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Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,  
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

19

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



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## **Productive use of specialized vocabulary in L2 culinary studies**

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### **Abstract**

Food writing is a subject within culinary studies. Many students undergoing the food writing course are not equipped with the vocabularies within the culinary arts. This study will analyze students' productive use of specialized vocabulary in their writing through 100 written documents collected from 10 students undergoing the food writing course; whose first language is Bahasa Melayu and the second language is English. The results show that the students were able to apply the specialized term appropriately in their writing in terms of the context and collocations used, with the presence of a few grammatical mistakes.

**Keywords:** Specialized vocabulary, Food writing, ESP, Second Language Acquisition, Genre-based Writing.

## **Uso productivo de vocabulario especializado en estudios culinarios L2**

### **Resumen**

La escritura de alimentos es una asignatura dentro de los estudios culinarios. Muchos estudiantes que cursan el curso de escritura de alimentos no están equipados con los vocabularios dentro de las artes culinarias. Este estudio analizará el uso productivo de vocabulario especializado de los estudiantes en su escritura a través de 100 documentos escritos recopilados de 10 estudiantes que cursan el curso de

escritura de alimentos; cuyo primer idioma es bahasa melayu y el segundo idioma es el inglés. Los resultados muestran que los estudiantes pudieron aplicar el término especializado de manera adecuada en su escritura en términos del contexto y las colocaciones utilizadas, con la presencia de algunos errores gramaticales.

**Palabras clave:** Vocabulario especializado, escritura de alimentos, ESP, adquisición de un segundo idioma, escritura basada en género.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary acquisition is an essential element in language learning. It can be illustrated through both receptive and productive use of the vocabulary acquired, also referred to as passive and active knowledge (Pignot-Shahov, 2012). Although it is important to acquire vocabulary receptively, a student of L2 background is considered as having acquired vocabulary at such degree when they can proficiently use the vocabulary in spoken or written form. In other words, they can use vocabulary productively. Thus, it is insufficient to just “know a word” without application, especially as in the case of L2 learners where motives in learning a new language are to be able to communicate using that language.

Furthermore, for English for Specific (ESP) courses students are required to be able to communicate using a “code” (Bhatia 1997) or specialized language within the discipline or field they are enrolled in. Specifically, university students should obtain certain academic literacy to be accepted within a discourse community, which is their area of expertise. According to Swales (1990) a group of individuals are

considered to be within a discourse community only if they possess (1) “a broadly agreed set of common public goals”, (2) “mechanisms of intercommunication among its members”, (3) “uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback”, (4) “utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims”, (5) “in addition to owning genres...has acquired some specific lexis” and (6) “has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursual expertise” (24-27). The sixth characteristic is the most relevant to this study where it is important that students have a certain level of expertise in the specific genre to be able to communicate effectively. One of the many language components students must possess for them to be familiar with a discourse community is an adequate grasp of vocabularies used within the genre. This implies that for L2 learners, to be able to use these discourse it may involve learning a whole new set of vocabulary. Thus, the knowledge of vocabulary acquisition among L2 learners may present the bigger picture in enabling students in acquiring the academic literacy within a certain community.

Culinary study, for instance, is an example of a genre with its own written and spoken discourse. To be accepted within the culinary community, one must be literate in the discourse within the discipline. In the L2 context, where students are learning in the gastronomic or culinary arts field as a second language, this applies as students must possess a large range of vocabulary to attain competencies in their area of study. Mohd et al. (2010) note that for culinary students to be able to excel in their field, they should be exposed to culinary arts education from elementary school until university level. However, since culinary studies have only begun emerging in the Malaysian institutions of higher education, it is not something the students are accustomed to. Besides, the

only subject offered within the culinary arts education in a school known as home science is conducted in Bahasa Malaysia. Home science is a sub field under the Integrated Living Skills (Kemahiran Hidup Bersepadu) subject offered both in primary and secondary school. Home science is primarily a basic course in food management and preparation. In the class, students are taught how to identify dishes and the different types of food, how to handle the tools and equipment in the kitchen, and how to prepare a meal which is usually locally influenced. Students will also be graded based on theory and cooking practical. The home science subject is conducted entirely in Bahasa Malaysia. Therefore, students are not being exposed to the language in culinary arts and its' structures in the English language.

