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Treatment and Teaching of Collocations

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Abstract

Learning vocabulary is the most important prerequisite for learning any foreign language because one cannot communicate precisely without words. But unfortunately many students are still asked to learn word lists with explanations in English or even equivalents in their native language. This method of learning is faulty not only because each word is usually associated with its mother-tongue equivalent, but also because each word is linguistically and situationally isolated. Words are not learnable as isolates, but in chunks which fall into categories like collocations, idioms (e.g.: kick the bucket), phrasal verbs (e.g.: give in) or proverbs (e.g.: like father like son).... etc.).

In this research, emphasis is laid on the treatment and the relevant techniques for teaching collocation by investigating the notion of collocation and providing a brief conceptual framework that deals with the issue in a practical and interesting way. The paper may have some useful implications for specialists in technical translation in the sense that it helps them to translate language as chunks rather than single words. Conclusions and recommendations concerning the notion of collocation and the appropriate method of its treatment have a place at the end of this research.

Keywords: Collocation, Co-occurrence, Collocates, Chunks, Treatment, Teaching techniques

1. Introduction

Collocation refers to the co-occurrence possibilities of linguistic units, i.e., words that occur together and form one single semantic unit. Such groups of words are called collocates, i.e., words that are spontaneously associated with one another in the mind of native speakers. A collocation is a combination of two or more words that are more likely to be used in various linguistic contexts. A certain noun occurs with a certain adjective (blind confidence, hard labour, hard currency ... etc.), a verb with a noun (make a mistake, do a favour, pay attention ... etc.), or a noun with a noun (brain drain, election campaign, state university ... etc.).

As for foreign learners and students of English such collocation poses an additional difficulty because it is the lack of collocation competence which is responsible for learners' errors in this respect. This lack forces students into a series of mistakes most of which are not grammatical (Hill, 2001).

J.R. Firth 1968 (cited in Hill, 2001) sees that collocation refers to "the company words keep their relationship with other words". Hornby (1997) looks at collocation in this way: "when we learn a language we learn how words combine together in phrases and sentences". Hill and Lewis (1999) see collocations as pairs of words that occur together so often that when you see one word, you strongly expect the other.

2. Categories of Collocations

Principally, the notion of collocation may extend to cover all lexical items in language since there is an entry for each verb, noun, adjective or adverb. But for convenience of treatment and brevity of description, a structural (syntactic) configuration has been devised to cover the different and most commonest types of collocations. Such a description makes it easier for the language user to follow and understand the collocational combination that occurs in language (English in particular).

The phenomenon, under investigation, has been categorized as Ghazala (1995) into groups according to the word classes that go together to form the collocational phrases. Accordingly, collocations are categorized into the following:

2.1. Adjective+Noun Collocations

This category begins with very restricted collocations in which one or, sometimes, very few adjectives go with the head noun. Then it proceeds to

cover less or unrestricted collocations in which a variety of adjectives collocate with the same head noun.

Adjectives

1. strong
2. net
3. deep
4. idle
5. torrential

Nouns

- tea
- weight
- sleep
- talk
- rains

2.2. Verb+Noun Collocations

This category includes a variety of verbs and nouns that go together forming very specific collocation verb phrases. It should be noted here that the verb and the noun are so interrelated that it is not easy to determine which one of them is the headword. Notice the following examples which are quoted from Hill and Lewis (1999):

Verbs

1. exert
2. teach
3. shake
4. pay
5. form

Nouns

- (an) effort (s)
- a lesson
- hands
- attention / a visit
- a cabinet

2.3. Noun+Noun Collocations

This group is characterized by the irreversible fixed order of its constituents. In this noun phrase structure both nouns are so interrelated that it is difficult to decide which one is the headword. Notice the ordering of the two nouns in the following examples (Hill and Lewis, 1999):

Nouns

1. brain
2. nerve
3. death
4. state
5. cabinet

Nouns

- drain
- cell
- sentence/penalty
- university
- minister

2.4. Adverb+Verb Collocations

An adverb or a number of adverbs may precede a particular verb forming collocations (Hill and Lewis, 1999). In the following examples the verbs function as headwords:

