**Collocations as an important aspect of vocabulary aquisition**

To know collocations well is known to be a great advantage of any learners of a foreign language because with the help of collocations they can enrich their vocabulary so that the speech may sound more colorfully.

In different languages collocations operate differently. This is the reason why we should take an account of language peculiarities. To translate Kazakh or Russian collocation into English one without losing its meaning is a really difficult thing because two collocations of two different languages may not express one and the same meaning. That is why it is ridiculous to translate collocations word in word as many English language learners have got used to doing. The way of how to prevent the learners from this habit should thoroughly be thought over and cleared up because it can lead to misunderstanding between the representatives of two completely different nations conveying their thoughts in completely different languages.

Without collocations the course of English Lexicology would apparently be poor because the skillfull and colorful formal speech is carried out with their insertion in it. Collocations are supposed to have a great impact on the audience as the performance where they are used a good deal of times seems to attract listeners’ attention for sure. Collocations always make speech sound more comprehensive as compared to that where they are missed.

To be aware of all the collocation peculiarities means to achieve fluency and proficiency in all four language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The topic of the work speaks for itself “Collocations as an important aspect of vocabulary acquisition”. It gives us the concept of what is going to be written on after pages. Of course in the research you are reading you will find out everything connected with vocabulary acquisition and collocations and their basic types.

The following points are going to be revealed in the first part of the present work: vocabulary acquisition and what role collocations play in the process of enriching the vocabulary. You will, as well, get some advice on how not to be confused while using collocations. In the second part of the research you will surely come across such themes as general survey of collocation including the definition, different types of collocations, the mistakes often made within collocations and how to prevent learners from making them. The third part of the present work will deal with analyzed book of Charles Dickens “Bleak House”. All these points supplement each other so that together they may form one successful and productive approach on how to best expand the learners’ vocabulary and make their speech more colorful with the help of collocations.

It is admitted that vocabulary acquisition, as the smallest unit in English learning, is the most basic, decisive yet difficult part. However, vocabulary acquisition has always obsessed and fascinated the English language learners. This paper presents a discussion of English vocabulary acquisition by foreign learners in the respect of vocabulary size and correct use. Through the analysis of the problems existing in the present vocabulary learning and teaching, there are also some learning strategies available to expand vocabulary size.

With the development of many countries, English teaching and learning has got great popularity in the whole society. Simultaneously, it has aroused many questions which deserved further researching to make English teaching and learning more effective. As to these questions, the study of vocabulary acquisition by foreign students may be the most important parts. Just as A.D. Wilkins said, “Without grammar, little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.” [1,118]

Today, besides the linguists, every English learner knows that vocabulary acquisition plays a dominant role in second language teaching and learning. The number of words one has directly influences the result of English learning. If attention is not sincerely paid to words learning, it’s obliviously impossible for him to acquire nice English ability, and further studies.

Motivated by the backwash of various tests, there have emerged many hand books and guiding books on vocabulary. In English classroom, you can see the blackboards are often littered with masses of new lexical items, and students compile page upon page of word list that they rarely have any chance to practice. After years of English learning, vocabulary acquisition is still a hard nut to crack to foreign learners of English. And gradually there is a common belief among learners that to learn an English word is to know its equivalent in the native language. Knowing the equivalent of a foreign word in your mother tongue means knowing the English word. And the larger one’s vocabulary size is the higher level one is at. Theoretically, it may be true. Yet this largely depends on the sound knowledge of the vocabulary items one has and the correct use he/she can make use of them. Different approaches to vocabulary acquisition will have totally different effects on both learners and teachers in helping the learners expand them vocabulary knowledge and size. The misconception of vocabulary acquisition will inevitably lead learners to go far from a good command of the English language. So, the question to be discussed below is the relation between vocabulary size and correct use.

As long known to language teachers and researchers, strong correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension has been established. Many linguists carry out a lot of research to identify the minimum vocabulary size required to read unsimplified texts adequately. According to E.D. Laufer, learners whose vocabulary size gives them 95% coverage of the words in the text are able to reach an adequate level of comprehension. He also finds that if a learner has less than 3000 words, his academic ability does not compensate for it to help comprehension [1,127]. So, it is necessary for English learners to have a large vocabulary. What’s more, a learner with a great many words in his vocabulary has the ability to use various strategies to establish the meanings of new words when they encounter them in the reading, and interested in more and learn more new words, but on the other hand, the one who has not often struggles to achieve comprehension, and his frequent frustration usually leads to less reading, which, in turn, deprives him of less opportunity to see and learn very many new words. This sets in motion the well known “Matthew Effects,” Stanovich’s application of Matthew, “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.” In terms of vocabulary development, good readers read more, become better readers, and learn more words; poor readers read less, become poorer readers, and learn fewer words. [1,25]

