A Qualitative Analysis of EFL Learners’ Discrimination of Near-Synonyms in a Data-Driven Learning Task

Miso Kim*


The purpose of this study was to analyze six English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners’ trajectories of discriminating near-synonyms in a data-driven learning task. Since the learners find it considerably difficult to learn subtle meaning differences of near-synonyms, corpus-based data-driven learning may provide an opportunity for them to tackle their difficulties. The study materials guided the learners to identify the differences between the four pairs of near-synonyms, categorize the concordance lines based on their findings, and generalize the findings. The six participants had notably different trajectories of discriminating near-synonyms. The qualitative analysis of the trajectories showed a tendency that the intermediate learners focused on the meanings and found the correct answer without knowing the core meaning, and the advanced learners moved further to attend to structural differences and sometimes tested their previous knowledge on the concordance data. This study implies the need for careful guidance, collaborative group works, and strategy teaching in data-driven learning tasks.

Key words: near-synonyms, data-driven learning, corpus-based learning, concordance

*Author: Miso Kim, Professor, Center for English as a Lingua Franca, Tamagawa University; 6 Chome-1-1 Tamagawagakuen, Machida, Tokyo 194-8610, Japan; Email: mkim@lab.tamagawa.ac.jp
Received 18 June 2020; Reviewed 28 July 2020; Accepted 9 September 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze the trajectories of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners when discriminating among near-synonyms in corpus-based data-driven learning (DDL) tasks. Although near-synonyms share a core meaning, they differ in nuance and connotation (Inkpen & Hirst, 2006). Discriminating among near-synonyms is challenging for EFL learners, especially where the translated equivalent is the same in their L1. While there is an extensive existing literature on near-synonyms and distinctions (e.g., Hayakawa, 1994; Jung, 2009; Partington, 2004; Xiao & McEnery, 2006), few studies have investigated how students can be helped to use near-synonyms in an appropriate way. Exceptions include studies of Korean EFL learners’ use of near-synonyms and semantic prosody by Jung, Sur, and Kim (2007) and Lee (2011). Both report that Korean EFL learners struggle to use near-synonyms appropriately. Against that background, the present study explores the potential of DDL for teaching near-synonyms. DDL provides ample resources for learners to play the role of researcher—identifying new language-related rules (Johns, 1991, 1994) by exploring concordance data, examining linguistic cues, and drawing conclusions about linguistic items. In the present study, EFL learners used DDL to discover differences between near-synonyms based on concordance lines. To examine learner trajectories, the study addressed the following research questions.

1. How do participants arrive at correct, near-correct, or mistaken answers when they attempt to discriminate near-synonyms by using linguistic cues in concordance lines?
2. How do individuals differ in their use of linguistic evidence to complete the DDL task?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Studies on Near-Synonyms

Word choices reflect the writer’s views, attitudes, beliefs, and intentions in choosing a particular word rather than any of the other available options. In making that choice in a given context, the writer considers both the word’s core meanings and its connotations, which are not always directly observable (Huston, 2002). In short, both the core and covert meanings of the chosen word convey the writer’s intention.

Lexical choice becomes especially difficult in the case of near-synonyms, which share a core meaning but differ slightly. According to Inkpen and Hirst (2006), near-synonyms “are not fully inter-substitutable, but vary in their shades of denotation or connotation, or in
the components of meaning they emphasize; they may also vary in grammatical or collocational constraints” (p. 1). In other words, despite their shared core meaning, each near-synonym has a distinctive meaning that distinguishes it from other words in that category. For example, both *basic* and *fundamental* share the core meaning as *the most essential part of something*. Beyond its core meaning, however, *fundamental* is considered more formal while *basic* has wider application and typically suggests something accepted or standard (Hayakawa, 1994). A corpus search highlights this difference; according to the British National Corpus (BNC) (Davies, 2004), the words *change, changes, principles, principle,* and *importance* typically follow *fundamental*, while *data, rate, principles, training,* and *skills* are the top five collocates for *basic*. Their differing collocates confirm that *fundamental* rather than *basic* is more often used to emphasize deeply grounded principles and the action of change. While this does not preclude the use of phrases such as *basic change, fundamental* may more appropriately reflect the writer’s intention. In this way, near-synonyms can be seen to have overlapping meanings and are partly interchangeable but non-identical.

As the subtle differences among near-synonyms tend not to be clearly stated, it can be challenging for EFL learners to choose the appropriate word from among several such terms in a given context, especially when their meanings are equivalent in their L1 (Jung, 2009; Morley & Partington, 2009). Existing bilingual dictionaries are not always helpful in such cases, as they emphasize denotation rather than usage (Partington, 1998; Xiao and McEnery, 2006).

To address some of the difficulties faced by EFL learners in this regard, Lee (2011) and Jung, Sur, and Kim (2007) investigated their competence in using semantic prosodies and near-synonyms. Lee (2011) reported that college students lacked knowledge about semantic prosodies, possibly indicating inadequate explanation of this issue in dictionaries and EFL books. Jung, Sur, and Kim (2007) reported that despite an observed positive correlation between English test scores and the ability to make sensitive use of near-synonymous verbs, learners made frequent errors in their use of near-synonyms. These findings confirm that unless special attention is paid to English near-synonyms, learners are likely to know only the core denotational meaning of these terms and not their subtle differences.

The present study explored the application of DDL to a near-synonym discrimination task to determine how learners might be helped to make appropriate use of near-synonyms. Previous cross-linguistic studies of near-synonyms have reported how boundaries drawn between words that share the same core meaning can help EFL learners to understand and fully exploit the connotations of each word. Building on these studies, the present research sought to establish how EFL learners detect these subtle nuances by drawing on the plethora of available linguistic cues in concordance lines, and how they apply their
findings in completing a near-synonym task.

