

Understanding Collocative Meaning in Linguistics and Language Teaching

Dr Mohammed Zaheer Ab Khan

Associate Professor of English Language

College of Arts and Education

English Language Department

Ajdabiya University

DOI:10.37648/ijrssh.v15i04.002

¹ Received: 19/08/2025; Accepted: 10/10/2025 Published: 13/10/2025

Abstract

Semantics is an intricate and multi-dimensional study, which has never been easily defined in a mere one-dimensional definition. Linguists have over decades been trying to unravel its dynamics, nature, and features. In its essence, semantics is concerned with meaning, which is how one interacts and comprehend language. Although the meaning may appear very simple, its nature and how it functions in the language is not as simple. To linguists, one of the greatest challenges is the classification of these meanings and how these meanings are structured. Over the years, theorists have come up with different methods of executing this task yet none of the definitions has been able to capture all the shades that are involved. Among leading experts in the field of semantics, several linguists have been able to distinguish between different kinds of meaning that help to get a more comprehensive understanding of how language is used to express thoughts. Nevertheless, even these attempts do not allow providing a certain and unambiguous explanation of some of the semantic concepts.

Collocative meaning is one of such concepts. Although it has been explicated in many academic books, it is hard to find an agreed definition. Collocative meaning has remained a debatable topic despite the much coverage it has received and a number of interpretations and views are present on the issue. Having read an impressive number of essays and books on the subject, it is understood that the development of a simple and one-fits-all definition is a complicated process. This essay aims at examining the concept of collocative meaning, its causes, its place in the wider semantics discipline as well as its applicability in the real world, e.g., teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The key question that becomes focused is whether collocative meaning is a unique form of meaning or it can be interpreted in yet another manner. This article will help us to understand its importance in theoretical and applied linguistics in that one will gain a more in-depth insight into how the meaning works in language.

Keywords: *semantics; collocative meaning; EFL; linguistics; multi-dimensional study.*

1. Introduction

Semantics or the study of meaning of language is a multifaceted study of linguistics. Collocative meaning is one of the main concepts that have become a top of discussion under semantics. In order to comprehend such concept as collocative meaning it is necessary to consider not only theoretical background but also practical implementation of the concept. The initial attempts like *The Meaning of Meaning* by C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards (1923) presented a system of meaning interpretation based on 16 categories. Although the most successful, their paradigm was not the only one, and such linguists as Charles Morris (1946), Roman Jakobson (1942) and Peter Newmark (1988) shared

¹ How to cite the article: Khan M.Z.A (October, 2025); Understanding Collocative Meaning in Linguistics and Language Teaching; *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*; Vol 15, Issue 4; 5-14, DOI: <http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v15i04.002>

another point of view. Among them, a simplified version, due to Geoffrey Leech (1969), has had a considerable influence, and it distinguishes seven different types of meaning namely conceptual, connotative, collocative, social, affective, reflected, and thematic. His work made sense of the functioning of meaning in language, the interaction of words, their meaning, and their context. The meaning of collocative as proposed by Leech (1969) is the relationship between words that occur often. An example is that, totally awesome is a widely used collocation but exclusive awesome or wholly awesome would sound unnatural to the native speakers. This co-occurrence is not accidental, but it takes patterns which are determined by social and linguistic convention. The collocative meaning can therefore be used to describe the use of language in situations where some of these words are more natural than others and help speakers to utilize language in a more efficient way and according to the norms of the native speakers.

This interpretation of collocative meaning is of great essence when it comes to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In an EFL classroom, students can tend to engage in studying vocabulary and grammar independently, with no other teaching that can cause the learners to have loopholes in the way words are used in practice. Through the focus on collocations as pairs of common words and their implications, EFL teachers are able to improve the fluency levels of learners and their capacity to process a language in its context and contribute to more natural and proper communication. The study of the collocative meaning as formulated by Leech (1969) is still a crucial part of the meaning of language. The collocations are changing with the language and their importance in the communication process remains crucial to the language students as well as the language teachers.

