Lexical Collocations in Medical Articles of Non-Native vs Native English-Speaking Researchers

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Abstract : This study presents multidimensional scrutiny of Benson et al.'s seven-category taxonomy of lexical collocations used by Egyptian medical authors and their peers of native-English speakers. It investigates 212 medical papers, all published during a span of 6 years (from 2013 to 2018). The comparison is held to the medical research articles submitted by native speakers of English (25,238 articles in total with over 103 million words) as derived from the Directory of Open Access Journals (a 2.7 billion-word corpus). The non-native speakers compiled corpus was properly annotated and marked-up manually by the researcher according to the standards of Weisser. In terms of statistical comparisons, though, deployed were the conventional frequency-based analysis besides the relevant criteria, such as association measures (AMs) in which LogDice is deployed as per the recommendation of Kilgariff et al. when comparing large corpora. Despite the terminological convergence in the subject corpora, comparison results confirm the previous literature of which the non-native speakers' compositions reveal limited ranges of lexical collocations in terms of their distribution. However, there is a ubiquitous tendency of overusing the NS-high-frequency multi-words in all lexical categories investigated. Furthermore, Egyptian authors, conversely to their English-speaking peers, tend to embrace more collocations denoting quantitative rather than qualitative analyses in their produced papers. This empirical work, per se, contributes to the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English as a Lingua Franca in Academic settings (ELFA). In addition, there are pedagogical implications that would promote a better quality of medical research papers published in Egyptian universities.

Keywords : corpus linguistics, EAP, ELFA, lexical collocations, medical discourse

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