### 2.2. DDL in Corpus-based Learning Activities

DDL reverses the traditional roles of teachers as deliverers of knowledge and students as receivers. As first proposed by Johns (1991), DDL encourages learners to acquire knowledge by engaging actively in language research and applying their findings within a meaningful context defined by their teacher. This role reversal is facilitated by the use of corpus data in the language classroom to inform learning. Adopting the role of researcher, learners autonomously detect and apply language rules and features by themselves. In this way, DDL offers a new platform for language learning.

Within this model of learning, Johns (1991) outlined a three-step procedure for concordance-based learning research (Identify—Classify—Generalize). Learners first identify the distinctive linguistic features of the given items and then classify those items on the basis of their findings. Finally, they generalize their findings, extending them beyond the given context. Johns (1991) demonstrated the benefits of this procedure for students in terms of how often they moved beyond their current linguistic knowledge and how this approach improved on traditional teacher-centered instruction: “in subsequent discussion it was evident that the class found the student’s generalization more useful than the teacher’s, not only in relation to the particular problem of *convince vs. persuade*, but as a way of thinking in general about the difference between to-infinitives and that-clauses” (p. 5).

Facilitated by corpus data, this discovery learning approach is reported to have generally positive effects on language learning (Hong, 2010; Hong & Oh, 2008; Lee & Lee, 2010; Lim & Lee, 2012; Liu & Jiang, 2009). Comparing the traditional grammar-translation method to corpus-based teaching, Hong and Oh (2008) and Lim and Lee (2011) found that the latter was generally more effective for advanced students and was positively accepted. Similarly, Hong (2010) reported that while both teaching methods raised awareness of the targeted grammatical rules, the corpus-based method also improved noticing behavior. Liu and Jiang (2009) also noted several positive effects of the corpus-based approach, including improvements in command of lexicogrammar, understanding of grammatical structure, and discovery learning skills. In similar vein, Lee and Lee (2010) reported that discovery learning increased understanding of collocation. In short, DDL can be said to enhance awareness of grammar and collocation, especially among intermediate and advanced students.

Using DDL in the classroom has some limitations. According to Boulton (2009a, 2009b), these include (a) lack of training and resources for both teachers and students; (b) laboriousness and tediousness of DDL tasks; (c) scarcity of published DDL-style activities; and (d) difficulty in interpreting messy and authentic concordance lines. While DDL can
enhance inductive learning of lexicogrammar, these limitations must be taken into account.

Previous research examining the effects of corpus-based learning in quantitative studies involving large samples found evidence of the effectiveness of corpus-based data. However, little is currently known about how EFL learners explore corpus data, what linguistic cues they find, how they formulate and test their own hypotheses, and how they differ in reaching their conclusions. To bridge this gap, the present study used qualitative methods to investigate the trajectories of a relatively small number of learners using corpus data to discover differences between near-synonyms.

3. THE STUDY

3.1. Participants

All of the six participants had more than ten years of English learning experience. Lower-level students (i.e., TOEIC score lower than 730) were not recruited for this study, as previous findings indicate that they are likely to struggle with corpus data (Kim & Lee, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2010). Participants’ profiles are summarized in Table 1. For reasons explained in section 4.2 below, S1 took much longer than other participants to complete the task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Residence in an English-speaking country</th>
<th>Time spent on the DDL task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Fashion design</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>132 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>80 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Environmental studies</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>72 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>English education</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>74 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>English education</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>74 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>English education</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>75 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Study Materials and Procedure

For the purposes of this study, four pairs of near-synonyms were chosen that met two criteria. First, the differences between items had previously been studied. Second, the items were assigned the same meaning in a well-known Korean-English dictionary. This was important because EFL learners have greater difficulty in distinguishing between near-
synonyms with the same L1 translation equivalent. Based on these two criteria, the selected pairs were (1) demand and request (Hayakawa, 1994); (2) mend and repair (Hayakawa, 1994; Jung, Sur, & Kim, 2007); (3) outcome and consequence (Hayakawa, 1994; Xiao & McEnery, 2006); and (4) happen and take place (Hayakawa, 1994; Partington, 2004). All example sentences and questions were taken from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies, 2008) or from the studies cited above.

Participants worked through the six major sections of study materials (see Appendix A). The first and second sections prepared them to engage with DDL data. The first section checked participants’ existing knowledge of the target items, based on literal translation and a fill-the-blanks activity. The second section was a DDL practice session (in Korean) prior to introduction of the corpus data that asked the participant to distinguish between two Korean near-synonyms in example sentences from Naver Korean Dictionary (n.d.). The remaining four sections followed Johns’ (1991) DDL procedure (Identify—Classify—Generalize). The materials included concordance lines and questions related to the four target pairs of near-synonyms. To complete the task, participants were asked to discriminate near-synonyms, so providing data that addressed the two research questions.

In the third section (the identify stage), participants were asked to distinguish the meanings of near-synonyms by reading Key Word In Context (KWIC) concordance lines (25 lines for each word) before writing their responses in the sheet provided. The concordance lines were then grouped into categories based on the differences identified. In the fourth section (the classify stage), participants were given eight lines for each word and were asked to match each line to the meanings they had previously identified. The fifth and sixth sections addressed the generalization stage. The fifth section involved a fill-the-blanks activity, with four lines for each pair of near-synonyms, and the final section was a free translation activity (with hints). Because of space limitations, Section 3 in Appendix A includes only concordance lines for the first pair (demand versus request).