Moreover, courses which specialize in writing specifically in the culinary discipline are scarce, as argued by Brien (2007) "internationally, the emergent subject area of food writing is more often located either in Food History and Gastronomy programs or as a component of practical culinary skills courses than in Writing or Publishing programs". Furthermore, the only public university in Malaysia which offers the food writing course is Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), even so not all UiTM campuses offer this subject as it is only offered within the Faculty of Hotel and Management in Shah Alam, Selangor. Therefore, students enrolled in the food writing course would have had very little exposure to the arts of food writing.

Due to the little exposure students have towards specialized vocabulary in food writing, it is problematic in the circumstances mainly where vocabulary acquisition is concerned. It is argued in the literature

that the more exposure students have to the specialized vocabularies, the better they are at learning it. In this study, however, as mentioned in the prior paragraphs, the students in this study have not had the exposure needed for them to learn the specialized vocabulary efficiently; this will ultimately impact their acquisition of specialized vocabulary. Without specialized vocabularies, the students will not be able to write proficiently (as a food writer). If students are not able to write proficiently, they will not be able to excel in the food writing course, which may affect their examination scores and overall grades (Gataullina & Drozdikova–Zaripova, 2016).

Due to the little exposure students have towards culinary arts in their previous education, as a novel strategy this study intend to discover how well the students can apply specialized vocabulary in food writing through their written assignments (Davaribina & Badr Parchin, 2016).

## **2. PROBLEMS IN ESP WRITING**

The problems in writing are particularly tricky within ESP courses, where students must be able to conform to the techniques in writing in the context of the subject matter. For instance, the specifically written discourse within the quantity surveying profession includes the design plan, tender invitation and proposals, project works, phase division of project works, request for inspection pro-forma, request for information pro-forma, contractor submission report, business letters and internal and external e-mails (Chuen Ching, 2010). Therefore, students within the

quantity surveying line of work must know how to write effectively within the conform discourse of quantity surveyors.

The difficulties faced by L2 learners in writing may be one of the main reasons it is difficult to promote writing among Malaysian students. A study on the lecturers' perception of the apprehension and attitude of tertiary level students in UiTM revealed that students showed high apprehension towards writing and a negative attitude towards academic writing (Noriah et al., 2010). Another study on the problems about writing among UiTM students by Choo (2001) found that students showed poor or average performance in examinations, particularly in writing.

In another study in law education, Rogers (2010) listed the typical lawyer-client letter as referring to the "subject matter, summarizing facts, identifying legal issues, referring to relevant legislation, referring to previous court decisions, drawing conclusions, indicating options and closing". Similarly, the written discourse in engineering, banking, nursing and other professions would certainly be varied. Therefore, students must be familiar to the written format used and the corpus or "language" within the specific field. This may pose another challenge for L2 learners, as they must be competent both in writing as well as the discourse genre. Similarly, for the students in this study, they must be competent in the discourse of food writing to be able to write effectively as food writers.

The style of writing required in food writing is also different than the type of writing students have been taught in the past. It requires a lot of passion, particularly for food. A good piece of writing is one which not only conveys information but produces ideas which come from the soul.

Thus, a notable food writer will have to come up with better words than delicious to describe food and must be able to engage all the senses (taste, smell, feel and look of the food) to effectively bring the message across (Barjasteh et al., 2016).

Thus, for students to understand the materials in the food writing course as well as be able to read and write competently, students need to acquire the vocabularies within the discourse. Vocabulary is also regarded as the core element in the learning of language and may provide the much-needed platform in second language acquisition (SLA). Having proficiency in vocabulary has also often been regarded as a predictor in students' writing quality (Munchie, 2002). A vast number of vocabularies are also needed for comprehension in multiple discourses. Studies have found that a certain amount of vocabulary is needed for different types of text comprehension. For instance, Hirsh & Nation (1992) found that learners need more than 2,000 words in their present vocabulary to be able to read the easiest fiction novels written for teenagers, or more than 4,000 words to read novels written for adults. It is agreed that without vocabulary, the student will not have the most important element needed in writing, which is words. David Wilkins (1972), a linguist agrees that vocabulary is the platform in language learning, through a popular statement he made; "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". Thus, if Malaysian learners are still unequipped in terms of their vocabulary development, they will always be in the losing end in the effort to achieve proficiency in English.