Adverbs

1. ultimately
2. seriously/strongly
3. totally/effectively
4. broadly/definitely
5. easily/successfully

Verbs

- prevail
advise
ban
confirm
substitute

2.5. Verb + Adverb Collocations

A particular verb may be followed by one or more adverbs that strongly collocate. Again the verb in this category is the headword as seen in the examples below:

Verbs

1. climb
2. violate
3. serve
4. consider
5. summarize

Adverbs

- steadily
openly
faithfully/devotedly
objectively/urgently
briefly/neatly

2.6. Verb+Adjective Collocations

In this category the verb (headword) collocates with a particular adjective. It often happens that a variety of adjectives can collocate with the same verb forming somewhat unrestricted collocations.¹

Verbs

1. fall
2. came
3. keep
4. lie
5. hold

Adjectives

- asleep/ill
right/true/close
alive/calm/quiet/amused/awake/better
asleep/flat/helpless/low/resting/unopened
cheap/close/constant/false/good/immoral/just/steady

2.7. Adverb+Adjective Collocations

An adverb often keeps company with a particular adjective. It may also happen that more than one adverb may collocate with the adjective headword.

¹ All these examples have been quoted from ARCS www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/0331/discuss.html - sample pages 1 of 1, 1 of 3, [Accessed on January 3rd 1999] and Jimmie Hill and Michael Lewis, "Dictionary of Selected Collocations".

The past participle in the examples below functions as an adjective. (McCarthy, 1990)

Adverbs

1. greatly
2. wildly
3. wonderfully
4. vitally
5. deeply

Adjectives

- encouraged
- fanciful
- expressive
- important
- ashamed

3. Importance of Collocations

Collocation plays an important role in vocabulary building due to the fact that English is full of collocational pairs and chunks which are fundamental to all language use. Building an effective vocabulary on the part of the learner depends, among other things, on remembering and storing collocations. According to Hill and Lewis (1999) "One of the best ways to build your vocabulary is to remember collocations rather than single words". McCarthy (1990) believes that knowledge of collocational appropriacy is part of the native speaker's competence, and can be problematic even for the advanced learners who often make inappropriate or unacceptable collocations. Lewis (2001) cites that it has been psycholinguistically proved that the human brains tends to acquire and store language in chunks rather than individual words. It is more effective for us to remember and use phrases rather than constructing them as separate or isolated words. Zimmerman (1998) points out that Nattinger and De Carrico have analyzed extensive examples of actual language to demonstrate a central role for lexical phrases and multi-word chunks.

They assert that pragmatic competence is determined by the learner's ability to access and adapt prefabricated chunks of language. Lewis (2001) these chunks should not be looked upon as merely words that go together but as combinations that have immediate force and sanctioned meanings which are situationally evocative.

4. Treatment and Teaching of Collocations

Due to the important role collocations play in the process of vocabulary building, which is an important part of the learners' overall language competence, special attention should be paid to the treatment of this linguistic phenomenon. Nation and Newton (1998) have found that collocational phrases are not learned well through

ordinary language exposure and suggest that there is a need for them to be learnt explicitly. This explicit learning can be achieved only through constant and conscious exposure to the language which is highly important to acquire collocational knowledge. Learning by deduction proves to be very effective because "some items appear to be taught more effectively on pattern practice and memorization". (Allen, 1974). Learning by deduction is most useful for mature learners, who are already prepared psycholinguistically and linguistically to be involved into the more complicated aspects of the language in which collocation plays an important role.

Lewis (1998) says that "the recognition, generation and effective recording of collocations are essential elements of his Lexical Approach". Lewis (2001) thinks that "asking students to systematically record the collocations of words newly or previously met will widen their understanding of what words mean and how they are used". Conscious and active introduction of these collocations in the classroom helps to recycle half-known words and accelerate their learning and gives more time and attention to the new ones. *Advocating* explicit–deductive treatment when dealing with collocation does not mean that the role of implicit–inductive treatment is to be eliminated. On the other hand, along with explicit rules and descriptive statements a variety of carefully designed drills and tasks are to be devised and put in actual use.