Participants completed the task in open public settings that included cafés, seminar rooms, and classrooms; the procedure was one-to-one and audio-recorded. Table 1 shows how much time each participant spent on the task. Immediately after completion of each section, the researcher asked the participant about their reasoning and linguistic evidence. The researcher intervened only if the participant went off-topic or requested translation help. As the purpose of the study was to trace each participant’s thinking trajectory and use of linguistic evidence, questions about line translations were accepted.

3.3. Data Analysis

After collecting the participants’ response sheets, the researcher transcribed their answers, reasoning, and verbal explanations of the linguistic evidence. The transcripts did
not include the researchers’ explanations of the task or any distractions (e.g., off-task chat). As a first step in the analysis, participants’ responses regarding near-synonym discrimination were categorized as correct, near-correct, or mistaken, using previous findings about the target items (Hayakawa, 1994; Jung, Sur, & Kim, 2007; Partington, 2004; Xiao & McEnery, 2006) as categorization criteria. The identified differences are summarized in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Near-synonyms</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>demand versus request</td>
<td>Hayakawa (1994)</td>
<td>Demand is used by a speaker in authority who insists on being obeyed; request is considerably weaker and connotes a courteous statement of desire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mend versus repair</td>
<td>Hayakawa (1994); Jung, Sur, and Kim (2007)</td>
<td>Mend usually collocates with words related to clothes, social affairs, and parts of a body; repair typically collocates with machines and hard objects. However, both can be used for both physical and mental objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outcome versus consequence</td>
<td>Hayakawa (1994); Xiao and McEnery (2006)</td>
<td>Outcome is a general word for a result and is typically used in a positive sense; consequence tends to denote a negative result occurring in some logical order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happen versus take place</td>
<td>Hayakawa (1994); Partington (2004)</td>
<td>The main difference between happen and take place relates to whether the activity was pre-planned or not. Happen is more often used to refer to an unintended event while take place commonly refers to a planned activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on these criteria, participants’ answers were categorized as correct, near-correct, or mistaken (see Appendix B). After the researcher had categorized the responses, two PhD students majoring in English education and applied linguistics cross-checked the category scheme. In cases of disagreement, the researcher and two inter-raters shared their opinions; if the disagreement was not resolved, they cast a vote to categorize the response. Correct answers were defined as responses that reflected the difference in core meaning (as discussed above) and any other responses confirmed by the concordance data. Partly correct responses were categorized as near-correct; for example, the response “demand refers to the macro-perspective (politics, economy, and the like) while request refers to personal and more specific situations” was categorized as near-correct because the use of demand and request in such contexts relates to their differing core meaning. Incorrect answers were those that did not align with the above criteria and were not supported by concordance lines.

After the responses had been categorized, participants’ trajectories in arriving at correct, near-correct, and mistaken answers were analyzed. Regarding the first research question, the analysis focused on their use of linguistic cues in concordance lines. To address the
second research question, the analysis compared each participant’s trajectory in terms of the evidence they used to identify synonyms.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers

This section addresses the first research question: “How do participants arrive at correct, near-correct, or mistaken answers when they attempt to discriminate near-synonyms by using linguistic cues in concordance lines?” This section summarizes the results involving correct answers before moving on to near-correct and mistaken answers. A full list of correct, near-correct, and mistaken answers can be found in Appendix B. Because of space limitations, this section reports only selected examples of the participants’ responses in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correct answers</td>
<td>1. Repair refers to fixing machines and physical objects. (S1, S2, S3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Coincidences or unexpected events follow happen; pre-planned activities follow take place. (S4, S6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near-correct answers</td>
<td>3. Happen is used when time and place are vague; take place is used when time and place are explicit. (S2, S3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Repair refers only to physical objects; mend can refer to both physical and mental objects. (S4, S6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistaken answers</td>
<td>5. Outcome presupposes input; consequence does not. (S2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. The cause of an outcome is attributable to someone, but a consequence has an external cause. (S2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Wh-words frequently follow demand. (S5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Mend means to tidy oneself up. (S6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a first observation, the participants drew correct conclusions based on different linguistic cues. For instance, S1, S2, and S3 used different linguistic cues to arrive at the first answer in Table 3. S1 identified the difference between mend and repair by contrasting collocates (e.g., “living-related” things like fences and walls versus physical objects like bicycles) as in Excerpt 1 below. S2 looked at the physicality of the objects of repair, which included bicycles, military equipment, and women, all of which have a physical form. S3 examined the objects of mend and repair in Excerpt 1 to see whether they had fixed forms. According to S2, repair refers to fixing hard things (e.g., machines) while mend refers to fixing soft things whose form is more fluid (e.g., clothes). During the
categorization stage, S1 and S3 did not include the human body or people as objects of repair, but S2 included them all, saying that all are tangible. At the generalization stage, both S2 and S3 included shoes as objects of repair, saying “Well it’s ambiguous, but I’ll write repair.” According to BNC (Davies, 2004) and COCA (Davies, 2008), the word shoes collocates with both repair and mend, but strictly speaking, mend is the correct answer. As shown, the participants’ thinking trajectories and use of linguistic evidence differed slightly even though they all arrived at the correct answer.

Excerpt 1. S1, S2, and S3 explain mend versus repair

S1: Mend is for... living-related things, such as fences, walls, and grounds [...] Looking at this (collocates), fence, fences [...] they are used for living. In contrast, repair fixes [...] physical objects, like bicycle, as in this line.
S2: Repair fixes [...] physical objects. Bicycles, military equipment [...] Woman? Well, it’s because it (the line) was from a fiction genre. Anyway, a woman is also a physical object.
S3: Repair is [...] mostly for machines, looking at the lines, here, machines or things [...] mend fixes soft things, such as clothes. [...] things that don’t have fixed forms, like this, which can be stretched, soft things.