### **3. WORD KNOWLEDGE AND PRODUCTION**

There are numerous ways to define a word. As illustrated by Singleton (1999, 2000) a word can be defined in terms of its types or tokens, classifications, orthographically, semantically, grammatically, single lexical items, lexicon, vocabulary and lexis. In an attempt to acknowledge what a word means, many researchers who specialized in vocabulary learning also attempt to explain the various means of word knowledge. It is, however, not an easy task as Nation (1990, 2001) explains that a word is not an isolated unit of language, where every word can be placed into various interlocking systems and levels. In the 1990s, a shift began which focused towards the usage of vocabulary, particularly in spoken form. The focus on oral discourse is also the main component which founded Nation's (2001) knowing a word or word knowledge.

Nation's (2001) word knowledge originated from the ideas of Richards' (1976) and Carter's (1998) research. The four criteria of knowing a word was revised to three principal characteristics of knowing a word; its form, meaning and use, with three sub-categories under each principle characteristic, making it nine in total. These sub-categories are further broken into their receptive and productive components. Nation asserts that vocabulary is retained receptively when a learner perceives a word meaning while listening or reading. Conversely, a learner will retain vocabulary productively through speaking and writing; where the learner will express the meaning of a word through the production of either in spoken or written form.

Meara (1996) proposed a view on word knowledge where he focused more on the holistic assessment of vocabulary competence. This competence, he refers to as “lexical competence” is divided into two dimensions, which are the vocabulary size and organization. According to Meara the size of vocabulary is the basic component in lexical competence, where a learner with a small number of vocabularies can be more competent than a learner with a bigger vocabulary range if their level of lexical organization is higher. These lexical organizations are the associations between L2 vocabularies and these associations provide links between networks of words. Thus, a learner with the ability to connect words in a structured manner, even with a small range of vocabulary is considered more competent than a learner with a vast range of vocabulary but cannot connect one word to another. Meara provides an example of a network of words as shown in Figure 1, which illustrates a simplified diagram of the associations of the word butterfly in English.

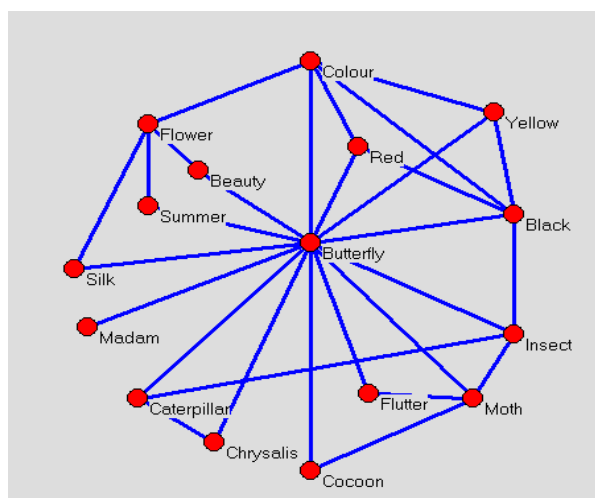


Figure 1: A simple association network of the word butterfly

Besides knowing a network of words, recent studies prove that it is more beneficial for learners with L2 background to learn words in multiple units rather than learning in single units. Thus, more focus should be put to teaching collocations in the classroom, especially in English for Specific courses which contain a distinct feature of discourse.

Collocation was first defined by Firth (1957) as “the company a word keeps”, with it being one from the five dimensions of meaning; phonetic, lexical, morphological, syntactic and semantic. In layman terms, it is a combination of words which make up a specific meaning. Thus, the wrong combinations of words will produce incorrect meanings. Examples of collocation in food writing are a tin of tuna, a cup of tea, a jar of honey, a loaf of bread, a bar of chocolate, a carton of milk, etc.

Collocations used productively can show communicative competence in terms of using words in multiple units at both syntagmatic and paradigmatic levels.

Additionally, a study by Karakoç & Köse (2017) discovered there was a significant correlation between students’ productive word knowledge and their writing performance. They found that students with higher productive vocabulary knowledge were more successful in their written exam.

