated in a Focus Group Interview (FGI) as a means of investigating the following two research questions:

1) What are university students perceptions regarding lexical chunks in EFL
2) What are some applicable strategies for implementing lexical chunks to enhance English proficiency skills?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Lexical Chunks/Extended Collocations in English

Since Firth (1957) introduced the terms collocation and fixed expressions, there has been growing research interest on frequent word combinations under different names and with somewhat different meanings such as; lexical chunks (Lewis, 1993), lexical bundles (Biber & Conrad, 1999), lexical phrases (DeCarrico & Nattinger, 1988), formulaic sequences/language (Schmitt & Carter, 2004; Wary, 2000; Wood, 2010) and phraseology (Cowie, 1998; Granger & Meunier, 2008; Howarth, 1996). These multi-word LCs frequently occur in written as well as spoken discourse. LCs help to construct predictable meaning and shape a paradigmatic sense of coherence in a text or speech. Biber and Conrad (1999) defined lexical bundles as "multi-word expressions which occur frequently and with accidental sequences of three or more words" (p. 183). However, in light of language use consisting of repeated multi-word sequences, LCs are a combination of more than two words co-occurring more frequently than we expect by chance.

In the same vein, texts may usually be constructed with an atomic single word, a variety of phrases, a sentence, or much longer constructions, reflecting recognizable and conventional patterns of organization. There are multi-word sequences used with a high frequency in written texts. Those sequences can be interpreted as building blocks of coherent discourse. Fixed sequences of words are used as unanalyzed chunks or wholes which have identifiable discourse functions. Thus, LCs fulfill discourse functions and play an important role in the communicative repertoire of speakers and writers (Conrad & Biber, 2005). LCs cannot help appearing across numerous texts regardless of the type of register, not simply being a matter of individual style. Wary

and Perkins (2000) noted multi-word units functioning as formulaic language play a central role in building fluency and confidence, mainly in spoken language. They can serve as a type of shortcut to language knowledge since they are stored in memory and retrieved later at the time of use. Therefore, LCs are now recognized as an essential element of language use and can provide useful insights into the characteristics of different discourse types. However, LC research has generally focused on description and analysis or on the placement of LCs in L1 acquisition. Practical implementation strategies are imperatively needed for EFL learners so they produce effective output, running through what they learned.

Identifying commonly used combinations has become an important aspect of automated, frequency-driven approaches to academic discourse analysis and teaching English for academic purposes (EAP). Recently, work has extended to "concgrams," or noncontiguous word groupings where there is a lexical and positional variation. Together, these lexical patterns are pervasive in academic language use and a key component of fluent linguistic production. The importance of LCs in both academic speech, writing, and speaking function cannot be overemphasized in frequency, form, and function.

In light of this, an important component of fluent linguistic production is directly related to the controlling of multi-word expressions referred to as clusters, chunks or bundles. Any of these terms can be defined as LCs or extended collocations which appear more frequently than expected by chance, helping to shape meanings in specific contexts and contributing to our sense of cohesion in a given text.

The role of LCs has generally received only marginal attention within linguistic and second language acquisition theory. While there has been continuing interest in the phenomenon, no coherent overall model has yet emerged. From a frequency-of-use and a psycholinguistic perspective, humans store multi-word sequences as single units from childhood to adulthood. Storing and retrieving such multi-word sequences would facilitate the level of fluency and accuracy in terms of language processing and production as single units. In light of the importance and role of multi-word sequences, the LCs approach is a significantly expansionary acquisition method for language processing, as well as a psychological load (Conrad & Biber, 2005). Table 1 indicates the types of LCs which are both non collocations and collocations simultaneously. As seen in Table 1, there are several types of LCs consisting of not only content words such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs, adverbs, but also proposition collocations, including extended collocations which are comprised of a wide range of multiple collocations.