In another example, S4 and S6 arrived by differing means at the difference between happen and take place (second answer in Table 3). S4 began by formulating a hypothesis and then used linguistic cues in the concordance lines to confirm it. In contrast, S6 first examined the linguistic cues before arriving at a conclusion. As illustrated in Excerpt 2, S4 began by hypothesizing that happen refers to accidents while take place refers to predictable events. He then tested his ambiguous understanding of the differences from the concordance data, examining the objects of happen and take place to confirm his hypothesis. Unlike S4, S6 first read through the concordance lines and noted the events. Excerpt 2 shows that S6 identified the difference by looking at the collocates of take place. Both participants successfully categorized the concordance lines and generalized their findings correctly. However, while both arrived at the correct conclusion, S4’s approach was top-down and S6’s was bottom-up.

Excerpt 2. S4 and S6 explain happen versus take place
S4: The sentence What happened? makes sense, but What took place? is awkward. Thus, happen refers to accidental events and connotes surprise. However, take place literally has place, and a predictable place and time follow take place.
S6: Happen is used when the event occurs frequently or in the future, so it is
used if the event happens accidentally. *Take place* collocates with *activity, story, movements*, and *performances*, so I feel that pre-planned events follow *take place*.

The participants arrived at near-correct answers (a) when they failed to examine enough linguistic cues or (b) when they ignored counter-evidence. The former case is exemplified by S2 and S3, who concluded that the time and place of events following *happen* were vague while the opposite was true of *take place* (third answer in Table 3). This answer is near-correct because the vagueness of events relates to the core meaning—that is, whether they are pre-planned. S2 successfully identified the core meaning, but S3 did not. At the beginning of the study, S2 did not know the meaning of *take place* and asked the researcher for the Korean counterpart. He first noticed that *place* in *take place* might be a clue and further explored the differences by looking at the collocates of each expression. He established that the time and place of events following *happen* were vague while the opposite was true of *take place* (i.e., a near-correct answer). He also established that *happen* could be used when events were unplanned, as indicated by the high frequency of the question *What happened?* In contrast, *take place* was seen to refer to more specific events such as trends or human sacrifices. Although he did not know the meaning of *take place*, he discovered this near-correct answer (i.e., vagueness of the event) before successfully identifying the core difference between these two near-synonyms (i.e., pre-plannedness). Like S2, S3 saw that *place* in *take place* might be a linguistic cue: “When it comes to *take place*, the phrase itself has *place*. Contrary to *happen*, *take place* has a noun (place) in it. So the usage is limited. It’s so easy.” He felt that the events following *take place* had to be specific because of the presence of the word *place*. On that basis, he drew the near-correct conclusion that *happen* refers to vague events while *take place* refers to events that are more concrete. However, S3 also concluded that *take place* relates to space while *happen* relates to time. In categorizing and generalizing this finding, he failed to notice that his conclusion was incorrect.

S4 and S6 ignored counter-evidence in the concordance lines. Both wrote that *repair* is used for physical objects while *mend* is used for both physical and mental objects (fourth answer in Table 3). In fact, both words can be used in both contexts, and the concordance line showed both. In Excerpt 3, S4 noted that *repair* also collocates with mental objects such as relationships and social security. Despite this counter-evidence, he failed to revise his conclusion and moved on. S6 also chose to ignore counter-evidence; in Excerpt 3, she noted that *relationship* was the object of *repair* but still adhered to her original finding. These two cases confirm that, even if learners notice new linguistic cues, they may choose to ignore them and so produce a near-correct answer, as their background knowledge may prevent them from learning a new word (Toro, Pons, Bion, & Sebastián-Gallés, 2011).
Excerpt 3. S4 and S6 neglect the counter-evidence
S4: I originally thought that repair is for something like machines while mend is for relationships and the like, but the concordance lines look very similar. The meaning difference is smaller than I think. Can I move on?
S6: Although the word relationship was used with repair, in a general sense, repair is for broken physical objects.

Finally, the participants drew mistaken conclusions when they (a) used inappropriate linguistic cues or (b) misinterpreted concordance lines. The former is illustrated by S2 in Excerpt 4 (fifth and sixth answers in Table 3). He understood that out in outcome is a linguistic cue and concluded that outcome refers to the results of someone’s action, as in the relationship between input and output. In relation to consequence, he concluded that this refers to results caused by external factors because one concordance line included “economic consequence.”

Excerpt 4. S2’s mistaken answer
S2: Consequence is like, the result might have come from someone’s past actions, but it is, like, the result came from external factors. Here, “economic consequence”—I didn’t adjust for the economy. But outcome is not so; it’s not from external factors. [...] Outcome is related to income. It is related to someone who inputs something, but consequence is not related to that.

S5 and S6 produced mistaken answers by misinterpreting concordance lines. S5 concluded that wh- words follow demand (seventh answer in Table 3): “Demand is used with wh-words, as you see here. But they do not appear in request.” However, the concordance line included several sentences, and the wh- word was not in the same sentence as demand. He noticed his mistake but did not correct his original finding. S6 also produced an incorrect answer as a result of misinterpretation (eighth answer in Table 3). According to her logic, “wearing her glasses and bent over the torn underwear she was mending (the concordance line) […] I feel like she is tidying herself up. So I thought that mend is also used in that context.” Looking at the full sentence, the object of mend was the torn underwear rather than she. Mend in this context referred to fixing the torn underwear rather than to tidying oneself up. Because of this misunderstanding, S6 formed the premature conclusion that mend can be used to refer to tidying oneself up.
4.2. Individual Differences in DDL

This section reports findings related to the second research question: “How do individuals differ in their use of linguistic evidence to complete the DDL task?” All of the participants arrived at their findings in different ways; the two main reasons for these individual differences were (a) participants’ attention to different aspects of language and (b) their individual problem-solving styles. The instruction was to “find differences between the pair of near-synonyms, such as meaning differences, structural differences, or grammatical differences.” In relation to (a), S3 attended exclusively to differences in meaning while S5 focused on structural or grammatical differences in 9 out of 12 answers. Although the researcher explicitly asked S5 to address differences in meaning, he did not change his focus. While S3 and S5 tended to focus on one aspect of the near-synonym pairs, S2 approached the task more flexibly; for example, in exploring the difference between demand and request, she focused on broad context and structural tendency. However, in the case of mend versus repair, she shifted her focus to individual word meanings.