2. The Role of Collocations in Semantics

This is the case with collocations, the concept that is used in the study of semantics to describe the habitual co-occurrence of words which make up fixed or semi-fixed phrases and have a meaning that cannot be easily inferred based on the individual words. Such combinations of words are useful to expand our knowledge of the functioning of language as they represent certain cultural, social and linguistic norms. For example, the term 'a cold shoulder', when applied in the sentence she gave him the cold shoulder, bears very little connection to the actual meaning of the words. It is defined as a deliberate act of overlooking a person, which depicts that collocations form new meanings depending on the context as opposed to the meaning of the words themselves.

Likewise, the term 'tight spot', e.g. 'I am in a tight spot' is not used to describe a narrow, or physically constraining, space, but a challenging one. This brings out the point of the meanings contained in collocations being developed through use and context. The collocations and semantics are symbiotic in that collocations assist in defining and enriching the meaning of words and semantic theories are used to explain why some combinations of words are more natural than others. Wittgenstein(1953) maintained that words meanings are intrinsically connected with the situations in which they are employed and this correspondingly to the idea of collocative meaning words make meaning through combinations. Collocations play an important role in the language learner who is interested in being fluent. Knowledge of collocations helps the learner to have an easier time communicating as they understand the literal sense of words as well as their contextual sense. Teachers must be encouraged to teach collocations since it is an important aspect of communicating. The use of collocations is central to semantics since it demonstrates how meaning is negotiated in the context of a speaker, a listener and a context. They are a door into the dynamic feature of language and must be learnt as theoretical construct as well as a practical instrument of using and teaching a language.

3. The Linguistic and History Foundations of Collocations in Linguistics

The phenomenon of collocations, which is a crucial part of semantic theory, is not new to people, and it is the notion that combinations of words are necessary to create meanings. R.H. Robins (1969) credits the analysis of collocative meaning to the Greek Stoics, who were among the earliest to recognise the fact that words do not exist in isolation, and that collocations are manifestations of the meaning of words. This initial insight was the foundation of the contemporary linguistic perspectives on collocations (Ball, 1969, p. 221). This idea has since been elaborated by contemporary experts like Namvar, Mustafa, and Nor (2011) who point out that words get unique meanings with respect to collocations they make. Their argument is that, words can vary depending on the collocation they are employed in (Namvar, Mustafa, and Nor, 2011, p. 3), which is the key to the functioning of the collocative meaning.

Linguistically, the word collocation is derived out of the Italian verb 'locare' (signifying to place at) and the Latin 'locare' (signifying to place). The term was made popular by J.R. Firth in 1951, who holds the view that, one shall know a word by the company it keeps (Firth, 1957, p. 11). The theory propounded by Firth focused on the idea that meaning of a word is inherently tied to other words that it habitually co-occurred with and that defined its syntactical and semantic characteristics (Firth, 1957, p. 196). This opinion made a great contribution to the semantic theory, emphasizing the importance of combinations of words to construct the meaning.

The definition of lexical meaning according to the Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary is a lexical meaning of a word used in isolation. Nevertheless, according to D.A. Cruse (2000), collocations are words that partially overlap with each other forming a sort of semantic transparency, i.e. the meaning of the phrase is influenced by the synthesis of the component parts (Cruse, as cited in Sadeghi, 2010, p. 2). Collocations occur in certain contexts, e.g., in the phrase strong coffee, strong argument, strong opinion, the word strong is always related to something intense, powerful. These are general trends that are easy to forecast in representing the role of collocations in conveying meaning in language (Sadeghi, 2010, p. 2). This predictability brings out the fact that knowledge in collocations can prevent embarrassment in speech and enhance fluency especially in teaching language and translation. Therefore, collocations are crucial in semantics theory and in the informal language application. Their research is critical in furthering our knowledge of the construction of meaning, not only in terms of associations among words and their application in a particular situation.