The efforts to know adequate amount of vocabulary knowledge is very necessary for good comprehension. But establishing exactly what it means to know a word is no easy task. Is “knowing” a word being able to recognize what it looks and sounds like? Is it being able to give the word’s dictionary definition? Research suggests that, in general, the answer to these questions is “no”. Knowing a word by sight and sound and knowing its dictionary definition are not the same as knowing how to use the word correctly and understanding it when it is heard or seen in various contexts. B.L. Wallace says, “to know a word is to make it recognized, recalled at will, related to an object or a concept, correctly used, pronounced and spelt, appropriately collocated, used at the right level of formality and with awareness of its connotations and associations”. [2,115] And Summer puts it this way: “the word is only really acquired if the learner can use it actively and correctively, or has efficient recall of it in a variety of contexts”. [2,115] These notions of linguists are especially instructive to foreign learners of English who hold the misconception that knowing the native equivalent means knowing the English words: the overall vocabulary size is by no means equal to the size of equivalents they have obtained.

In many countries, college students, as the main group of English learners, have always been struggling to pass the CET-4 and CET-6 to get a certification to ensure the successful graduation and a promising job. And in the new CET-4 Syllabus, a student needs to recognize 4,200 words with 1,600 phrases and expressions, and needs to be able to use 2,500 of them properly and skillfully. On the exam paper the proportion of vocabulary test carries more weight. Thus, it required students to rack their brains to accumulate English vocabulary as many as possible. They adopt whatever method possible they believe to rich their vocabulary, and many of them just make all efforts to memorize words’ spelling and native equivalents. With the time on, after memorizing 50 pages of words list, they find they can only recall the words on the last page and all the words on the other pages have long gone out of their mind. Though for a short period they might achieve a rapid growth, the words are “easy come, easy go”. Repetition does not give any help. The harder they try, more frustrated they feel. Confusion and frustration eventually force them to lose all their interest in vocabulary and English. Why? One of the reasons is the way of their vocabulary learning: the straight translation and rote learning. It does not help to form in the mind wide association with other words, thus can not store long in the brain. As we all know that, words are stored and remembered in a network of associations. Words in our mental lexicon are tied to each other not only by meaning, form and sound, but also by sight and by other parts of context in which we have learned or experienced them. So nowadays more and more scientific vocabulary books can be found to provide learners with not only bilingual word lists, but example sentences, flash cards, audio tapes and other types of channel to help memorize new words. And many English textbooks published in other countries are revised to add some representatives and frequently used sentences following every word, and after text reading, vocabulary exercises are also designed to deepen their memory.

Another reason for the failure of vocabulary learning is that many foreign learners rely too much on the mother tongue. They have used to translating every English word into their own language, even in the reading comprehension, which makes them feel “safe”. And they will confuse one English word with other unrelated words because of similar meanings in the native language. Memorizing single equivalent in mother tongue makes them poor at understanding a word in the various reading contexts, not to mention in the listening and using it in speaking. So this bad habit impairs their abilities to use them appropriately, and it is not strange to forget easily. No one can deny the importance and necessity of expanding vocabulary, but the key is to find a proper method to achieve it that enables learners to retain and use words correctly.

Some college teachers, however, do not seem to function well in helping students with vocabulary learning.

Firstly, some of them merely ask students to memorize as many words as they can. Some even mislead students to have the concept that vocabulary size is the only key to pass English tests of various kinds and levels. Under their guidance students eventually do not feel that they actually achieved a good growth of vocabulary. Therefore, they are less likely to pass tests. Even if they are lucky enough, they are still not sure of the use of these words they clam to have acquired.

Secondly, college teachers shoulder the task of students’ listening, speaking, reading and writing English. However, teaching time is stable and limited. As a small part of English study, words are not deserved too much time among many tasks. What’s more, test-oriented education needs an instant achieving training, hence foundation is often ignored by lots of educators.

Thirdly, in modern college English teaching, a lot of teachers teach words no more than explaining their meanings. This method is dull in style and tedious in content. It will finally lead students to acquire a bad habit of automatically matching words, regardless of real situation. Furthermore, this mechanical absorbing of words can lead to students’ inability to remember certain words when they are in need of them in real context. Students will forget the words as soon as teachers finish teaching. If this happens, either communication breaks down or the students have to use some “repairing strategy”, such as expressing his meaning in a different way. On some other occasions when they are able to recall what are stored in their minds, they may also mis-collocate the words, e.g. in “a blank position”, or use situationally inappropriate words. So, this method of teaching is very low in efficiency, and teachers have enough space to promote it.

# REFERENCES

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