When looking at differences in meaning, the participants focused on different aspects of meaning. For example, in exploring the difference between outcome and consequence, S2 focused on who or what was responsible for the result while S3 sought to determine whether the result was quantifiable. In other words, S2 attended to who produced the result while S3 focused on the result itself. This difference of focus produced different answers. According to S2, “Outcome shows a result attributable to someone, and the reason of consequence might come from outside.” For S3, on the other hand, “Outcome refers to quantifiable results, and consequence doesn’t.”

Second, differences in problem-solving style influenced how the participants reached their conclusions. For example, as an intermediate-level participant who had lived in an English-speaking country for six months or so, S1 did not know the meanings of 6 of the 15 words in the first task section. In contrast, S4 had lived in an English-speaking country for more than 10 years and answered everything correctly in the first section. This proficiency gap might seem to suggest that S4 gained more from DDL, but this was not the case. In fact, while S1 was much more willing to revise her conclusions and spent more time on the task, S4 adhered to his original hypotheses. S1 took more than 70 minutes to complete Section 3 and returned to it three times to modify or add findings even after proceeding to the next sections. As she spent more time on the task, she found more evidence or counter-evidence and was the only participant to return to her original finding in this way. As a result, she spent 132 minutes on the DDL task. Excerpt 5 is one example of S1’s iterative modification process.
Excerpt 5. S1 iteratively modifies her answer
S1: Ah… I got it. Can I go back and modify it?
Researcher (R): Of course you can.
S1: How do you say it… Wait a minute. So… translation, please.
R: (Looking at a concordance line, “nobody was repairing her”) Nobody has soothed her, although she was emotionally broken.
S1: Then, so, it (mend) repairs personal relationships, but this (repair) fixed a person him/herself. This line (my body has begun to repair) also seems to mean the body fixed him/herself. I felt like that.
R: Then are you going to modify the previous finding? You said repair is not used for relationships?
S1: Yes. As for the same person, mend means the relationship between people but repair fixes the person him/herself.

As the only participant who moved back and forth to revise her original findings, S1 demonstrated her ability to distinguish near-synonyms appropriately by correctly answering all eight questions in Section 6. In contrast, S4’s trajectory was quite different. He already had some vague ideas about the differences between the two pairs of near-synonyms. Although he tested the ideas during the DDL task and found counter-evidence, he nevertheless regressed to his original idea. Excerpt 6 is one example of S4’s process.

Excerpt 6. S4 reverts to his original idea
S4: Well… I originally thought that their meanings (mend and repair) are different. But the more I look at it, the more I feel there is no difference […] Can I just write that there is no difference?
R: Yes.
S4: I originally thought that repair is for something like machines, and mend is for relationships and the like, but the concordance lines look very similar. The meaning difference is smaller than I think. Can I move on?
[15 minutes later]
S4: Can I go back to the previous section and write my feeling about them, because there is nothing? It’s just my feeling. Repair is for physical things, mend is something like… something. […] mend can be applied for mental and abstract things, and repair is for physical objects. But… see. (concordance lines) mend fences and walls…

This excerpt shows that the concordance lines did not support S4’s original assumptions about the difference between the two words, but he adhered to his original idea and
neglected counter-evidence (*mend fences and walls*). He ignored the concordance lines and wrote his original idea on the answer sheet. His answers in Sections 5 and 6 show that he failed to notice that *clothes* collocate more with *mend* than *repair*, and he answered incorrectly in both sections. In summary, while S4 used the concordance lines to test his hypothesis and ignored the counter-evidence, S1 based her conclusions on the concordance lines.

### 5. DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

These six cases of DDL-based near-synonym discrimination raise several important issues. First of all, it is clear that identical linguistic evidence can lead to completely different findings, depending on the learner’s reasoning process. For example, both S2 and S3 derived a near-correct answer from the same linguistic evidence (the noun *place* in *take place*). However, by collecting further linguistic evidence that included collocations, S2 was able to establish that *happen* refers to unplanned activities while *take place* refers to activities that are planned. In contrast, S3 focused exclusively on the word *place* in *take place* and wrongly concluded that *happen* relates to time while *take place* relates to space. These cases show that on noticing the same linguistic cue, some learners seek further corroborating evidence while others stop collecting new evidence and reach a premature conclusion. In short, the same linguistic evidence may be differently interpreted, and reliance on one item of evidence may lead to an incorrect conclusion. For that reason, DDL tasks should encourage learners to examine multiple items of evidence or to cross-check their findings.

Second, the study demonstrates that near-correct or mistaken answers may be a consequence of inappropriate or insufficient linguistic cues, neglect of counter-evidence, or misinterpretation of concordance lines. Some linguistic cues need to be substantiated by other cues, as for example in the findings regarding *place* in *take place* (S2, S3). Some linguistic cues may be misleading; for example, *out in outcome* is not an antonym of *input*, but S2 reached an inaccurate conclusion by interpreting it in this way. In some cases, participants noted several instances of counter-evidence but were reluctant to revise their previous answers (e.g., S4, S6). Misinterpretation of concordance lines also led to mistaken responses (S5, S6). These cases demonstrate the need for careful guidance regarding which linguistic cues to use, how many cues to use, how to validate conflicting cues, and how to interpret concordance lines.