4. The Role of Collocations in Language Teaching and Meaning

Collocations in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching are considered to be the key to effective communication. The conventional method of teaching usually centers on grammar and vocabulary separately, believing that once these two parts are mastered, the eventual student would be able to communicate on any subject. Nonetheless, Namvar, Mustafa, and Nor (2011) believe that this method does not consider the fact that collocations allow learners to provide language in a more natural manner. They claim that people are applying grammar to the purposes that it was not designed to serve, and that is the shortcoming of this conventional interest. Collocations are also referred to as prefabricated chunks or lexical chunks that are trapped in the mental lexicons of the native speakers. These combinations such as sour milk which is opposed to rancid milk have a certain context-linked meaning which extends beyond the definition of the individual words. According to Namvar et al. (2011), collocations are not only names of objects, but also have an element of pragmatics that entails the use of language in particular settings (Yule, 1996). Collocations, then, are used to maintain the meaning in the linguistically correct way and contextually suitable way.

The incorporation of collocations in language learning indicates the realization that people tend to build meaning using patterns of words as opposed to the single words. To illustrate, the phrases, 'sour milk' and 'rancid milk' are both used to denote spoiled milk but in their connotation and usage there is a disparity. These dissimilarities underscore the inaccurate idea that collocations do not only concern words but the way meaning may be contextually influenced. Namvar et al. (2011) believe that collocations allow the learners not only to name things but also to do something with language to express more subtle meanings. Understanding how to apply formal or informal collocations in different situations can guide learners to learn how to communicate within nuances. Learners can speak more easily and effectively due to the knowledge of collocations, as Namvar et al. (2011) imply, as they do not have to create sentences but rely on ready-made phrases. Such a process of chunking is indicative of the process of storing language patterns used by native speakers to make communication quick and coherent, and collocations cannot be dispensed with in the quest of fluency and effective communication.

Collocations are not given much attention in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and most teachers do not incorporate them in their normal curriculum. According to Laybutt (2009), although collocations are important, they are not taught or practiced explicitly in the classroom, where sporadic exercises of the so-called consciousness-raising tend to be used by many teachers. This scarcity of concentrated attention to collocations shows the necessity of EFL teachers to use them in their teaching. In case a teacher is aware of how collocations are crucial in language acquisition, he or she can allocate at least one unit of the semester to teaching and practicing collocations. This would assist a second language learner (L2 learners) to identify and apply typical word combinations thereby enhancing their fluency in natural speech. In the case of L2 learners, they may boost their fluency by being able to

memorize a few collocations. Through learning of common collocations, the learners are therefore able to have a better understanding of the rhythm and flow of the language. Such awareness can also help them learn more about collocations and apply them in the conversation, particularly with native speakers. In the long term, collocations can be learned and result in more natural and native-like language proficiency.

Idiomatic expressions are usually formed as a result of collocations. As an example, cultural and linguistic norms are present in such expressions as to spill the beans or a bone to pick. Also, rather simple constructions, such as terribly excited and wildly successful, are examples of the peculiarities of collocations in English. Although both adverbs serve the same purpose of making adjectives stronger, they cannot be used interchangeably; the phrase 'terribly successful' sounds wrong to the local language speakers, although its structure is also related to the same syntactical rule as terribly excited. These details demonstrate that it is significant to learn how words merge in natural language to comprehend their meanings and usage better. Mwihi (2004) points out that by being aware of such differences, learners are able to negotiate the lexical and cultural complexities of a certain language. Educators can instruct students in fundamental differences in meaning to better develop the skills to generate coherent and culturally sensitive utterances by teaching them common collocations, such as: iron will, nerves of steel. The teaching of collocations in EFL lessons provides learners with more chance to communicate in a more authentic way. Through emphasizing general word combinations and the contextual application of these combinations, the teachers may develop fluency and understanding. Collocations connect the gap between the theory and the implementation of language into practice, making it possible to understand how language operates in the real world situation better. Mwihi (2004) and other researchers note that it is necessary to learn how collocational patterns can be applied to enhance the general level of language proficiency and make communication more natural.