Paulston and Bruder (1976) see that the two methods are not mutually exclusive but are complementary. It is suggested that a combination of deduction and induction will produce the best results. A language lesson should consist of introducing explicit remarks about the collocations being tackled, plus a series of drills from a mechanical to a communicative level in order to direct the students' attention to the issue and give them optimum practice in language production. Strevens (1977) asserts that "this deductive-inductive method springs from the fact that the idea of single 'best' method is intuitively unsatisfactory".

As for beginners, Rivers and Temperley (1978) see that "inductive treatment is very appropriate for young learners who have not yet developed fully their ability to think in abstractions". This type of treatment, as Allen (1974) states, is also appropriate in that it helps learners to be acquainted with a variety of collocations by process of induction based on drilling and the observation of language in use. As a starting point for introducing the notion of collocation to learners, it is important to focus on the arbitrary nature that characterizes and governs collocational relations. As Woolard (2001) puts it: "There is no reason why, for instance, to say "make a decision" rather than "do a decision". We need to make our students aware that this is simply the way we say things in English". Woolard (2001) believes that this is very much in line with modern trends in teaching the language to helping learners develop their learning skills. It coincides with modern technology which has made it accessible to learners to develop

their own skills through CD-ROM and teaching internet websites. This sort of learning which aims at developing students' proficiency in this area needs guidance from teachers that they can become independent collectors of collocations from input which they meet outside the classroom (Hill, 2001).

Lewis (2001) asserts that when dealing with the notion of collocation teachers are required to continually bring useful collocations to students attention and help them to remember them more than trying to improve their grammar or giving them new words, which can be misused. Many students are not making any noticeable progress simply because they have not been trained to notice which words go with which. But this should not be understood as neglecting or overshadowing the role of grammar and lexis at the expense of collocation. An efficient teaching strategy should deal with collocations only after the language material has been explored for meaning and grammar. The foregoing discussion has shed some light on the need for a special treatment of the notion of collocation. A treatment which varies according to the level of the learners whether beginners, intermediate or advanced. The purpose behind this treatment is to help students learn associated chunks with their associate meaning rather than isolated words. This, it is hoped, can be achieved by devising a variety of teaching techniques and exercises.

5. Teaching Techniques: Classroom Activities

Students' failure to learn collocations is basically attributed to the fact that teachers have not pointed them out in the text they are using. Unless teachers direct their students' attention, they will not notice and record collocations for themselves (Lewis, 2001). Their prominent role is to help learners to identify collocations in text, and highlight the useful relations existing between types of collocations: adjective+noun, verb + adverb ... etc. The process of training students to recognize collocations in context may take different forms of techniques.

Although there is a variety of teaching techniques, the researchers have chosen and devised some which are particularly effective and suitable to practise the commonest collocations. As McCarthy (1990) puts it, "these techniques represent some sort of organized alternatives to the disorganized word lists or the more conventional ways of related words in lists of synonyms and antonyms".

The aim behind introducing such class activities is twofold:

1. The immediate one is to make it easy for students to have a clear understanding of this phenomenon through a systematic presentation of a variety of tasks and exercises which help "build the learners' mental lexicons" (Hill et al., 2001). Here, the so-called "semantic mapping" technique has been adopted (Lewis, 1998). This

technique has been found very effective in creating associative networks for words by drawing conscious relationship between words that collocate.

2. The ultimate aim is to make students more aware of collocations as an effective way to improve their ability to use the language precisely and systematically.
3. Before dealing with the teaching technique, it is a good idea to refer to the strategy of teaching collocation. To Hill et al. (2001) and Lewis (2001) this strategy may precede as follows:
4. Pointing out a collocational combination from the text.
5. Assigning its category (adjective+noun, verb+adverb, or verb+noun collocations ... etc.).
6. Writing it on the board and asking students to record it in their notebooks.
7. Encouraging students to provide collocates they already know.
8. Selecting some other new ones that are related to each category.
9. Providing sufficient exercises and activities to enhance teaching.