#### **4. METHOD**

The research was conducted in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UiTM) which is a public university. The reason for choosing this particular campus in Shah Alam is because it is the main campus for the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management. There are four departments under the faculty which include Hotel, Tourism, Food Service and Culinary Arts. The course which is chosen for this study is the Food Writing course. This course provides an introduction to the field of food writing or food journalism. It also introduces and exposes students on the writing identification for the preparation of food articles and to develop attitude and awareness towards becoming a good and effective writer, where food writing is most prevalent such as reviewing restaurants, writing articles for magazines or newspapers. The course is compulsory for students majoring in the culinary arts. It is also made compulsory for students majoring in hotel, tourism and food service with a minor in culinary arts.

This study takes a qualitative approach to discourse analysis. The participants were second-year students undergoing a tourism program, majoring in food service management with a minor in culinary. The students have had no experience in food writing but have been exposed to the basics of culinary arts through courses such as gastronomy. Altogether there were 29 students, with the majority of females, 24 in total and remaining of 5 males. To answer the research question, artefacts or written documents were collected from the food writing course, which includes the students' portfolios comprising of their written work or essays throughout the semester. In this study, the portfolios were collected from 10 random students, with ten assignments per student making it a total of

100 students' assignments. The main reason the portfolios were collected was to help the researcher to discover how many of the specialized vocabularies were used by students in their written assignments and to analyze student usage of specialized vocabulary through their writing. Notably, the usage of a word in students' written work does not imply that the students understand the meaning of it. The ultimate goal in vocabulary acquisition, from Wesche & Paribakht's (1996) Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) is that students can use the word if they can apply it into a sentence correctly in their writing. Thus, the analysis of students' portfolio was used to answer the research question, which is to discover how well students can apply specialized vocabulary in their written assignments, with very little background to the food writing course.

By analyzing the usage of specialized vocabulary in students' written work through the portfolio, this allowed the researcher to confirm that they have used it in the right way (See Appendix for a sample of student essays). To do so, the researcher relied on the class lecturer's assessments to further validate the findings, which is to see whether or not the students were able to use the specialized vocabulary in context through expert opinion.

The details of the written assignments are according to the topics provided by the lecturer, which was handed out to the students at the beginning of the semester. Students were graded weekly based on their written work. The topics for the class exercise (CE) given are as follows:

**1.CE Week 2 topic: Journalism. To be submitted in week 3  
(18/3 – 22/3)**

1. List down one (1) reason why you registered for the Food Writing subject.
2. List down three (3) reasons why writing is important in our life? Your essay should relate to the phases of our life.

**2.CE Week 3 topic: Food Writing skills. To be submitted in week 4 (25/3-29/3)**

1. Write an essay on the food industry with issues emphasizing on the regulation of **halal status** (for Muslim clients) and compare it with **kosher status** (for Jewish clients).

**3.CE Week 4 topic: Writing techniques. To be submitted in week 5 (1/4-5/4)**

1. Prepare a script for food preparation by giving one example (like how to prepare curry puff), or prepare an interesting script of speech for an introduction of a tourist centre (for example a speech to introduce Redang Island to a group of British tourists).

**4.CE Week 5 topic: Developing Ideas. To be submitted in week 6 (8/4- 12/4)**

1. Compile at least two different brochures/advertisement handouts from any restaurants or you can download them from any website online advertisements and get them printed on either buffet or

served food promotions for corporate functions or wedding receptions.

2. Write your comments and compare the two selected brochures whether they are fair and reasonable or bad in terms of options/ selections, prices and presentations of food.

**5.CE Week 6 topic: Importance of Accuracy. To be submitted in week 7 (15/4-19/4)**

1. Write your comment on the importance of the ABC formula in writing styles.

**6.CE Week 7 topic: Areas for Food Writing. To be submitted in week 9 (29/4-3/5)**

1. Select one (1) source of media; either from newspaper, magazines, books, on line journals/websites/ blogs with regards to food writing articles which interest you most. Comment the selected article; whether they are good or bad. Attach the original articles to your comment (essay) as a source of reference.