The important thing about understanding the way language works is that collocations or word pairings that always come together are important. In *The Selfish Gene*, Richard Dawkins (1976) coined the word meme based on the Greek word mimema, which means something imitated. Memes can be considered in this way as collocations-familiar word pairs, which are recognized by being used frequently. Such common phrases as nuclear family, junk food, and key to the future have some meaning outside of their words and represent how language expresses common notions. In the case of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, it is necessary to learn about collocations. Breaking collocational rules may lead to clumsy or unnatural speech which was an obstacle to communication. As an instance, when referring to a mad man, one says, 'Holy cow, look at that crazy man!' would make sense to native speakers but "Holy moose, what a nutcase that man is!" would be strange, since the expression holy moose does not appear as a natural collocation in the English language. Awareness of these distinctions is essential to EFL students, as they make it possible to find their way through the nuances of a natural speech.

Semantics is also a factor of collocations, which determine the construction of meaning. Dumitrascu (2010) defines collocations as sets of words, in which members of the set engage in a semantic relationship (p. 12). As an example, 'holy cow' can be frequently used as some sort of exclamation, but it also has cultural overtones, especially in Hinduism, where cows are holy. In a similar manner, junk food elicits a particular image of a greasy and unhealthy food showing the use of word pairings to develop meaning when a specific context is repeated as time goes by. Another point that is made by Dumitrascu (2010) is that the analysis of collocations should be conducted idiomatically. Such expressions as to have an 'iron will' or 'to have nerves of steel' do not have an literal meaning but have culturally-directed meanings. The comprehension of these subtleties is important to both linguists and language teachers. In the case of EFL learners, clear teaching of collocations assists them in speaking more fluently, according to the patterns of native speakers and being more fluent.

The use of collocations in EFL teaching is critical in ensuring that learners are able to attain effective communication. Collocations are not only lexical patterns, but they have both semantic and pragmatic meanings. Education based on the use of collocations can give students a better understanding of the meaning construction process, which helps learners to speak a more natural and fluent language. Collocations are necessary to comprehend language as the idea proposed by Dumitrascu (2010) and need to be given the priority in learning a language. Word combinations that tend to be commonly used together are known as collocations, and they are required to enhance fluency and understanding among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Park (2003) describes the necessity to teach collocations, which according to him are a very important part of linguistic semantics. According to him,

learners can communicate more effectively in both fluent and written language through learning collocations as coherent units, arguing, that, in the case of collocations, it is important to understand and learn as a unit and then learners can communicate more efficiently and quickly (p. 20). This shows how collocations help in manoeuvring the natural language usage challenges.

Nevertheless, collocations are frequently neglected in most EFL environments, including the Japanese. English teaching in Japan is often based on the standardised type of English taught in books, and not much attention is paid to the frequent combinations of words that are used in the natural speech (Hodne, 2009). According to Hodne (2009), it is identified differently, and it appears that linguists and educators are yet to have a universal definition (p. 4), which is the ability to incorporate collocational knowledge into the teaching experience. Nevertheless, the issue of the significance of teaching collocations in Japan is gaining momentum in the attention of most people, with scholars such as Koya (2005) observing that research on collocations should be expanded.

When learning the L2, learning often involves the use of translation to know the meaning of new words, although the learners need to learn to use the language in a manner similar to native speakers. Although one can learn to understand it even without being able to master the use of collocations, it does not allow learning fluency and being considered a native-like speaker. According to May Fan (2002) quoted in Pawley and Syder (1983), collocational knowledge is very important in L2 competence, that is, it helps the learner to speak fluently, to make the speech clearer, and to write or to sound like native speakers. Learning and applying collocations is essential in the development of fluency that meets the norms of the native speakers. It assists the learners to speak and write more naturally and idiomatic. EFL teachers should also incorporate collocations in language teaching in order to enhance the communicative abilities of students and make them understand the nuances of language usage.