Finally, DDL may help students to identify differences among near-synonyms, even if they do not know a word’s correct meaning or their proficiency level is low. While it is commonly believed that DDL tasks are likely to prove challenging for inexperienced
learners (Boulton, 2009a, 2009b), the present findings show that this approach can be effective for intermediate-level learners. For example, S1 and S2 were unfamiliar with several words at the beginning of the experiment but ultimately succeeded in drawing reasonable conclusions about subtle or nuanced differences as well as superficial meanings and successfully categorized and generalized their findings beyond the given concordance line. In addition, the cases of S1 and S4 show how differences in problem-solving style enable lower-proficiency learners to benefit from DDL by taking the time to examine diverse linguistic cues and iteratively revising their findings.

The limitations of this study include the small sample size (six adult participants with at least intermediate English proficiency) and the limited number of DDL sessions (single one-to-one DDL sessions averaging about 90 minutes duration). For these reasons, the study findings should be interpreted with caution in cases involving younger or lower-proficiency students, or when tasks are completed in a classroom setting, where one teacher is responsible for a group of students for a longer period.

The present results indicate that DDL tasks may assist vocabulary learning, especially when the boundaries between synonyms are unclear. When researching differences in meaning, grammar, or structure, concordance lines provide rich linguistic cues. The following provisions can help to implement DDL tasks more easily and effectively. First, careful guidance and assistance from an instructor or from other learners is likely to produce more refined answers. Specifically, the participants’ trajectories suggest that performance was likely to improve if they received guidance, noticed more counter-evidence, took account of other linguistic evidence, and double-checked their findings. In the classroom, guided assistance is likely to help students to notice relevant linguistic cues, to accurately interpret concordance lines, and to draw clear conclusions based on concordance data.

A second implication of these findings is that group work is important for DDL. As participants attended to different aspects of the same concordance data, collaborative activities among peers would facilitate the assembly and cross-checking of different findings and items of evidence. For example, while S1, S2, and S3 tended to focus on meanings, S4, S5, and S6 looked beyond the semantic level to structural and grammatical differences. In addition, while S1, S2, and S3 carefully investigated the linguistic evidence, S4 and S6 tended to reach hasty conclusions, ignoring any counter-evidence. By working together, learners who differ in proficiency and style are likely to detect more linguistic evidence at the levels of meaning, structure, and grammar and to validate their findings from multiple perspectives.

Finally, it seems useful to teach learners about strategies for reading concordance data before attempting a DDL task. For example, as all of these participants needed time to familiarize themselves with the KWIC lines and struggled to interpret them, it would be useful to advise learners to read five lines at a time, attending to three words close to the
node word and referring to overall frequency lists.

6. CONCLUSION

For near-synonyms in L2, especially those sharing the same L1 counterpart, it is challenging for L2 learners to draw appropriate meaning boundaries. To address this issue, the present study employed a corpus-based task based on the three steps of DDL (Identify—Classify—Generalize). In examining concordance data, the six participants all differed in trajectory and problem-solving style. The study confirms the need for further research on the application of DDL from different perspectives. As the focus here was on vocabulary, it would be useful for future qualitative studies to explore grammar-level and other relevant tasks. Investigation of interactions during a group DDL task is also likely to yield new ideas for the practical application of DDL in the classroom.

Applicable levels: Tertiary

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Naver Korean Dictionary. (n.d.) Retrieved on September 15, 2020, from https://ko.dict.naver.com/#/search?range=all&query=%EA%B0%91%EC%A0%88%20%EA%B3%B1%EC%A0%88


APPENDIX A
Study Materials

Section 1. Preliminary Check

1. denote
2. good
3. happen
4. consequence
5. request
6. take place
7. meet
8. job
9. confidence
10. outcome
11. paper
12. event
13. meeting
14. trust
15. predilection

Section 2. Warm-up activity

G1) 다음은 ‘감정’과 ‘급결’의 의미와 동물 모양의 농담입니다. 다음 예문을 참고하여 감정과 급결의 차이를 찾아 주세요.

<감정>
그의 몸뚱이에는 냉비야 감별이 풍겼다.
마음 깊은 다른 긴 급결이다.
언전을 맡는 토요일부부 시장을 뛰어넘기が必要에 밀등도.
통해 염탄을 지반히 보니 급결이 노렸다.
그 땅은 도배보다 가벼운 급결로 비해 빠르다.

<급결>
그 방법은 대배보다 가벼운 급결로 비해 빠르다.
생산력이 자연보다 새 급결이 높았다.
영동 망설임 없이 걸어도 소독이 잘 빠르지 않아서.
내 빛나는 백 급결은 소중하다!

G2) 다음의 문장에 감정과 급결의 차이가 무엇이라고 생각하시나요?

(1) The guy cries in _______ the washing machine.
(2) They _______ that their sons be accepted classes with other black students.
(3) These kinds of events are going _______.
(4) They are due to _______ disasters inflicted by the war.
(5) The rapid jump in prices is also an unanticipated _______ of the current policy.
(6) They _______ at the transportation of trains and those men.
(7) We, the family, are happy for a positive _______.
(8) Alternating, accidents _______ at brand new pipelines, said Boeing.

G3) 다음의 문장에 감정과 급결 중 무엇이 더 잘 보이느냐에?

* 통해 감정도 내리 빠르기지 못한 외로이가 수신 차례에 _______ 아이다.
* 사려 않는 섬시한 무냐면 나는 마치 날고가 시간을 쫒아 _______ 투자할 생각을 한다.

