



FUNCTIONING OF “COLLOCATION” AS A LANGUAGE PHENOMENON (IN THE CASE OF THE BRITISH ONLINE EDITIONS)

Isheryakova Joanna Rinatovna

The second-year student of Bukhara State University, Foreign languages Faculty

E-mail: juanna2567@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the question of the essence and role of the linguistic phenomenon «collocation», and the peculiarities of the functioning of English collocations in British online publications. The article also explores the features of the description and structural systematization of the “collocation” phenomenon, and also considers the options for classifying the studied collocations using examples selected from the online publications of the British newspapers «The Guardian» and «The Independent.»

1. Introduction

Collocations and their functioning are of scientific interest to many foreign and domestic linguists. However, at the moment there are no precisely designated types and descriptions of this linguistic phenomenon.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, in the narrow sense, the definition of collocation is: “Collocation is a combination of words in a language, that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance”, which in English means: “collocation is a combination of words that occur together in the language more often than one would expect based on the random distribution”. In a broad sense, collocations are considered grammatically and lexically correct phrases that sound correct for native speakers of a given language. Such expressions consist of two or three words that are used together. It is worth noting that a similar linguistic phenomenon, collocation, exists in many languages of the world.

Collocations are one of the difficulties in learning a language. Most of our vocabulary consists of the so-called “prefabricated chunks of different kinds”, or ready-made blocks of words of various types, and collocations are the most important type of such “blocks”, which makes the topic under study so relevant.

Ten years ago, in most Russian universities, collocations were not an important aspect of the English language curriculum. The textbooks did not contain their mention or special exercises for training lexical compatibility, developing the skills of a dictionary user, which is especially important for the successful search for collocation partners of words. Since modern textbooks are focused on communication, productive types of speech activity, the development of



fluency and naturalness of speech, more attention has been paid to the field of lexical compatibility, as well as exercises that train search skills in dictionaries of various types. Thanks to advances in information technology, the search for collocations is faster than was possible with printed directories.

It should be noted that the problem of studying collocation is one of the central ones in research on lexicology and syntax. Collocations are a new phenomenon compared to other units of the language. They are between free and stable phrases. Such «related» phenomena in linguistics always attract the attention of researchers. Until now, there are many different definitions about the place of collocations in the linguistic system of units. Some linguists consider them to be types of phraseological units, others believe that they are stable phrases. French linguists also consider collocation as a method of analyzing the meaning of a word by identifying the environment of a given word.

Very valuable comments on certain aspects of this problem can be found in the works of many foreign scientists: Benson M., Lewis M., Bans J., Cowie A., Furs J.R., Sinclair J. and others. To domestic scientists who paid attention to the study of collocations should include such linguists as Borisova E.G., Akhmanova O.S., Kobritsov B.P. However, the few studies that address this issue do not provide a sufficiently complete picture and exhaustive characterization of collocation.

The purpose of this article is to study the functioning of collocations in British online publications and to determine the general features of the description of this linguistic phenomenon. In this regard, relevant theoretical information about collocations was studied and analyzed, the texts of British online publications were analyzed for the presence of collocations, and the specifics of their functioning according to various collocations were revealed. The material of the study was the news articles of the British online publications “The Guardian” and “The Independent”, published in the period of 2018. The source of information about collocations was the Oxford

Collocations Dictionary” (2002), where collocations from examples were verified, and the nature of lexical compatibility and content of the collocation itself was clarified.

In modern linguistics, the term collocation occupies one of the leading places. It comes from the English word collocation, which means mutual location, joint placement. The term appeared thanks to the English linguist John Furs. In the Russian-language scientific literature, it first appeared in the Dictionary of Linguistic Terms of the Soviet linguist Akhmanova O.S., who defines collocations as “lexico-phraseological conditional combination of words in speech for the implementation of their polysemy”. Monograph Borisova E.G. became the first work in Russian linguistics devoted to the study of the concept of collocation and its functioning in speech on the basis of the Russian language.

Since a collocation concretizes the meaning of the words that it includes, the exact meaning of a word in any context is determined by its environment – the distributors, the so-called collocates – the words that are united around it. The word in the collocation that retains its meaning is called the key or free component: the word scenery in combination beautiful scenery. A word that depends on a key component and whose choice is determined by tradition is called a non-free component.