5. The Benefits and the difficulty of teaching Collocations in EFL

Words that are used together (collocations) play an essential role in language acquisition, which is a problem among second language learners (L2Ls). 'Rain or shine here', 'smiling with pleasure', 'she is glowing', etc. contain similar verbs (e.g., shine, smile, glow), but the verbs cannot be used interchangeably. As an illustration, 'shine' does not normally go with 'joy' but does go 'well' with in school (she excels in school). Such inconsistency in collocational use is among the main challenges that L2Ls experience (Fan, 2008, p. 111). The biggest problem is that collocations are acquired subconsciously by native speakers through exposure to the natural language; it is in their speech communities that they acquire word combinations. Conversely, English as second language speakers particularly those who spend most of their time in classrooms, do not get the opportunity to experience the use of the authentic language, which prevents them from learning collocations intuitively.

Fan (2008) states that native speakers develop a tremendous responsiveness of collocation unconsciously, and most of the learners, particularly those who learn the second language at school setting, are deprived of this chance (p. 111). In spite of all these difficulties it is essential to teach collocations. The conventional EFL curricula are concerned with grammar and sentence structure to the point of neglecting the interaction of words in context. This emphasis on basic grammar can be useful in making the student comprehend the English language yet it usually impairs fluency and natural expression in speech. Two factors pose a major challenge to learning of collocations in EFL: they are idiosyncratic and do not allow exposure to native contexts. As an example, whereas refine and polish are synonyms in such situations as refined/polished argument, a mixture of refined tea and polished car is unnatural. This uncertainty makes it necessary that learners should consider collocations to be a fixed combination of words, instead of basing on the meaning of words in isolation. Also, L2Ls have difficulty internalizing such natural combinations without being exposed to native English (Fan, 2008).

6. Concerns in the Use of Collocations

Learning collocations is very important in becoming more fluent and sounding more native, although it is not obligatory that the L2 learner (L2L) be understood. According to Fan (2008), the knowledge of the correct usage and meaning of collocations will make one speak more naturally, particularly in the informal setting. Wray (2002) goes further to add that collocations play a central role in the development of fluency and aid in the development of genuine and integrated language. They also allow English as second language learners not to use awful language,

making them more comfortable talking to native speakers. To teach the EFL effectively, the teachers are advised to focus on teaching collocations in addition to grammar and pragmatic knowledge. Through practical examples, expressions and general phrases, teachers can make learners feel more fluent and easier when they are communicating.

First language transfer is one of the greatest challenges in EFL students so that the learner uses the structures in his/her language to English and commits errors. To illustrate, a literal translation of the phrase on the other hand to most languages would create confusion because there is no direct word that can translate the phrase. Collocations are not always simply translated and cannot be dismantled into their separate elements. As an example, the verb 'make' is used with a large number of nouns in the English language (e.g. make a decision, make progress, make an effort) but these constructions do not make sense when translated into other languages without the loss of the idiomatic value. It is therefore important that learners should learn collocations as units and not single words.

To deal with these challenges, a teacher ought to incorporate the use of collocations in classroom exercises. Memorization and drilling are one of the strategies which are efficient, and through drilling, students internalize collocations. As an illustration, displaying images on the whiteboard and requiring the students to guess the collocation encourage the students to learn more in the context of word combinations. The other useful exercise is the collocation discovery through which students enquire about the etymology of phrases, e.g. "break the ice). This prompts learners to learn about collocations other than they are actually translated to and hones a further insight of context and the way of use. Also, internet research may be used to enable the learner to investigate the origin and development of collocations, which may make him/her think critically on the use of language. The use of collocations in EFL teaching enables the learners to build a more innate understanding of the language and hence they can communicate in the language fluently and freely.