**7.CE Week 9 topic: Write a recipe. To be submitted in week 10 (6/5-10/5)**

1. Create your simple recipe for Mothers' Day celebration.

2. Write the said recipe on any coloured card **size 6 inches X 4 inches**, with a little stand behind it that makes it positioned slanting vertically at 45 degrees.

Your recipe card can be in portrait or landscape layout. Include in with interesting and relevant pictures too!

**8. CE Week 10 topic: Beat reporting critique/ review. To be submitted in week 11 (13/5-17/5)**

1. Write your experience after having a memorable dinner at a restaurant. Was it a good or bad experience?

**9. CE Week 11 topic: Query letter. To be submitted in week 12 (20/5-24/5)**

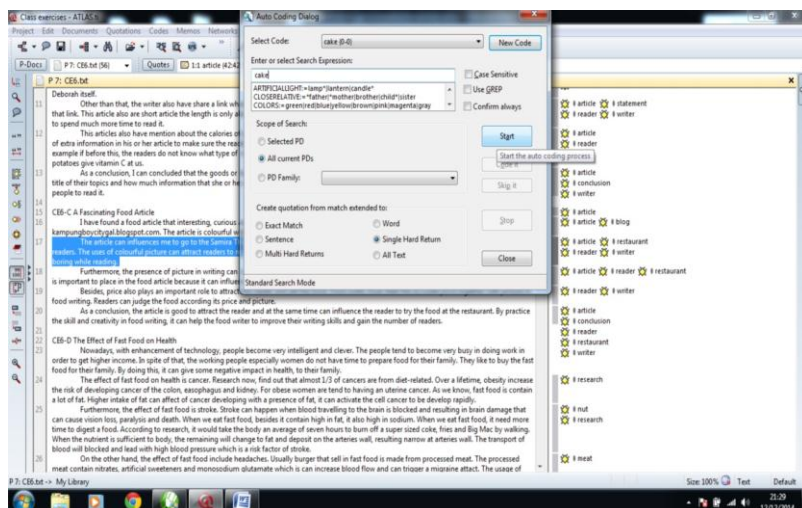
1. Write an application letter to the editor/ employer to apply for a job as a writer under segment /column in regards to food writing. Attached also the up dated resume / CV for potential employer's reference.

**10. CE Week 12 topic: Challenges, responsibilities and ethics in food writing. To be submitted in week 14 (3/6-7/6)**

1. Comment on ethics in the food industry, emphasizing on issues of honesty, social responsibilities and long term relationship, good reputation with **either one** of the following:

- (a) Between producer and customers
- (b) Between producer and suppliers
- (c) Between producer and transporters
- (d) Between producer and promoters/advertisers.
- (e) Between producer and government (Malaysia or international countries).

The artefacts or students' written assignments are sorted according to the weekly topic assigned by the lecturer of the class. Altogether there are ten topics as listed earlier. The written assignments are then typed manually into word documents. The transcripts are then analyzed using Atlas. ti computer program to see the use of specialized vocabularies in the students' work. To find the specialized vocabulary used by the students in their written work, the assignment transcript were run through Atlas.ti using the auto-coding dialogue. Through the auto-coding dialogue, the researcher can specify which specialized word to search for, for instance, the word "cake" (see Interface 1), and the software will allocate all the dialogues containing the specified word, i.e. cake (see Interface 2).

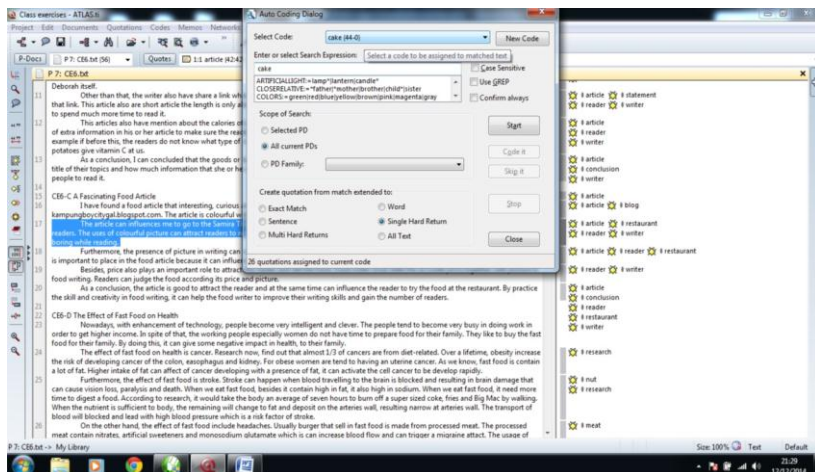


Interface 1: Auto coding dialogue using Atlas.ti

Interface 2 shows that there were 44 instances where the word “cake” was found in the assignment transcripts.