TABLE 1

Types of the Lexical Chunks[1]

Lexical Chunks (that are not collocations)	Lexical Chunks (that are collocations)
up until now (fixed expression)	withdraw an offer (V+N)
nice to see you (semi-fixed expression)	crushing defeat (A+N)
by the way (polywords)	blizzards rage (N+V)
back and forth (binominal)	a sense of humor (N+N)
if I were you (sentence frame)	deeply absorbed (Adv+A)
hit the nail on the head (idiom)	appreciate sincerely (V+Adv)
my point is that…(sentence builder)	in a conscientious manner (P+N)
long time no see (institutionalized utterance; fixed expression)	notoriously hot and humid weather conditions (Adv+A, A+N, N+N; extended collocation)

In terms of word combinations, LCs which are not collocations listed in the left column are also lexis and extended collocations. The importance of LCs or extended collocations cannot be overemphasized, appearing to be very useful building blocks for the discourse of fulfilling communicative purposes that are particularly important for each of the registers. When it comes to structural patterns, Conrad and Biber (2005) have noted that bundles in conversation account for about 90% of verbal phrases, while academic prose accounts for about 60% of noun or prepositional phrases. This is attributable to the need for noun and verb phrases as well as prepositional phrases as shown in Table 1.

2. English Proficiency Enhancement Strategies

Lewis (1997, p. 44) has pointed out “language consists of prefabricated chunks of different kinds, but describing a language and teaching it are two very different things”. Thus, teachers’ mindsets as well as materials and methods need to be modified in the direction of the LCs approach. According to Conrad and Biber (2005), LCs require that multi-word sequences be identified with priority given to frequency, fixedness, and sequences longer than two words. In EFL learners of English vocabulary, they encounter the challenge of overcoming a fairly equivalent practice. To identify multi-word prefabricated sequences, learners try to find useful examples and lexical information on fully, relatively, and semi-fixed frames with slots which may be filled in a limited number of ways. Through this process language learners have the ability to chunk any text successfully. This effort and switchover toward lexis, instead of the single-word-

[1] This table was amended (N. Kim, 2009).

based vocabulary and grammar dichotomy perspective drive learners to significantly benefit from the language learning activities they experience, both in and out of class. They are increasingly storing LCs and unanalyzed bundles as fixed or semi-fixed units in our mental lexicon. This new approach leads to facilitating and enriching the learners' production process.

In terms of fostering proficiency enhancement strategies, a strong increase in the relationship between instruction and fluency, and the use of LCs is attributable to the consequence of input processing as well as retrieving output for production. Thus, LCs have a credence for quantity as well as quality of input. Noticing LCs accurately helps convert input into intake, and provide the central strategy of utilizing LCs. Lewis(1997) briefly expounded the LCs, "From a language learning point of view, chunking is the basis of spoken fluency, and the way learners chunk the text as they read is the determining factor in the way we hear it in our heads, and so determining the way we decode the meaning" (p. 54).

To convert input to intake efficiently, learners need to be aware of chunks in a text and not see only a sequence of individual words. The traditional dichotomous approach between vocabulary and grammar is invalid and unproductive. We need to notice the implications of the central pedagogical principle of the LA, in terms of raising learners' consciousness in a lexical and chunking manner. Words tend to stick together in droves. Those droves of words are based on meaning so there are sets of words used to talk about particular topics. That is, we tend to be working with sets rather than single words.

When teachers have their learners enhance their proficiency using chunking, collocation frameworks are the crucial linkage between chunks through the cognitive thinking process. Furthermore, an important component of fluent linguistic proficiency is how to control multiword expressions referred to as clusters, chunks, or lexical bundles. In real language experience, LCs are stored in the mental lexicon. These strings are nevertheless glued together in everyday discourse. LCs are statistically the most frequent recurring sequence of words in any collection of texts. Extended collocations appear more often than expected (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999).

To enhance practical English proficiency, learners need to increasingly expand their chunking skills through windowing and shadowing. Through windowing, students learn to make longer English sentences by chunking appropriate lexical phrases. Windowing is defined as appropriately using a series of chunks of a sentence as one would open windows one by one (N. Kim, 2009; Talmy, 1996). Through this process, students can speak or write in a chunk unit, or a group of words one by one beyond small talk (N. Kim, 2010). This active procedure is helpful, in light of getting students to think about productive progress, in terms of chunks rather than complete sentences.

Below are three examples of how to use the two main strategies; shadowing and windowing more communicatively during class.