7. Recognition and Identification of Collocations.

Lack of awareness of the importance of collocations by students is a major challenge in the learning of collocations. This problem is common with most ESL programs, particularly in the non-English speaking countries, when teaching a language the grammar and vocabulary are taught mainly leaving the colloquial forms such as collocations, idioms, and a pun severely undervalued. Consequently, students can also fail to understand that legal mastery of collocations is a key to fluency. This oppression to exposure usually implies that learners can only experience the use of natural language when they meet native speakers either during the course of traveling or when they are in a foreign country. To resolve this, teachers can be sensitized by integrating real-life communication in classes. As an example, dialogues, media, or texts with common collocations can be used by the teachers, and students should understand that fluency does not only mean correct grammar. The use of language and its patterns of usage, such as collocational patterns, is one of the main secrets of effective communication.

Classroom teaching is important, but being exposed to an English speaking environment is amongst the best means of learning collocations. Research indicates that students who are exposed to an actual contextual meaning of language learn collocations more naturally and they also have the advantage of being given instant feedback by the native speakers (Schmitt, 2004). But in most cases this is not the case and immersion is not an option to many EFL learners. Thus, teachers can make the experience as immersive as possible with the role-playing, viewing of English-language movies, and discussion in which the collocations should be featured, so that the students might acquire a more intuitive sense of the language use.

Collocations usually do not have a precise logical principle, and thus, they are difficult to learn within the EFL. As an illustration, best wishes is a natural expression, whereas high wishes or exuberant wishes would be strange to the native speakers. Such phrases tend to become standard ones with time and their meaning cannot necessarily be inferred using the constituent words. This can bewilder students and even the highly trained teachers would find it difficult to justify the reasons why some work and others do not work, particularly when the rationale of why they do is based on cultural and historical development (Wray, 2002).

Collocations acquisition can be described as an essential area of language acquisition, in particular, in the context of attaining fluency and native proficiency. According to the challenges that face them, including first language transfer and no awareness, the educators can assist the learners with the provision of collocations in the

curriculum, as well as, by employing techniques like repetition, discovery activities, and creating awareness. Although there is no better method to learn collocations than by immersion, classroom-based learning may also be a good source of exposure and practice of using language in the real-world setting, which will improve communicative competence among students.

8. Lexical Association and The Collocational Meaning.

Collocations-pairings of words which frequently occur naturally in the language are critical in the interpretation of meaning presentation. According to Pecina (2009), there are three types of lexical associations namely collocational association, semantic association and cross-language association. Collocational association is a phenomenon whereby words are regularly used along with some other words and are seen in the same phrases such as maiden voyage. Even maiden journey may have been reasonable, but it is awkward to the ears of natives. Semantic association displays the association between words in terms of their meanings e.g. sick and ill which are both a description of poor health but are used in different contexts e.g. sick leave vs. ill health. Lastly, cross-language association which is the relationship between words used in various languages like the French name mansion translating to the English word house although there can be a variation in collocational use of words (Pecina, 2009).

The collocations can actually be more than their individual elements making subtle meanings. Toast bread and roast meat are natural collocations though roast bread and toast meat are strange phrases, although these words are similar in meaning (Matthews, 1982). This indicates that collocational patterns are signs of cultural and linguistic preferences and thus determine the interpretation and expression of meanings. The meaning that arises when a word is used in a habitual manner with another word is known as collocative meaning, which is vital in creating meaning in language. According to Croft and Cruse (2004), collocations are combinations of words which speakers use rather than other combinations that seem semantically equivalent (p. 249). As an example, 'strong coffee' is used in preference to 'powerful coffee' although the two might have the same meaning with respect to the strength of coffee. The example of the use of collocations being used to shape the semantic landscape of a language is well exemplified by Native speakers identically identifying strong coffee as the standard coffee. Collocation study thus shows the influence of meaning not only by the words themselves but also by relationships between words in their cultural and contextual contexts. This is particularly applicable among the language learners who have to negotiate both lexical and cultural challenges of collocations to express themselves naturally and effectively.

