

Are Cultural Assumptions Portrayed Through Lexical Patterns?

It has been claimed that patterns of language use, more specifically lexical patterns, play a major role in language acquisition (Krashen and Scarcella, 1978). Although some lexical patterns require learner creativity, many of these chunks come from partly memorized wholes encouraged by certain environmental and social conditions. In order to determine their overall influence on second language learning, this study examines lexical patterns and the underlying cultural assumptions that accompany them. This research aims to answer two important questions: 1) Do frequently occurring lexical patterns carry cultural assumptions?, and 2) If so, what is their impact on language pedagogy?

In doing this we developed two comparable corpora of both English and Russian newspapers. Using corpus software application WordSmith Tools, we extracted the most frequently occurring lexical patterns from the newspapers and categorized them to see whether these patterns fell under the same semantic categories across both languages. These semantic categories included, but were not limited to, concepts of *time*, *space*, *social norms and behaviors*, etc. The findings indicate that cultural assumptions do indeed accompany various lexical patterns.

Furthermore, this study provides evidence of socio-cultural influences on L2 instruction, which can be potentially applied to numerous academic and non-academic purposes.