A Qualitative Analysis of EFL Learners' Discrimination of Near-Synonyms in a Data-Driven Learning Task
Section 3. Concordance lines

Section 3. Concordance lines

The process was essentially governmental, and in order to get the necessary support from the political establishment, MBS had to be well-connected and influential. She had spent years building relationships with key players in the government, and her influence extended to the highest levels of power. Her ability to navigate the complex political landscape and maintain her position as a powerful figure was a testament to her skill and determination.

However, the political landscape was constantly shifting, and MBS was not immune to the challenges that came with power. She had to be constantly aware of the potential for backlash and had to be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any threats to her authority. Despite the challenges, MBS remained steadfast in her commitment to the cause, and her influence continued to grow, making her one of the most powerful figures in the political landscape.
Section 4. Grouping concordance lines together

1) demand vs request

- and abusive. If he was demanding of me, he demanded that much more of her - [CURIOUS? Curiosity is an American to buy -- they have to buy a product, demanding and say something.
- "Why do you march on my property?" Edward demanded. "Why do your people attack the citizens of Safe Harbor"
- If only he could find the will to meet the demand. Hofstred noted to at least double the Hoffman
- in language, computer technology and business and created a demand for teachers in these areas. 2. To demand
- providing career opportunities? Nowadays our economic demands on other nations threaten fragile economies in
- "More seat" angle to the public, which would demand actions from its elected officials. But Figure considers such
- It is time, Phil Dunnam would be the first to demand answers. [ILLUSTRATION. A PHOTOS. COLOR 1: PHIL DUNNAM

Anything less is to be pitiful. And they requested that their names be taken off as directors, Mr. Stowe. Correct
- That's how complicated the industry has become. We requested an aide and for you who wanted a window seat.
- to speak to the Lettgeat, at the Governor's personal request. One describes her nose as slightly or at the back of
- last. "Sure," Fred replied to their request without hesitation. If they were coming to his ceremony, he
- that share printed files with black numbers of required requests. However, defending themselves to the end.
- guidelines remain ambiguous as companies try to respond to requests for sales without incurring liability. Consider the
- American impasse so well. Yet, therefore, respectfully request that you maintain support for a vibrant, non-smoking
- Saudi involvement were cited today by a U.S. official, who requested anonymity, was asked whether Saudi Arabia and

2) mend vs repair

- times a year. At the point on Pope Wernery he mend walls and fences, even built new outbuildings. He had five
- was her goal, now, should have the broken thing mend. Saying, "It was his own fault. When one
- wearing her glasses and bent over the bin underneath she was mending. "Your mother's working too hard. " Bad mannered
- called me, and I think our relationship is on the mend." Tom Wilson admits that getting along with her is not easy.
- here some Mushrooms healthy again and David Wesley on the mend from his injuries. The history are a lame duck team
- academic achievements, whereas chatting and socializing with mends, playing games, and the use of Internet Call
- First time in office, de la Rue has tried to mend relations not stop with the international Jewish community.
- we can check food, make cakes, clean seeds, mend the chicken fence, plow the garden or put it to bed.

I remembered Chenas’s house in the dump workship where he repaired bicycles for the neighborhood. Wilkes. He was a mole in
- copy paper, light bulbs, gasoline, parts for repairing military equipment and municipal water pumps, and medicines
- Lady of the Light is falling to bits and suddenly repairing her. It seems clerical work more demoralized than standing
- chemical and electrical processes, was damaged beyond repair. But there was little enough in the rubble to gap
- direct hit, it’s one of the few places where repairs were finished in time for the first day (on current)
- to a lesser attitude, when my body has begun to repair itself then. I took at the note. I made during my hours of
- reverses in her social studies class because part of needed to repair windows that old were too hard to come by.
- watch though, she marvels. A laptop was sent for repair because a student spilled coffee into the keyboard, leaving the

A Qualitative Analysis of EFL Learners' Discrimination of Near-Synonyms in a Data-Driven Learning Task
### 3) outcome vs consequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The world of the no less contemptible saint, but the outcome of his legend turns on his redemption through speech.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The war on terror and Bush’s bloody history, this outcome may not be entirely satisfying — but it is the only intentional agreement without any understanding on the final outcome. The reason why is quite obvious. Both the Fall’s go by him, it’s probably a different outcome to the game: we’ve got away with one here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins (2005) tracked the educational and labor market outcomes of Washington State’s basic skills students and found that college practitioners examined inequities in students’ outcomes in professional education courses. The way, in which a whole contributes to an improvement in intended outcomes. An example of research that begins to address these issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other words, the preference for immediate positive outcomes becomes dominant, and this may serve the purpose of the child’s physical education program. The consequence of the lack of information was evident in the marginal position achievements. The cost and effort of space travel are a consequence of space being simply hostile to life. You might decrease in difficulty is due to external pressures with little consequence given to educational excellence. (Allbach, Sally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the 95% fire for dealing in their territory or suffer the consequences. Some gang members, however, are given the option of rounding “here lasting energy security and negative economic consequences” for the country. It said “responsible drilling” environmental resources are common property, and the consequences of their use are a social problem (Makson, 1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarly, with a more influential example that had fatal consequences in England in 1770. When King Henry II said of commonly approaching any time in the wild can have fatal consequences. Because of the precautions that somehow and his</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4) happen vs take place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>south of laws. An accident. “What happened?” I think the operator twisted a valve or mental note, yes. I believe that exactly what happened in his! NANSERIEZ. That tape doesn’t make her sound like way of life for him. A lot of good things happen to him because he’s the shape! ’E MARRIAGE IN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>without having taken the pertinent. Part 2. This happens more frequently, and then all the time. It was harder and decades if through the TV, you can see what happens. It’s spread the gerrymandering. A gap and health, life, live. &quot;Okay, what happens in the future from a basketball standpoint, I don’t know. Changing today, and again. I don’t see that happening in the science world. It’s still a very slow and her head. I don’t believe that’s what happened. I don’t think you do either. There was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other. But don’t forget the development that has taken place since then. We did the new measure only after the limited to France. EDITOR. 5. NOTE. This story takes place about ten years before the novel for a December November 1998.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so to speak, that the events of this book take place near a big anti-war demonstration. Because McBurns was Henry to SARAH-MAK: “This is where the story will be taking place.” NANCY SMITH: Some new research out of UCLA shows that the social changes that have taken place in Algeria since its independence as represented by the spread that the background on which all of these trends are taking place is the location. And if the emergence of a self-confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 6, Free translation activity

