

ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS AND THEIR TYPES

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Abstract. This article studies the types of collocations and their importance in language learning. Moreover, it deals with the literature review done in the topic of classifying collocations into several groups.

Keywords: collocations, idioms, word combinations, co-occurrence, strong collocations, grammatical and lexical collocations.

Collocations and their grammatical structure are one of the discussive topics in linguistics. Many linguistics offer a similar view on the concept of collocations and the main focus is paid on the co-occurrence of the words. The term itself is derived from Latin word *collocate* and means to arrange or to set in order (Martynska, 2004). According to another linguist, collocation is the combined words at the syntagmatic level. For instance, the collocation dark night syntagmatically connected to each other. Since the meaning of the dark and night is relatively collocated (Firth, 1957). Hill, in turn, defined collocation as a predictable combination of the content words, e.g., *football match, bus stop*.

Modern linguistics classify the collocations into several types. Mahmoud (2005) explained that there are only two types of them: open collocations and restricted.

1. The nodes which can be clustered with different words are considered to be open collocations, e.g., *a big bag, a beautiful city, an old lady*, etc.
2. Fixed clusters such as idioms are referred as restricted collocations, e.g., *raining cats and dogs, once in a blue moon*.

However, other group of scientists categorize the collocations as following:

1. Unique collocations: These are the fixed collocations whose companion words cannot be replaced with other words, like *abiding memory, acute awareness*. Hill (2001) particularly explored this type of combinations which involve less common and regularly quite specific or idiomatic pairings.
2. Strong collocations: The word combinations of this group consist of words which are connected to each other strongly yet, they can be separated, e.g., *heavy rain, break the law, make a mistake*
3. Weak collocations: They can be made up of word co-occurrences which are easily predicted. For example: *a hot day, a small street or an ancient museum*.
4. Medium-strength collocations: This term is suggested by Lewis (2001) and the words used in the collocation can be either used alone or mostly used with their second pairs such as *have a breakfast, take an exam*.

The above-mentioned classification of the collocations is made according the structure of making them.

In addition to this, there are plenty of collocation patterns where several word groups in most cases come together. Particularly, there 20 of them.

1. Adjective+noun= a bad life
2. Verb+noun= clean the room
3. Noun+noun= TV channel

4. Verb+adverb= sleep tight
5. Adverb+adjective= absolutely gorgeous
6. Verb+adjective+noun= examine the previous lesson
7. Noun+verb= the dog closed in
8. Discourse marker: *to start with*
9. Multi-word prepositional phrase: *several weeks ago*
10. Phrasal verb: *look after*
11. Adjective+preposition= jealous of
12. Compound noun: *traffic light*
13. Binominal: *ups and downs, advantages and disadvantages*
14. Trinominal: *mind, body and soul, or here, there and everywhere*
15. Fixed phrases: *on the contrary*
16. Incomplete fixed phrase: *a type of..., better late....*
17. Fixed expressions: *bite the bullet*
18. Semi-fixed expression: *see you later/tomorrow/on Friday*
19. Part of proverbs: *everything that glitters*
20. Part of quotation: *no matter how apart...*

Furthermore, other important types of collocations are lexical and grammatical. It is divided in these categories in order to provide clarity and structure for mastering vocabulary usage and syntactical patterns.

Lexical collocations are those focus on nuanced meanings and are mostly directly tied to vocabulary development. For instance, *black tea, strong coffee* or *a major difference*. In this example the word of difference cannot be used with other words such high or low that is why they are believed to be lexical collocations. Moreover, in many cases, verb+noun,(give a talk), adjective+noun (bright idea), noun+verb (people live), noun+noun (a cattle of sheep), adverb+adjective(extremely noisy) and verb+adverb(think thoroughly) forms of lexical collocations are common.

When it comes to grammatical collocations, they relate to grammatical structures and prepositions. For example, “catch up” uses the prepositions “on/with/to” but above is not used with it. “To be afraid that” also follows with this rule.

In briefly, co-occurrence of two equal lexical words is decided to be lexical collocations while, grammatical collocations deal with a lexical word, typically a noun, adjective or verb with a grammatical word.

In conclusion, there are three big division of collocations according to linguistics. However, it is undeniable that these classifications are also sub-divided into several groups. In language learning and teaching, the role of collocations is crucial since, they assist and make the speech of FLLs more natural and fluency. So as to communicate without difficulties foreign language learners should acquire an adequate number of word combinations and collocations.

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