1) I went to school/ with my best friends/ to improve my English speaking ability/ last Tuesday.// (a simple sentence)

2) Now we are taking a Practical English course/ with some enrolled students/ to get more than 800 points on the TOEIC/ by improving our overall English abilities/ on the fourth floor/ of Moon Hall/ right next to Baedal building/ where we meet once a week.// (a complex sentence)

3) Sunday,/ in the joint funeral service/ speaking before the bereaved families and the nation,/ who will once again/ be in deep sorrow/ President Moon made the vow/ to completely uncover the truth / of the tragedy/ and build a memorial park/ on his social network site./ in a way/ that symbolizes the value/ of life and safety/ as society's priority.// (a mixed sentence)

Students can gradually ratchet the above sentences using the two strategies emphasized throughout this study: windowing and shadowing. The first sentence is a basic windowing strategy utilized by chunking four sets of words in a simple sentence. The second and third are complex and mixed sentences, in which students immediately repeat what the person says chunk by chunk. These sentences as ‘a set of chunks’, for example, will be able to produce longer sentences logically and chronologically. Windowing can be applied to free-talking by telling students prepositions function as bridges between one expression and another using preposition + noun collocations. Example 2 is a good reference to this. Students need to overcome the challenge of forming sentences in chunks and practice observing and utilizing samples full of LCs to improve their language proficiency.

Shadowing, defined as oral repetition immediately after a native speaker and is quite intensive. (N. Kim, 2010). Chung (2010) notes the shadowing method increased students’ self-confidence in the use of English, their shadowing preferences, and perception in terms of improving their English speaking skills. Lambert (1990) suggests technically adapting the method, saying “shadowing is a paced, auditory tracking task which involves the immediate vocalization of auditorily presented stimuli in the same language, parrot-style, of a message” (p. 17).

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The number of participant in this case study were four who enrolled in a "Practicum for Practical English" class during the Spring semester of 2018. One took the actual ETS TOEIC exam for the first time. For the purpose of ascertaining the effects and finding applicable strategies for enhancing English proficiency, the participants wrote "self-reflections" and "weekly activity logs". All participated in follow-up in-depth interviews. The participants had quite different levels of proficiency requiring individual coaching by the researcher. At times dividing them into pairs according to their pre-test scores and discussion process. From a Q & A session, at the beginning of the class, student responses demonstrated a feeling extreme difficulty reading passages. Table 2 indicates some variables of the interview participants, then numerically according to what year they were in and their genders, followed by their TOEIC points.

TABLE 2

Summary of Interview Participant Variables (n = 4)

Interviewee	Gender	Year	Mock TOEIC Pre-test score			Remarks
			LC	RC	Total	
A	Male	Junior	430	410	840	
B	Female	Junior	360	335	695	
C	Female	Senior	400	260	660	
D	Male	Junior	350	260	610	First attempt at TOEIC exam

2. Instruments & Procedures

1) Questionnaire and Interview

The first instrument for this study was a questionnaire survey used to identify participants' perceptions of LCs activities and gathered practical experiences of LCs on the basis of the qualitative approach. Students filled out open-ended six question questionnaires near the end of class. To identify additional thoughts and opinions about LCs. Additionally, they responded to interview questions about supplementary experiences and opinions from the same survey questions.

Interviews with four students were conducted at the end of the last regular class before the final exam in the form of feedback. They served to investigate their understandings/

perceptions of LCs activities and some applicable strategies on how to apply and activate them in real situations. These four students also submitted their "self-reflections" about their learning activities once, at the end of the class, and the "activity log" three times as shown in Table 3.

To answer the questions interactively six questions were presented to students, on paper, in Korean. With no strict guidelines on the length of their answers, students responded while the researcher listened and dictated their answers.

2) Procedures

The surveys were distributed to students at the beginning of the class where the researcher of this study observed the students' LCs activities. The interviews were conducted during the last class of the semester prior to the final exam. There were no strict instructions given on what the length should be for the answers. The interviews were simply one-on-one conversations. This gave a balance to LC activities and involved students who were motivated to get a higher score on a TOEIC test as well as two required mock tests during class. The following procedures were followed for the LCs activities during the course.

Students tried to expand their LCs activities from simple, complex, to mixed sentences by implementing the LCs approach through useful language production strategies in a chunking-to-windowing expansionary format.