Once all of the specialized vocabularies were identified, the researcher can assess the use of the specialized vocabularies through the sentence structured by the students. If the students use the word effectively within context, they are considered successful in applying the specialized words in their written work. Specifically, the researcher will look at students’ use of specialized vocabulary using the following statements:

- 1.If students use the specialized vocabulary in context
- 2.If students use with the correct meaning and
- 3.If students use correct collocations



Interface 2: Output from auto coding dialogue using Atlas.ti

## 5. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The analysis of the corpus focused on the usage of specialized vocabulary in the students' written assignments based on the six categories of food writing specialized vocabulary (Nur et al., 2013) under Step 3, namely: ingredients, food/drink, tools/utensils/equipment, description, other words related to culinary arts and other words related to journalism; and Step 4 which are words that have meaning specific to the food writing discipline. For this paper, only the data under the ingredients category will be discussed.

## **6. INGREDIENTS**

The category of ingredients include all the elements required in preparing and creating a dish, such as i) the main ingredients, i.e. meat, poultry, seafood; and ii) other ingredients which may include herbs, flavourings, colouring, etc. Apart from food, the elements of ingredients may also be used in the preparation of drinks, such as cocktails, smoothies, juices, etc.

The specialized words under the ingredients category compiled from the corpus in research question 1 include: bacon, banana, basil, bean, beef, berries, butter, butternut, cannelloni, cherries, cheese, chicken, chilies, chives, cilantro, clams, coconut, corn, duck, egg, eggplant, figs, fillet, fish, flour, fruit, garlic, gelatin, goat, herb, ice, ketchup, lamb, lemon, lentil, lime, mango, meat, milk, mulberry, mushroom, mustard, nuts, onion, orange, oyster, parsley, pasta, peanut, pepper, pickle, potato, pumpkin, salmon, salsa, salt, sauce, scallops, seafood, seasoning, seeds, sesame, soy, spices, stake, strawberry, sugar, tofu, tomato, vanilla, vegetable, walnut and yeast.

After analyzing 100 of the students' written work, the data presented a lot of specialized vocabularies from the ingredients category. This finding adds up as a large part of food writing is the process and preparation of food and drinks, which required the main elements comprised of ingredients. It was quite difficult for the researcher to analyze the usage of specialized vocabulary under the ingredients category when they are used in recipes, as they were merely listed as the ingredients. Thus, the analysis of specialized vocabulary under the

ingredients category was done only when the students used them in a sentence, which required students to apply contextualization in their writing. It is important to consider the context in students' writing as what a word means often depends on the context in which it is used, and people pick up much of their vocabulary knowledge from context, apart from explicit instruction (Nagy 1995).

From the analysis, it was found that the students used only 58 from 73 specialized vocabularies compiled under the ingredients category. The specialized vocabularies that were not used may be because they were not the typical ingredients students are accustomed to, and some are not particularly easy to get at the local store. In other words, students are not familiar with these words (or ingredients), due to students' background knowledge in the food writing industry. Campbell & Campbell (2008) acknowledged, "Background knowledge is the raw material that conditions are learning. It acts as mental hooks for the lodging of new information and is the basic building block of content and skill knowledge". Thus, without background knowledge of these ingredients, students would not be able to apply them in their writing or expand their knowledge of vocabulary within culinary arts. The specialized vocabularies that were not used in the students' written assignments from the list compiled from the corpus in research question 1 are butternut, cannelloni, cherries, chives, cilantro, clams, figs, ketchup, mango, mulberry, pumpkin, salsa, scallops, strawberry and tofu.