Collocations are also dynamic and they indicate culture and geographical differences. Due to the spread of the English language, the collocations vary in various regions, thereby acquiring different forms and meanings. This variety may be very confusing to L2 learners since the use of collocations is affected by the culture and their regional use (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2005). To become proficient enough in both lingual and cultural terms, learners must understand collocations as lingual structures and cultural cues. Collocations play a significant role in learning languages because they have a meaning beyond the words. The analysis of lexical associations, collocations, semantic, and cross-language, is the practice that can assist the learner to recognize and apply the collocations more efficiently. Collocations as pointed out by Pecina (2009) and Matthews (1982) are usually more than literal and hence are very crucial in attaining fluency. In the case of L2 learners, collocations are an important part of mastering fluent and natural communication in patterns of native speakers.

Collocations are mainly used to facilitate communication. They assist speakers to communicate in a more natural and fluent way and make their ideas be expressed in a manner that other speakers can immediately associate. To native speakers, collocations are easy to use naturally. In the case of L2 learners, collocational knowledge must be acquired to learn fluency and sound more fluent in English. According to Wray (2002), being a better communicator is important in learning the formulaic language like collocation because this will help the speakers to make use of language effectively and correctly in various situations. They do not only help one to pass on the meaning but also they act as a barometer to the native speakers when the non-native speakers are speaking. The selection of collocations may say much about a speaker such as his/her language skill, cultural origins, and even his/her social positions. Indicatively, the native English speaker can possibly notice if a person is a non-native speaker by the nature of collocations he/she uses or does not use appropriately. Moreover, some of the collocations may indicate the social status of a speaker or the informality of the situation he/she is addressing (Biber et al., 1999). Therefore, collocations do not only have linguistic meaning, but they are social and cultural overtones as well.

9. Conclusion

Although collocations can be difficult to the L2 learner, because it is unstructured and relies on context and cultural background, it is essential that the learners become more aware of the significance of the collocational meaning in language acquisition. Vocabulary acquisition is not about learning single words as Nation (2001) points out, it is about learning to use words in meaningful combination. To learn English in a way that one can fluently and meaningfully speak it, a collision of common collocations is a significant step towards this objective as a second language learner of English. Although they may not be in a position to acquire all the collocations at once, with a few important phrases they can go a long way to communicate effectively in a real life scenario.

Collocations also ensure that learners do not use clumsy or unnatural phrases that are brought about by direct translation of their native language to English. According to what Ellis (2002) says, L2 learners are usually in trouble due to the fact that they use the rules of their first language to their second language and, thus, produce phrases that do not concur with the norms of the native speakers. As an illustration, a learner can pronounce make a photo rather than take a photo, which is not naturally sounding to the native speakers. Students need to learn common collocations to prevent such mistakes and speak in such a manner that this complies with the norms of the native speakers.

In native and non-native communication, collocations are significant in enabling people to present the meaning in a more natural and flowing manner. Nevertheless, learning and mastering collocations is critical in becoming fluent in English, notwithstanding the difficulties they present to the L2 learners. Thus, when considering the methods of teaching a foreign language, teachers are strongly encouraged to focus more on the element of collocations as a part of a wider strategy to understand the grammar and vocabulary but achieve the skills of an effective and fluent communication, instead.