TABLE 3

Weekly Procedures for the Lexical Chunks Activities

Phase	Stratified Process Activities for Lexical Chunks
Introductory Course (Week 2-5)	·Present a model sentence with 4 chunks for simple sentences ·Introduce the basic concept and importance of collocations and lexical chunks as well as windowing and shadowing strategies ·Create two new sentences every week by using chunk-by-chunk strategies: Based on weekly "Activity log" ·Consciously come up with possible situation and sentences using more lexical chunks: Fostering free-talking with native speakers ·Offer some weekly instructions for practicing windowing and shadowing by using English drama, TED, novels, or students' own favorites
Extended Course (Week 6-7 &10)	·Present a model sentence with 6 chunks through complex sentences ·Develop chunk-based sentences by adding more chunks of given types of collocations and lexical chunks ·Use coordinate conjunctions such as "and, but, or" ·Develop chunk-based sentences by adding more chunks to the given types of collocations and lexical chunks ·To focus on incorporating widowing and shadowing strategies into practicing practical language use through TOEIC reading or listening

Reinforce-ment Course (Week 11-13)	·Present a model sentence with more than 8 chunks through mixed sentences ·Develop and reinforce chunk-based sentences by adding more chunks to given types of collocations and lexical chunks ·To give the opportunity as a group to develop and practice your group communication skills ·Use subordinate conjunctions such as "if, since, as, when, while, because", etc. .Apply specific informative techniques discussed in class and in the text when preparing, presenting, and delivering the speech through windowing and shadowing strategies
Feedback Course (Week 9 & Week 14)	·To give the opportunity to share and give feedback to each other through their presentations two times: intermediate (Week 9), final (Week 14). ·Make the given sentences correct and longer if possible for presentation with native speakers while free-talking. ·Give a presentation about what students produced through lexical chunks activity focusing on windowing and shadowing strategies ·In addition to giving a presentation on chunk-based sentence-making activities and increase learners' optimal autonomous learning ·Delivering a speech on the basis of the windowing strategy in front of class for 5 minutes as part of public speaking ·Write down "Self-reflections" and do intensive interviews

3. Data Collection and Analysis

A questionnaire analysis on LCs was utilized to identify enrolled students' basic perceptions, and empirical evidence of LCs at the end of the class from a qualitative perspective. The collected samples were utilized to coach learners' LCs activities for better understanding and implementation. Four students were selected for the focus group interviews (FGI) in order to identify challenges students encountered in learning English LCs. The surveys were qualitatively administered near the end of the class according to the "self-reflections" and "activity logs". The researcher collected participants' responses, and discussed mutual relationships between their participation in LCs activities and their reports and answers of interview questions

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Perceptions and Empirical Evidence for Lexical Chunks

Based on the questionnaire survey, activity logs and self-reflections, the students were asked to answer the following six questions concerning vocabulary learning methods, chunk-based English learning, windowing strategy use, shadowing strategy use, influences of what they practiced on the basis of chunking, application, and expansion of windowing and shadowing strategies.

Q1. How had you studied English vocabulary prior to this chunk-based activities class?

> "When I studied English vocabulary before, I usually memorized a single word and translated it in Korean in an equivalent manner. That method was a common case in the past. I got a very low score in reading. When I took a mock TOEIC test, I felt there was an absolute lack of time especially in reading with more than unsolved 10 questions left. So I made up my mind to change my reading method and improved my reading speed through windowing and shadowing strategies by chunking. The chunking strategy leads to speed reading which I noticeably experienced". (An excerpt from Interviewee D)

This response of Interviewee D indicates the real learned vocabulary from teaching in a purely paired-translational equivalent fashion. Insufficient knowledge of lexical chunks led to a low score as well as taking extensive time in reading. Up to this point scholars and researchers have gained significant evidence that LCs are stored as unanalyzed multi-word chunks in our mental lexicon (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2004; Lewis, 1993; Woolard, 2000). In actual terms, English is full of chunks. Student responses show the chunk-based windowing and shadowing strategies helped significantly to increase comprehension and produce what they learned.

Lewis (1997), an advocate of the lexical approach, insists his lexical approach is not simply a shift of emphasis from grammar to vocabulary teaching, as "language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary, but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks" (p. 3). Chunks include collocations, fixed and semi-fixed expressions and idioms, and occupy a crucial role in facilitating language proficiency and fluency.

Q2: What are the effects of chunking practice and what types are the most difficult to practice?