But according to Hill et al. (2001) teachers are warned to include huge numbers of collocations at one time because this may prove to be a counterproductive process. It is worth mentioning that it is up to the teacher to determine the level of his students and choose the appropriate teaching techniques and exercises accordingly.

Technique (1)

A very important classroom activity can be conducted to practice "Verb+Noun" collocations which have already been dealt with and recorded in the students' notebooks.

To foster easy learning of the collocations with the verbs "miss", "get", "do" and "make" the following table is given to help students memorize them:

Miss	Get	Do	Make
a/the goal	home	one's homework	progress
a/the chance	the sack	one's shopping	money
one's family	permission	somebody a favour	a mistake
an/the opportunity	the message	business	a discovery
a/the lesson	a job	one's best	troubles
an appointment	nowhere	the cooking	peace

Depending on the table above the following task can be introduced to check the students' ability to provide the correct collocations².

Task: Choose the words and phrases that collocate with the verbs below:

Verbs: Miss Get Do Make

Words and Phrases: (progress, goal, homework, home, the cooking, nowhere, shopping, chance, effort, someone a favour, peace, the point, permission, money, one's family, the sack, a mess, a mistake, the opportunity, trouble, one's best).

Technique (2)

A similar technique can be devised to introduce the verbs "come", "get" "feel", "go" that collocate with adjectives (Verb+Adjective) collocations.

The following table can be devised to direct the students' attention to the collocational combinations.

Come	Get	Feel	Go
first	ready	comfortable	mad
last	married	happy	crazy
right	divorced	disappointed	wild
early	drunk	free	wrong
close	angry	ill	quiet
late	lost	nervous	bad

Technique (3)

Another exercise can be introduced to practise another group of "Verb+Noun" collocations. The headwords are the verbs: catch, pay, keep, have and break.

² The material in these exercises has been quoted from www.geocities.com/p.2of4, but some modifications have been made to cope with the exercise requirements.

This is shown in the following table³:

Catch	Pay	Keep	Have	Break
a cold	attention	a pet	a headache	the law
a bus	cash	control	a bath	the rules
a ball	a visit	a promise	a haircut	a world record
fire	the price	an appointment	a holiday	a promise
a thief	by check	a secret	a drink	one's heart

Technique (4)

To encourage students to record "Verb+Noun" collocations, a 5-1 box⁴ is introduced. The headword, in one side of the box, is *the noun "job,"* while in the other side *the verbs* that collocate are recorded. It is noticed here that some verbs are followed by a preposition forming grammatical collocations. Notice the following table:

apply for a	job
be out of a	
find a	
hunt for a	
resign from a	

This technique can be used to encourage students to design more boxes of their own to record other types of collocation.

Technique (5)

McCarthy and O'Dell (1994) believe that "words forks" are good ways of learning the collocation (of adjectives with nouns, and verbs with nouns. Look at the complete forks below:

³ All examples are borrowed from www.geocities.com/lof3/Athens/Acropolis/033/intra.html /

⁴ The above box has been quoted from Jimmie Hill, et al, 2001, Classroom strategies, activities and exercises, p.99.

Adjectives		Verbs	
original		shoot	
brilliant		edit	
unusual	idea	direct	a film
great	noun (headword)	star in	noun (headword)
excellent		review	

Task: Now finish these forks with suitable words that collocate with the headwords "view and ball".

Adjectives		Verbs	
magnificent		kick	
superb		hit	
	view		a ball
	noun (headword)		noun (headword)

Students can work together to add adjectives to the fork with "view" like: wonderful, optimistic, pessimistic...etc. As for the second fork, they can add verbs like: bounce, throw, catch, pass...etc.