References

- Ball, D. (1969). *The nature of meaning*. Oxford University Press.
- Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. (1999). *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. Cambridge University Press.
- Biletzki, A., & Matar, M. (2011). *Wittgenstein: A reader's guide*. Continuum.
- Croft, W., & Cruse, D. A. (2004). *Cognitive linguistics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cruse, D. A. (2000). *Meaning in language: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.
- Dawkins, R. (1976). *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford University Press.
- De Saussure, F. (1916). *Course in general linguistics*. Open Court.
- Dumitrașcu, A. M. (2010). Collocations in practice. In M. M. Mărcuț, R. M. Mureșan & A. I. D. Dumitriu (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference of the Association for the Study of Language and Communication* (pp. 11-24). University of Bucharest.
- Ellis, R. (2002). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- Fan, M. (2002). The importance of collocational knowledge in L2 competence. In P. Wray (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 9th Conference on Language Learning* (pp. 65–78). Cambridge University Press.
- Fan, M. (2008). The importance of collocations in second language competence. In D. Wray (Ed.), *Formulaic language and the lexicon* (pp. 110–120). Cambridge University Press.
- Fan, M. (2008). The importance of collocations in second language competence. In D. Wray (Ed.), *Formulaic language and the lexicon* (pp. 110–120). Cambridge University Press.
- Firth, J. R. (1957). *Papers in linguistics 1934-1951*. Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1966). Notes on transitivity and theme in English. *Journal of Linguistics*, 2(2), 140-168.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Longman.

Hodne, R. (2009). The role of collocations in EFL education: Current challenges and future directions. *ELT Journal*, 63(4), 3-12.

Jakobson, R. (1942). *Two aspects of linguistics and the philosophy of language. Selected Writings*, Volume 1, The Hague.

Koya, Y. (2005). A study of collocations in Japanese EFL education. *Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 14(2), 106-118.

Laybutt, J. (2009). *Collocations in the EFL classroom: Raising awareness of the importance of collocations*. Cambridge University Press.

Leech, G. (1969). *A linguistic guide to English poetry*. Longman.

Leech, G. (1969). *A linguistic guide to English poetry*. Longman.

Matthews, P. H. (1982). Collocations and their usage. *Studies in Linguistics*, 7, 249-254.

McCarthy, M., & O'Dell, F. (2005). *English collocations in use: Intermediate*. Cambridge University Press.

Morris, C. (1946). *Signs, language, and behavior*. Prentice-Hall.

Müller, Y. (2008). Collocations in English and the history of their study. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 36(1), 4-26.

Mwihaki, A. (2004). Collocations and the categorization of adjectives in Kiswahili. *Studies in Language*, 28(1), 129-148.

Namvar, F., Mustafa, G., & Nor, M. (2011). Collocation and its impact on the teaching of English. *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 1-9.

Namvar, F., Mustafa, G., & Nor, M. (2011). Collocation and its impact on the teaching of English. *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 1-9.

Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge University Press.

Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. Prentice-Hall.

Ogden, C. K., & Richards, I. A. (1923). *The meaning of meaning: A study of the influence of language upon thought and of the science of symbolism*. Harcourt Brace.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. (n.d.). *Lexical meaning*. Retrieved from <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/lexical>

Park, J. (2003). Korean EFL language learners and the importance of collocations in language acquisition. *The English Teacher*, 32(1), 19-22.

Pawley, A., & Syder, F. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In J. Richards & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and Communication* (pp. 191-226). Longman.

Pawley, A., & Syder, F. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In J. Richards & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 191-226). Longman.

Pecina, P. (2009). Lexical associations and collocational meaning. *Lingua*, 119(2), 1-14.

Robins, R. H. (1969). *General linguistics: An introductory course*. Longman.

Sadeghi, B. (2010). The significance of collocations in learning English as a second language. *Journal of English Language and Literature*, 3(2), 1-7.

Schmitt, N. (2004). Investigating collocations in a second language: Implications for teaching and lexicography. *Lexicography: Journal of ASIALEX*, 1(1), 115-144.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations* (G. E. M. Anscombe, Trans.). Blackwell.

Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

Yule, G. (1996). *The study of language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.