> "Every time I find out useful chunks, I write them down in my collocation notebook according to the types of chunks. Even though I practice listening through TED or American dramas, I print out the script and underline the chunks by slashing the breath group with a meaningful unit so that I can better understand the contents. Eventually I marked much better in TOEIC Parts 5 and 6. I felt my reading ability has been improving a lot as well as vocabulary and grammatical structures". (An excerpt from Interviewee B)

In class, students learned several predominant types of chunks and collocations including prepositional units, as shown in Table 1. Before actually practicing windowing and shadowing, students paid more attention to collocations and chunks, in terms of their importance and roles in sentences and structures. Collocations are the name for pairs of words that tend to occur together in discourse. They are fundamental to the structure of English and to communication in English. However, the collocation principle is necessary for English learners to increase their problem-solving abilities on practical English exams such as TOEIC and TOEFL.

Forming a meaningful and inseparable unit semantically and/or syntactically, multi-word chunks are prefabricated language sequences with two or more words. A basic unit of connecting words for language sequences, a collocation consists of two or more words that are often used together extending far beyond the level of multi-word units to convey a specific information to others (N. Kim, 2016). Once students grasp the basic concept of chunks, they can apply what they learned to enhance all four English skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar connecting capacity.

Q3: What are the effects of windowing activities on the basis of chunking and collocations?

> "As time went by, I was able to make sentences with a variety of chunks longer and longer on my own through information gapping and cognitive connection using 5W1H questioning techniques that the researcher recommended. I could expand and apply my windowing activity to TOEIC test learning. I have a habit of using my finger or a pencil while reading, slashing a chunk unit so that I can read the given passage faster and more accurately and figure out the content and gist in a more correct and problem-solving manner. I got a 100-point higher score on the TOEIC test in the end". (An excerpt from Interviewee C)

> At first my windowing speed was very slow. Also I did not come up with the appropriate chunks adding continuously from 3-4 chunks to more than about 10 chunks throughout the semester. As time has passed by, surprisingly enough I have become able to make 10-chunk sentences sometime in the process of developing my windowing strategy. Through this activity process I have a good command of English proficiency. This activity is empowering and makes me better aware of the concept of chunks and windowing. (An excerpt from Interviewee B)

When students were stuck in the cognitive process, which is in the middle of thinking about appropriate added chunks, the researcher recommended the 5W1H questioning technique when coaching students' windowing process. Interviewee B responded, "by expanding the chunking process, I try to add more information to the prior sentence. Utilizing the 5W1H questioning technique worked as a catalyst in coming up with added chunks. Once I set up the basic structure with some simple chunks, I feel somewhat easy to supplement any chunks at my disposal.".

Using a simple set of framed questions, the 5W1H technique could be a framework students can use when gathering information and investigating topics like this *"I went to school/ with my friends/ to meet my English teacher/ by subway/ last Saturday"//*. This sentence consists of five chunks that include "who, what, when where, why, and how". Participants considered using this framework to expand their scope of thinking, organize their findings, or create new sentences and structures. Through this process, they can predict what is going on, according to the present situation or development of a mutual relationship. These windowing activities would be greatly helpful to students trying to learn all four English skills. In particular, students can speak with a native speaker by describing a scene or picture, as well as a topic.

Q4: What are the effects of shadowing activities on the basis of verbal tracking?

> "I chose a TED video (*ex, There's more to life than being happy*.) and printed the script and then figured out the general meaning through chunking by slashing chunk by chunk. After that, I watched the video, looking at the subtitles or the script. Later I tried to shadow without a script or subtitles. Finally, like a public speaker I practiced delivering a speech like I was the one doing the public speaking. Then I felt like I could speak English in a native-like and natural manner. I am thinking of this saying, *Experience leads to greater ability*". (An excerpt from Interviewee C)

Shadowing is defined as the oral, immediate imitated repetition of what is spoken and is valuable for improving one's speaking and listening skills (N. Kim, 2011). As Interviewee C responded, "when I am listening TOEIC listening session I practiced a variety of shadowing activities in a more conscious manner. In the end I got 25 more points in the listening section". Furthermore, in an effort to facilitate the learners' reflective speaking progress, shadowing is appropriated with the speaking test framework suitable for building an English communication (N. Kim, 2010).

The applicability of this approach is if students are able to think in terms of chunks,

they will be more successful in conveying their thoughts by speaking those thoughts in intelligible English. Shadowing includes 'lecture shadowing', 'reading shadowing', 'conversational shadowing', 'selective shadowing', and 'interactive shadowing' (Murphey, 1995, 2000, 2001). According to students' levels and processes, teachers need to choose and focus on different types of shadowing. Knowledge of LCs are essential for language proficiency, spoken discourse, or written language (Decarrico, 2001; Newell, 1990; O'Keefe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2007; Schmitt, 2004).