Technique (6)

Matrices or grids can be used to clarify the collocation of certain words. They are excellent ways to introduce and practice different collocations. " The teacher needs only to supply the blank grids after modelling the first unit, and the students can complete the grids with the collocations they discover in each chapter" (Conzett, 2001).

	a car	a motorbike	a train	a horse	a plane
to fly					+
to drive	+		+		
to ride		+	+	+	

In order to create some sort of contextual effectiveness, the following task can be suggested.

Task: Depending on the information given in the grid above, complete the following sentences:

1. She has always wanted to----- a train.
2. Russian women are not allowed to-----passenger aircraft.
3. -----a motorbike can be very dangerous.
4. He has always wanted to-----a modern car.

Technique (7)

To access the learners' collocational competence in "Verb+Noun" collocations, matching exercises are devised. These exercises can be straightforward as follows:

Task: Match the words in column "A" with their collocates in column "B".

Column A
1 - exert 2 - take 3 - do 4 - perform 5 - save

Column B
a - my best b - money c - an operation d - a seat e - an effort

Matching exercises can be made more effective by asking students to supply more than one answer as shown in the following exercise, which provides practice on "Adjective+Noun" collocations.

Task: Match the following adjectives with nouns in as many combinations as possible⁵:

Adjectives

1. inefficient
2. sufficient
3. enough
4. limited

Nouns

- time
- responsibility
- decision
- progress
- money
- understanding
- equipment
- administration

Technique (8)

Hill et al. (2001) introduce matching–completion exercises to reinforce the learning of "Adverb+Adjective" collocations. The activity begins with introducing two lists: "List 1" which includes adverbs and "List 2" which includes adjectives. Students are asked to match the correct collocations. It ends with a completion–type exercise depending on the two lists below.

Task: Match the adverbs in List1 with the adjectives in List 2

List 1 (Adverbs)

- 1- absolutely
- 2- densely
- 3- highly
- 4- clearly
- 5- strictly
- 6- badly

List2(Adjectives)

- a- mistaken
- b- qualified
- c- populated
- d- limited
- e- evident
- f- certain

⁵ Possible answers: 1- inefficient/progress, equipment, administration 2 - sufficient / time, money, understanding 3 – enough, time, money 4 - limited / time, responsibility, progress, money, understanding

Now complete these sentences by using each adverb once;

1. I am certain about what she wants.
2. He is a qualified teacher.
3. Central California is one of the most populated Paris of the USA.
4. Excuse me, I wasmistaken.
5. It is evident that the plan will not prove successful.
6. Supplies at this low price arelimited.

Technique (9)

Benson et al. (1991) suggest an effective completion type technique to develop the students' collocational experience. A number of incomplete sentences are presented and students are asked to provide the missing words that form correct collocations with the headwords.

Task: Find the collocation and write the missing word in the space provided⁶

1. She was an adviser the prime minister.
2. This photograph is too small. Can you it?
3. We saw a of wild horses.
4. She fluency in three languages.
- 5 - This letter is a follow - up to my telephone
- 6 - He lost the key. He had to the door.

Technique (10)

A refreshing activity can be suggested to remind students of words they often overuse such as "do, make, have, take" (Hill et al., 2001). Learners often do not realize how many words collocate with a word they already know. The teacher can introduce a word followed by a list of words that include both correct and incorrect collocations.

⁶ Possible answers: 1. to 2. enlarge 3. herd 4. acquired 5. call 6. force / break down

The students are asked to identify the correct collocations. This activity can be done from time to time when the teacher discovers that his students' memory needs some of refreshment.

Technique (11)

An interesting technique can be devised by preparing cards on which headwords are written. Other cards, on which words that might collocate with the headwords, are also prepared. Each of the two types of cards may have different colours to make the activity more interesting. This type of activity is suitable for beginners and intermediate students⁷

Task: Choose words on the red cards that collocate with words on the white cards.

White Cards: make, do

Red Cards: mistake, favour, business, research, one's best, believe, progress, homework, discovery ... etc.