01 다음의 문장을 영어로 번역해 보세요.

1. 그 소년은 우리가 그의 빈을 수용하기를 가정 요구한다.
   (The sponsor / take up the bill / repeatedly)

2. 그 비행기는 그 계열사에 의해 고쳤다.
   (The tail of the airplane / the manufacturer)

3. 나무가에서 말하는 대체 환경을 이해하는 것은 모든 커뮤니티에게 중요하다.
   (Pulling out of town / every American / understand)

4. 그녀는 교육이 되는 그 장소를 좋아하지 않았다.
   (The board of education / the information)

5. 그들은 대부분 TV를 보거나, 신경을 고치거나, 저녁을 먹었다.
   (Most of them)

6. 나는 내 가족에 문의로 일의 알아보지 두려웠다.
   (would / to my family / be afraid of)

7. 그는 그 결과에 대해 매우 거부적으로 가볍고, 나도 또한 그랬다.
   (extremely / about / as was I)

8. 이 액션은 읽기 기말 시험 후에 전혀 정상적인 분위기에서 알아차리고 있다.
   (These primary elections / the charged atmosphere / the day before)

A Qualitative Analysis of EFL Learners' Discrimination of Near-Synonyms in a Data-Driven Learning Task
APPENDIX B
The Participants’ Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers

### Table 1: Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers of Demand Versus Request

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Answers</th>
<th>Near-Correct Answers</th>
<th>Mistaken Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demand is for referring to quantifiable customer needs but request cannot be used in the same way. (S3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demand is stronger than request. (S4, S6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Demand is both intensive and intensive; but request is transitive. (S5)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Possessive pronouns frequently precede request. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Demand refers to the users' perspective (policy, economy, and the like); while request refers to personal and more specific situations. (S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correct Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Demand is a noun in “demand for + object,” whereas request is used as a personal verb in “request for.” (S4)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Demand is for making something, whereas request is for making things. (S1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Demand presupposes that the receiver is not present. Request does not. (S2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Wh-words frequently follow demands. (S3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Request + that a clause is more frequent than demand + that + clause. (S5)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers of Mood Versus Modality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Answers</th>
<th>Near-Correct Answers</th>
<th>Mistaken Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mood is used in the phrase as “need for mood frequently.” (S1, S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mood refers to existing mood and physical objects. (S1, S2, S3)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The objects of mood are soft things (e.g., clothes). (S1, S3)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Mood is used for fixing personal relationships. (S1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Mood is for fixing everyday objects (e.g., lenses and walls), whereas mood is frequently used for fixing machines. (S1, S5)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Near-Correct Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Repair fixes a person’s condition (e.g., body). (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Repair refers only to physical objects. mood can be used for both physical and mental objects. (S2, S4, S6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The plural form of repair is more frequent than that of mood. (S4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Repair is used for fixing broken things, whereas mood is for minor flaws. (S6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mistaken Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Repair is exclusively used for fixing physical objects. (S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Many articles appear before mood. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mood means to help oneself up. (S6)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers of Outcome Versus Consequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Answers</th>
<th>Near-Correct Answers</th>
<th>Mistaken Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Outcome is frequently used when interpreting statistical results. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Outcome is less negative than consequence, and consequence is for negative situations due to some reason. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consequence is used to refer to a predictable and complicated result, but the means of outcome are often unpredictable. (S4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The meaning of consequence is stronger than that of outcome. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Near-Correct Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Adjectives before outcome have less stronger meanings than adjectives before consequence. (S5, S6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Outcome includes substantive events. The reports of outcome may not have already happened. (S6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Outcome is used in academic settings more frequently than consequence is. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mistaken Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Consequence is frequently used in spoken settings. (S3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Outcome presupposes input, consequence does not. (S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The cause of an outcome is attributable to someone, but the cause of consequence is external. (S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Outcome is for quantifiable results, but consequence is not. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Generally, adjectives precede outcome and nouns precede consequence. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Correct, Near-Correct, and Mistaken Answers of Happen Versus Take Place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct Answers</th>
<th>Near-Correct Answers</th>
<th>Mistaken Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The objects of happen are unexpected, but those of take place are logically predictable. (S2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Incidents are unexpected events, follow happen, pre-planned activities follow take place. (S4, S6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What comes before happen frequently. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Spatial prepositions frequently follow take place. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The form happen refers to an activity that is experienced by someone. (S5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Near-Correct Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Happen is used when the time and place is vague, and take place is used when time and place are explicit. (S2, S3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sentences that use happen have simple structures than sentences that use take place. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mistaken Answers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Grammatical devices (e.g., modal verbs, present perfect, and wh-words) frequently precede happen, whereas adverbs and nouns precede take place. (S1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Happen is related to time and take place is related to space. (S3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Take place is used in present progressive forms more frequently than happen is. (S5)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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