Q5: What applicable effects of windowing and shadowing activities are there for free-talking with native speakers?

> "Through these two strategies, I have been able to understand native speakers' speaking with more ease. I feel my listening ability has been fairly enhanced. Through the chunk-based approach, I can come up with multi-word sequences on specific topics when I try to talk with native speakers. The most helpful method has probably been shadowing. I have recorded what I say as I shadow together with what the native speaker is actually said and compared mine to the native speakers'- in terms of pause, speed and sense by chunks, as well as pronunciation and intonation, even gestures when I watched movies". (An excerpt from Interviewee C)

As part of a recommended activity, participants went to 'English Café' to speak freely with native speakers, between 4 and 6 pm following class. Interviewee C responded, "I talked with them about what I learned in class through windowing and shadowing, continuously studying TOEIC vocabulary through the chunk-based approach". Speaking in sentences seems overwhelming, yet using the windowing approach may be more realistic, particularly struggling students who seem to say more than one word.

Participants first practiced shadowing through movies with subtitles, following the native speakers' speed, pronunciation and imitating their pause and pitch, and even natural gestures. As one student said, "Slowly I have become accustomed to the speaking speed of native speakers and understand what they mean. When I try to talk with international professors at the English Café, I felt extremely nervous and dumb struck with fear at first. However, I feel like I am alleviating that anxiety and fear in a gradual way".

Q6: What are the overall effects of what you practiced focusing on windowing and shadowing activities?

> "I feel I have become familiar with English learning while learning windowing and shadowing strategies in this class. I have gained some self-confidence. I feel I can enjoy learning English through the strategies of chunking, windowing, and shadowing. Although I did not get a good score on the TOEIC test on my first attempt, I am satisfied with my positive and productive studying habit progress that this class stimulated and motivated me to achieve". (An excerpt from Interviewee D)

Interviewee D said, "Before this class, I did not have any special learning methods to improve my English ability. I just tried to study English in a traditional way. After several years of no studying English, I was concerned about learning English at first". This student understood collocations and LCs are widespread in English while participating in this class. LCs are arbitrarily sanctioned independent units in English. When presenting fixed or semi-fixed expressions, teachers introduce learners to the idea such expressions exist in any language. Fixed expressions should be taught without internal analysis. Combining words when we communicate in English can be taken into the classroom immediately with more ease, by noticing how native speakers speak, and through learners' consciousness-raising.

2. Applicable Strategies for Implementing Lexical Chunks

Participants took two mock TOEIC tests at the beginning and near the end of the semester and one actual TOEIC test near the end of the semester. Even if the purpose of this class does not focus on the TOEIC test, students set their goals to get a higher score on the TOEIC test in order to apply what they learned. Here are students' score changing processes on the pre-post tests and ETS TOEIC test.

TABLE 4

Participant's TOEIC Score Progress

Participants	Mock TOEIC test		ETS TOEIC test			Remarks
	Pre-test	Post-test	LC	RC	Total	
A	840	870	475	395	870	
B	695	745	415	320	735	
C	660	695	425	345	770	
D	610	770	320	320	640	First attempt at TOEIC exam

As said in the interviews, student A, who set a goal to get a score of 900, raised his score to 870 points in contrast to his previous score of 835 points. This student focused his study on listening and utilized shadowing. He got 30 points higher than his previous listening test score.

> "Through this class, I scored 870 TOEIC points, which I got 835 points six years ago. Consequently, I got 30 more points in the listening section. I think the shadowing strategy is a prominent reason for it. Listening practice through shadowing makes me improve my listening much more. Although I did not get a significantly higher score in the reading section, I feel I can read the given reading passage or other reading materials in a faster and more comfortable manner". (An excerpt from Interviewee A)

> "When I prepared for the TOEIC test, I focused on speaking. So I shadowed hard and tried to understand the contents at the speed of native speakers while watching videos or movies or listening to TED. Because I focused on spoken discourse, when I talked with native speakers I felt my listening ability was getting extremely better. Through the chunking process, I recorded my speaking and compared it to the native speaker's real voice. Naturally my learning strategy integrated with my other skills. Thanks to concentrating on shadowing and chunking, I can read the passage very quickly compared to my previous reading style. Eventually I got a good score on the actual TOEIC test. (An excerpt from Interviewee C)

Interviewee C had a unique English learning objective focused on speaking which is necessary for a job as a flight attendant. Based on the open-ended questionnaire, self-report, and in-depth interview, the researcher identified the following reciprocally applicable strategies for implementing lexical chunks.