This task can be developed into a game-play activity in which the class is divided into two groups or teams, and the group that matches more correct collocations is the winner. For more advanced levels, the previous class activity can be developed into a more productive skill in "having students write new sentences depending on the possible collocations generated by the groups" (McCarthy, 1990).

Technique (12)

An interesting collocation game can be played with intermediate and advanced students. The teacher tells his students that all the words he reads out collocate with the same noun, which they must try to find. Students write down the collocates the teacher reads out. When they think they know the correct noun, they stand up. Guesses are checked and the same is repeated with a new word. It is very important to make sure, before starting the game, that the activity will not be frustrating for the students. Students can consult their dictionaries to find the answers (Hill et al., 2001).

⁷ This technique is adopted by the researcher depending on Anita. J. Sokmen "Current Trends in Teaching Second language Vocabulary", (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), PP. 253–254.

Here are some examples:

No.	Collocates given by the teacher	Words to be guessed by students
1	plain, dark, white, bitter, milk, bar of	chocolate
2	provide, collect, volunteer, conceal, gather, withhold	information
3	huge, growing, profitable, export, domestic, black	market
4	cut, calculate, cover, minimize, meet, recover	the cost of

The same thing can be done with adverbs or verbs:

No.	Collocates given by the teacher	Words to be guessed by students
5	extremely, reasonably, superbly, fighting, remarkably	fit
6	carefully, thoroughly, properly, closely, briefly	examine

After playing this game many times, students can do the activity independently in small groups.

Technique (13)

Benson et al. (1991) recommend another technique that can be used with advanced students to create a sense of collocational awareness. 'Students are asked to point out the distinction between collocations and free combinations.

Task: In each of the following sentences, the underlined words are either collocations or free combinations. Write collocation or free combination in the space provided (Benson et al., 1991).

1 - We received bitter complaints about the service

We have no recent complaints about the service.....

2 - The police filed a report about the demonstration

Unfortunately, the office has lost your report

3 - She committed suicide

Most people in our country detest suicide

4 - It is not easy to declare war

Many people hate war and try to stop it

5 - Do you need a license to operate a tractor?

You do not need a license to sell a tractor

Technique (14)

Another technique that aims at developing the students' competence at the recognition level is to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable collocations. In the task below attention is drawn to "Verb+Adverb" collocations. The same technique can be used with other categories of collocations.

Task: Identify the acceptable collocations by underlining them ⁸

⁸ Sometimes more than one acceptable collocation is given in each item as seen in the answers: 1.a, c/2.a.c/3.b/4.a/S.b, c/6.a, b

1- sleep	/a . soundly	b. fully	c. deeply
2- thank	/a. sincerely	b. deeply	c. warmly
3- recommend	/a. greatly	b. highly	c. deeply
4- note	/a. carefully	b. vitally	c. highly
5- emphasize	/a. highly	b. strongly	c. repeatedly
6- grip	/a. firmly	b . tightly	c. strongly

Technique (15)

McCarthy (1990) asserts: "Even very advanced learners often make inappropriate or unacceptable collocations" He; therefore, suggests an effective technique by devising a class activity in which students are given sentences containing a variety of erroneous or odd collocations and asked to provide alternatives. This task is very interesting in that it attempts to check the students' collocational knowledge. (McCarthy, 1990)

Task: Identity any odd or unacceptable collocations in the following sentences, and suggest alternatives⁹.

1. His books commanded criticism from many people.
2. There was a high difference between the two teams.
3. I am making this exam because I want to achieve a step in my career.
4. He had been found guilty of some slight crimes.
5. She won many competitions, forming fame in the process.
6. I was very grateful because he rescued my life.

Technique (16)

In order to enhance the learners' collocational efficiency, another teaching technique can be used, to distinguish between correct and incorrect collocations. Learners are also asked to provide the correct alternatives.

⁹ Alternatives for the underlined words (erroneous collocations) are: 1. attracted 2. big 3. taking – take
4. minor 5 . achieving 6. saved

Task: Write "Correct" if the collocation is correct. If it is wrong, write the correct one in the space provided.