Collocations are divided into two large groups: grammatical and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocations consist of a main word (noun, verb, adjective) and a preposition. Other combinations of words are called lexical collocations.

2. Methodology

According to the topic of the research, a number of classifications of the functioning of collocations as a linguistic phenomenon have been studied. Foreign researchers distinguish several classifications of collocation. Cowie A. Compiled his classification, arguing that, unlike idioms, the meaning of a collocation is made up of the meanings of the words included in it. The classification of Lewis M. And Bunce J is based on the principle of “predictability” of the translation of a collocation from one language to another (predictability in Language) . Lewis M. Builds another classification based on the number of words with which a lexical unit enters into collocations.

In this article, we will take a closer look at the classification of the British linguist Benson M., who understands this linguistic phenomenon as idiomatic stable combinations of words and divides collocations into:

- Non-composite – the meaning of such collocations does not follow from the meanings of their parts, or the meaning is completely different from the free combination. These are usually idioms and idiomatic expressions. In this example, we see the use of a non-composite collocation: Authors are up in arms over a new contract that demands all rights for any story it publishes. (The authors are outraged by the new terms that require rights to all publications.) [“The Guardian”, 8/17/18]. Here, the meaning of the collocation to be up in arms does not follow from the meanings of its parts. This collocation has a sign of an idiomatic expression;
- Non-replaceable – members of a collocation cannot be replaced by other words, even if they have the same meaning in the context. We found the use of an irreplaceable type of collocation in this sentence: Chief executive resisted earlier calls to resign after controversial remarks. (The chief executive has resisted earlier calls to step down after controversial remarks.) [«The Independent», 05/16/18] You cannot replace chief executive with main executive, or other words, even if in context they have the same the very meaning;

Invariables are collocations that cannot be freely modified by additional lexical material or by grammatical rules. This is also true for set expressions such as idioms. For example: Germany's SPD gives cautious green light to Merkel coalition talks.

(The SPD apprehensively endorsed the Merkel coalition talks.) [The Guardian, 01/21/18]. The collocation to give green light (to approve) cannot be freely changed, for example, to give red light with the help of additional lexical material or with the help of grammatical rules. This also indicates the presence of idiomaticity and a sign of a stable expression.

3. Results and discussion

Summing up the results of the study, it should be noted that collocation as a linguistic phenomenon is widespread in the media discourse of the British online editions of The Guardian and The Independent newspapers. The collected material clearly confirms the functioning of collocations according to the classifications of scientists. Summarizing the above, the phenomenon of collocation can be called syntactic-semantic, in which there are always two components: free and dependent, the main element of which is the word. The



general features necessary for describing and systematizing collocations include such characteristics as stability, the degree of idiomaticity, the number of words with which the lexical unit enters.

T in collocation, grammatical category of constituent parts, “predictability” of translation of collocation from one language to another. The application of the analysis method to the material of this work made it possible to discover the fact that some collocations exhibit a sign of idiomaticity. The translation of such collocations from English into Russian showed that they are most often translated idiomatically. However, it is worth noting that idiomatic collocations are less common in British online newspaper texts. Based on the analysis of news texts, according to the given collocations from the examples, we can conclude that the most common collocations are related to politics, business, economics, and the social sphere. Probably, these phrases reflect British realities and are the most relevant when discussing issues on this topic, which is popular for newspaper publications. The use of collocations by the authors in the texts helps to properly convey their opinion to the readers, as well as in providing additional information. The functions of collocations include the fact that they concretize and expand the lexical meaning of the words that are part of the phrase, and also give the text the brightness of the expression, since in order to express any meaning, the speaker “uses not only the word whose meaning coincides with the corresponding meaning » but also a unique value arising in relation between the values of the collocation components. To find out what words a word “collaborates” with, you need to refer to special dictionaries. The main reliable sources of information about collocations are the authoritative monolingual educational dictionaries for special purposes «Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English» and «Macmillan Collocations Dictionary».

4. Conclusion

Thus, the study of a number of theoretical issues of collocations and the analysis of their functioning as a linguistic phenomenon (on the material of the British online editions of the newspapers The Guardian and The Independent) in the light of the current tasks of linguistics allow us to take a fresh approach to some problems that are still young, but actively developing linguistic discipline.

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