In answering the research question of whether the students were able to apply specialized vocabulary attained during the food writing course in their written assignments, the researcher has chosen to analyze

specialized vocabulary (from the ingredients category) that were used by all ten students in their written work. The results showed that the first and most used specialized vocabulary found in all 10 of the students' written assignment was butter and egg. Other specialized vocabularies which are more complicated and sophisticated are not used widely by the students in their writing (for example cannelloni, cilantro, figs, etc.); which is why the researcher proceeded with the specialized vocabularies "egg" and "butter" for the analysis. The examples are as follows (specialized vocabularies are underlined):

i. Butter

"In the small bowl we have three egg yolks, two tablespoons superfine sugar, one teaspoon vanilla extract and lastly we need a half stick unsalted butter." (Student A, Class Exercise 3)

"Step two, pour milk into a large saucepan. Add cheese and butter, on medium-low heat." (Student B, Class Exercise 3)

"You needs 6 cups of thinly sliced potatoes, washed and drained, 1 cup cheddar cheese, ½ cup mozzarella cheese, 1 cup of milk, ½ cup sour cream, one teaspoon finely chopped onion, 1/8 cup of butter and pinch of salt." (Student C, Class Exercise 3)

"Beat the cream cheese, butter and vanilla together in the bowl of a stand mixer on low speed to combine." (Student D, Class Exercise 3)

“For cooking omelette, we must use a flat pan, if you don’t like butter you can use cooking oil.” (Student E, Class Exercise 3)

“In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream the remaining butter with the brown sugar, food colouring and vanilla on low to combine.” (Student F, Class Exercise 3)

“Scrape down the bottom and sides of the bowl and divide the butter between the two prepared cake pans.” (Student G, Class Exercise 3)

“Butter is the last ingredient to add and beat it again for 30 seconds.” (Student H, Class Exercise 3)

“Grease two 9-inch cake pans with one tbs of butter each.” (Student I, Class Exercise 3)

“Roux is a mixture of one portion flour into one portion butter, people usually using clarified butter for roux making.” (Student J, Class Exercise 7)

ii. Egg

“This desserts use only whites of eggs. Consider making this dish for desserts when your meal includes hollandaise source, which uses only egg yolks.” (Student A, Class Exercise 3)

“Carbonara sauce is a creamy sauce. It consists of cream, eggs, cheese and bacon.” (Student B, Class Exercise 3)

“Check the surface of bottom egg mixture to make sure the egg not scorched.” (Student C, Class Exercise 3)

“Reduce the speed to medium and add the eggs, one at a time, beating thoroughly between each addition.” (Student D, Class Exercise 3)

“Firstly, we must have an egg. The quantity depends on the pax that you want to serve. For today we only use three pieces of egg.” (Student E, Class Exercise 3)

“An egg must be wash nicely, break it and put it in the bowl.” (Student F, Class Exercise 3)

“Add eggs, syrup and vanilla. Beat until well blended and fluffy.” (Student G, Class Exercise 3)

“Served with hard boiled eggs that already shelled and halved.” (Student H, Class Exercise 3)

“It a bacteria that is most commonly found in raw meat, raw poultry, egg, milk and dairy product.” (Student I, Class Exercise 7)

“Slice the quail eggs transversely, place three halves on the other side of the tuna, and fill with caviar.” (Student J, Class Exercise 7)

From the examples provided of the most used specialized vocabulary within the ingredients category, which was “butter” and “egg”, the researcher found that students were able to apply these terms efficiently in terms of contextualization. But, students still showed some difficulties with collocations and a few grammar aspects.

In this study, the analysis found that the use of collocations for measurements were appropriately utilized by the students for the word “butter”, for instance the student indicated the amount of butter using “half stick” (Student A, Class Exercise 3), “1/8 cup” (Student C, Class Exercise 3), “1 tablespoon” (Student I, Class Exercise 3) and “one portion” (Student J, Class Exercise 7). Similarly, most of the students also showed good usage of adjectives to explain the noun “egg”. For instance, students provided the adjectives “whites of [eggs]” (Student A, Class Exercise 3), “quail [eggs]” (Student H, Class Exercise 3) and “hard-boiled [eggs]” (Student J, Class Exercise 7).