1 - My friend sent hot greetings.
.....

2 - The pupils made their homework.
.....

3 - She was a great comfort to her parents.
.....

4 - He drove his bicycle down the road.
.....

5 - The pilot flew the helicopter very skillfully.
.....

6- She did great efforts to win the race.
.....

Technique (17)

Another activity can be suggested to check the students' ability to discriminate between common and odd collocations. A number of verbs are introduced in each line that all collocate (except one) with a head noun that follows. Students are asked to cross out the verb that does not collocate (Hill et al., 2001).

Task: Cross out the verb that does not collocate with the noun that follows¹⁰:

No.	Verbs	Nouns
1	accept, act on, disregarded, follow, make, take	advice
2	deal with, do, examine, ignore, reject, respond	a complaint
3	accept, answer, come in for, give, rise to, make, reject	criticism
4	share, desirable, do, enjoy, have, recall	an experience
5	come to, decide, enforce, implement, reach, sign	an agreement

Technique (18)

Another matching exercise may take the form of groups in which all words in one group collocate with a particular noun. Students are asked to guess the appropriate nouns that collocate with the words in each group (Hill et al., 2001).

¹⁰ The words to be deleted are: 1. make 2.do 3. make 4. do 5. decide

Task: Match each of the nouns (strategy, war, discomfort, discipline, excitement) to one of the groups of words below (Hill and Lewis, 1999).

Group A: considerable, extreme, mild, minor, slight, unbearable

Group B: arouse, cause, create, display, feel, lead to, contain

Group C: declare, go to, lead to, prolong, wage, win, lose

Group D: adopt, abandon, apply, devise, follow, invent

Group E: effective, firm, strict, poor, excessive, slack ¹¹

Technique (19)

To break up the class routine, Sokmen (2000) suggests a number of oral activities by experiencing words in various ways with an aural-oral reinforcement. The best technique to begin with is memorizing and acting out simple and easy dialogues that reinforce structured speech. Such dialogues are advantageous in putting words directly into productive chunks (collocational combinations). This teaching technique is suitable for beginners and intermediate students.

Technique (20)

Sokmen (2000) suggests another technique which depends on "information gathering" which can highlight target collocations. The teacher can raise a question like: What nouns collocate with the verb "make"? In this kind of oral activity, each student has to give one noun and the teacher must move around the class to get the students' answers until the information is complete. Various questions of the same nature can be asked about a variety of collocations. This oral activity is useful in the sense that it reinforces the students' acquired knowledge of collocations and exposes them to new relevant ones. This oral activity can be finally complemented by a written activity for more reinforcement.

Technique (21)

Translation activity has been found effective in vocabulary building and chunking words (collocates). This teaching technique has been found suitable for linguistically homogeneous advanced classes (Sokmen, 2000). This technique involves

¹¹ The correct nouns are: discomfort, excitement, war, strategy, discipline

oral translation activities conducted communicatively through pair work, information gaps and group discussion while summarizing and paraphrasing the text to be translated. In doing so, Sokmen (2000) believes that "students can learn chunking words through the process of discussion, repetition and retelling". Students are asked to "translate collocations into their own language as single units. Doing this regularly will help students become more aware of collocation and less inclined to translate word for word" (Hill et al., 2001).

Technique (22)

A very effective technique can be used for correcting students' mistakes. To Lewis (2001) committing errors "provides the ideal opportunity to expand and organize the learners' lexicon in a very efficient way". When a collocational mistake is committed, the teacher should not only correct the mistake itself, but also give some extra collocations as well. The activity below shows how a student's miscollocation, for instance, "make an exam" is dealt with:

S: I have to make an exam in the summer.

(Teacher indicates mistake by facial expression) S: I have to make an exam.

T : (Writes "exam" on the board).

What verb do we usually use with " exam"?

S: Take

T: Yes, that's right. (Writes "take" on the board).

What other verbs do we use with "exam"?

S: Pass

T: Yes. And the opposite? S: Fail

T: Yes. (Writes "pass" and "fail" on the board).