In the spoken arena, international professors can extend students' chunking competence to free-talking. An even more practical way of applying chunking to the challenge of getting students to speak would be to distribute a list of chunks or collocations when the free-talking session begins. This is simply one way of using shadowing. As the approach is being used more and more, teachers are finding various ways to appropriate it. Some are using it to complement videos they show in the classroom. Therefore, it does not seem outrageous to consider using the same approach during a free-talking session (N. Kim, 2016).

A significant proportion of what we use, regardless of one's mother tongue, consists of prefabricated multi-word items. LCs are retrieved and processed as whole units, which may not only enhance the accuracy and fluency of the language, but also speed up language processing significantly. Although many linguists propose LCs can contribute to English proficiency, especially for EFL learners, little empirical research has been done to see the relationship between EFL learners' competence of LCs and their English proficiency (Conzett, 2000). On the basis of understanding the functions and roles of LCs, exploring the effects of LCs is pedagogically useful and important in coaching English learners through written and spoken language learning. Therefore, effective proficiency enhancement strategies for improving students' practical English skills which can be used in the EFL classroom largely involve windowing and shadowing under the guise of chunks & chunking in the EFL contexts.

V. CONCLUSION

Observation and acquisition of the multi-word expressions referred to as "chunks", "phrases", "clusters" or "bundles" are an important component of proficiency enhancement strategies. LCs seem to present considerable challenges to English learners struggling to make their language productive proficiency become both more fluent and accurate in their real communication arena.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate participants' perceptions of LCs, and to suggest applicable strategies for enhancing practical English proficiency. The quality of learning strategies can lead to a better quality of English proficiency. The first research question was, "What are university students perceptions regarding lexical chunks in EFL context?" Students have comparatively low perceptions, especially low-level students, in terms of the concept and realization of LCs in a sentence or a passage since they have learned English in a word-for-word manner. They struggled to combine words to convey a specific meaning even though they already know the meaning of individual words. As practice time went by, students became more familiar with LCs and knew the importance and roles of LCs. Expansion and application of chunks & chunking, windowing and shadowing made students feel excited setting their horizons higher in English.

The second research question was, "What are some applicable strategies for implementing lexical chunks to enhance English proficiency skills?" As a starting point the researcher reviewed the literature and deepened lexical chunk-based methodology. Chunking is a basic and fundamental conceptual principle to convey the series of items as a single unit under the guise of all types of chunks. Actual and expanded techniques,

such as windowing and shadowing are practical and cognitive representations with continuous syntagmatic and semantic/paradigmatic coherence in a more expansive manner. On the spot, learners can apply windowing and shadowing strategies to the TOEIC or other tests utilized to measure college students/new employees English fluency and accuracy. As a result, many college students need to improve their English test scores along with the fact that companies recruiting newcomers require a higher English score.

In this study, participants, regardless of their English levels, scored higher than before, especially two low-level students on the reading and listening sections. More importantly, students built their self-confidence, learner autonomy, and speaking skills through applying what they actually learned in class to free-talking sessions with native speakers in a real productive situation.

The limitations of this paper include: 1) This study was carried out at just one university in one EFL country with just four students as a preliminary case study, focusing on windowing and shadowing strategies. It is limited in terms of generalizing the results of this paper. 2) This study did not cover the framework of all types of LCs for facilitating English proficiency, focusing on TOEIC test scores and free-talking activities.

Despite these limitations, from the perspective of educational implications, this study advances the language learning framework model for students, in terms of connecting chunking elements. Applying windowing and shadowing strategies in a real-world context, teachers need to develop a windowing program that is applicable and practical, in order for learners to imitate and produce their own sentences in a real-time communication situation. Moreover, further studies are needed to develop an effective and applicable curriculum according to the types of windowing and shadowing strategies in conversation, writing, and academic prose in a more learner autonomous fashion.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Language: English
Applicable Levels: Secondary, Higher Education

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