However, a few students are less aware of the correct phrase in indicating the number of eggs. For instance, one of the students wrote “3 pieces of eggs” (Student E, Class Exercise 3) to indicate that the recipe needed 3 eggs, thus this illustrates that the student was not aware that the combination of piece and egg does not complement each other or that the correct adjectives for the countable noun “egg” count eggs as one whole egg. For instance, one whole egg can also be “an egg”, other than that it

will be measured by numbers such as two eggs, three eggs, ten eggs, etc. To further illustrate, suitable adjectives are also required for uncountable nouns. Taking the same example, “eggs” can also be uncountable when they are mixed; therefore the adjectives that can be used are “some [eggs]”, “a bowl of [eggs]”, etc. The example presented illustrate collocations in term of lexical components (i.e. lexical collocation), which employ combinations of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs (Bahns, 1993; Carter, 1998). Instances of lexical collocation are a bright idea, talk freely, seriously injured and sleep soundly.

Additionally, collocation may also be represented through grammar (i.e. grammatical collocation) which is represented by the association of nouns, verbs or adjectives with specific prepositions or grammatical structures (Bahns 1993; Carter 1998), for instance, take in, pray for, lean on, and also consist of phrasal verbs, such as look forward to, look down on, etc.

When analyzing whether students can apply the specialized vocabulary (under the ingredients category) in their writing, it is important to look at the collocations used which complement the specialized words. In particular, for the ingredients category, students must be able to use the correct combination of words or adjectives to explain the specialized vocabulary. The adjectives can be (i) descriptive, where it explains the noun (such as white, brown, wholemeal, rye and garlic for bread), (ii) adjectives of number/quantity for countable nouns (such as six scallops), and (iii) adjectives of number/quantity for uncountable nouns (such as a cup of cheese).

In summary, after analyzing the usage of the specialized vocabulary, it can be concluded that students were able to apply the specialized term appropriately in terms of the context and collocations used, with the presence of a few grammatical mistakes which did not affect the meaning of the specialized terms. It should be noted that the specialized vocabulary analyzed were based on what was available through the corpus collected. Therefore word choices used were simple and limited. Although the corpus for this study may be the exact representation of the reading materials in one particular classroom in a food writing course, however, it cannot be represented to other classes in other universities or even the same university. Also, as this study tested students' performance through written exercises to see whether students were able to apply specialized vocabulary in their written assignment, future research should test to see whether students can use specialized vocabulary orally, through presentations or role-plays. Finally, it would also be beneficial for researchers to replicate this study with a much larger sample of respondents, as well as a more varied population to be able to receive a more holistic point of view on the productive vocabulary use in food writing among L2 learners. A larger population, which include more food writing classes would also provide a larger compilation of artefacts, comprising of numerous materials which include specialized vocabulary in food writing, would allow for a more exhaustive and cohesive analysis of specialized vocabulary usage in food writing (Wardiono & Yuspin, 2019).

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Findings from the analysis of the artefacts found that students were able to use specialized vocabulary productively through their use of context, meaning, and collocations used. It is suggested that students are taught specialized vocabulary through its collocations because it will allow students to make connections between words in their lexical, making learning more meaningful to the students. Knowledge of collocations in food writing would also allow students to convey their message more clearly through writing and be more proficient in their productive use of the target language.

The findings of this study also encourage the learning of specialized vocabulary through collocations, which is the learning of a specific meaning through a combination of words. Instances of collocations in food writing are a tin of tuna, a cup of tea, a jar of honey, a loaf of bread, and so on. As discussed earlier, learning words through its connections to other words provide links between networks of words. Thus, a learner with the ability to connect words in a structured manner, even with a small range of vocabulary is considered more competent than a learner with a vast range of vocabulary but cannot connect one word to another.

Additionally, the learning of specialized vocabulary through collocations, as found from the literature show that better retention of words is learnt from a string of words, rather than single words. The connections of words should be stressed as it allows students to become familiar to the similarity of a certain group of words. Finally, the focus

should also be given to students' background and needs during class and lectures to better their acquisition of specialized vocabulary in the classroom, as no two students are fully identical. Thus, taking account of what is best for each student, especially in acquiring specialized vocabularies through individual strategies, which may seem somewhat impractical, but not impossible.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank Puan Nazha Mohamed Arip from Segi College for allowing us to conduct this research in her food writing class at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam, Malaysia.

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Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 35, Especial N° 19, 2019

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

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