T: If you fail an exam and you want to take it again, what do you say? (Waits for a response).

O.K, re-take, you can re-take an exam. (Writes re-take on the board).

If you pass the exam with difficulty, what can you say? (Waits for response).

S: I

T: You say "scrape through".

After finishing the activity, a format can be used to organize the responses:

take	an exam
pass	
fail	
re - take	
scrape through	

7. Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

Due to the important role which the notion of collocation plays in language learning, its teaching should be a top priority in every language course. The method of treatment and the techniques that follow vary in relation to the level of the learners whether it is elementary, intermediate or advanced.

To conclude, it can be said that all the activities and techniques which have been previously introduced aim at highlighting the learners' awareness of the notion of collocation. This in turn results in expanding their collocational competence by being consciously and fully involved in this area of language learning. When achieved, this will ultimately lead to a better identification of and mastery over a wide range of collocation which represents a characteristic phenomenon of the English Language.

Suggestions

1. The method of treatment varies according to the learner's level and needs so it is suggested that implicit-inductive treatment of collocational combinations is to be adopted when dealing with elementary and intermediate levels. The suggested method depends on induction and habit-formation through repetition and

memorization of the commonest collocations. It is psycholinguistically believed that the more drills learners of English at early stages are exposed to, the better their performance will be and the less errors they will commit. It is therefore, suggested that textbook writers should bear this fact in mind when designing their language courses and textbooks.

2. As for intermediate and advanced learners another method should be followed, one which depends on explicit presentation of the notion of collocation. A method which aims at making students fully aware of the notion they are dealing with. It gives the advanced learners some degree of conscious insight into the material they have already learned so as to enlarge their experience of English and to achieve a discriminating control over the data that they will be called upon to handle as the exposure to collocation increases throughout the language course.
3. It is suggested that a combination of deduction and induction will produce the best results since the idea of a single method is practically unacceptable.
4. A very important stage, which should be adopted when dealing with different collocations, is that they should be treated independently as an entity, and divided into separate categories, for instance, "Verb+Noun" collocations, "Adjective+Noun" collocations, "Adjective+Adverb" collocations and so on. This type of independent treatment, the researchers believe, will make it easier and more practical for students to form an overall (syntactic-semantic) characterization of the phenomenon by getting them directly and systematically involved in it.
5. It is worth mentioning, that teachers should be well prepared for their task. Only teachers who have a clear understanding of the notion of collocation will be able to help learners in the best possible way. Thus enhancing the teachers' collocational knowledge and experience plays a remarkable role in the process of teaching.
6. It is also suggested that a teacher should always encourage what Lewis (2001) calls "a student centered exploration approach to language". This can be achieved by directing his/her students' attention to pointing out and recording in their notebooks useful collocations which they might come across while reading a text. Adding newly-learned collocations by consciously introducing them and reactivating other half-known words will increase the chance of acquisition (Lewis, 2001). The teacher should also highlight his student' power of observation so as to create in them a sense of collocational awareness which is an essential step to acquire collocational experience.
7. Even in the absence of collocationally-oriented textbooks, teachers can make use of the current textbooks by re-examining them not only for new vocabulary but also for collocations. This exploration should aim at directing the students' attention to collocations in different contexts.
8. In order to foster independent language learning, it is advisable that advanced learners should be encouraged to consult collocation dictionaries to acquire a much

more comprehensive account of word combinations, and consequently, widen their collocational knowledge. Out-standing dictionaries in this respect are: "BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English", "The LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations" and "The Advanced Reader's Collocation Searcher". Along with this, the constructive use of modern technology (through CD-ROM and World Wide Web-the internet) has made such independent learning quite feasible.

9. A significant implication for teachers is that, at advanced levels, they should never teach a new word particularly a noun or a verb without giving a few common collocates. This is so because knowing the meaning of word is useless or inefficient without knowing something about their collocational combinations. It is collocational competence that allows students to read more widely, understand more quickly and speak more fluently.

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