

Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education
University of Pyay

Pyay University
Research Journal

Vol. 9, No. 1

December, 2017.

Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education
University of Pyay

Pyay University
Research Journal

Pyay University Research Journal 2017

Vol. 9, No. 1

Editorial Board

Executive Editor

Rector Dr Khin Thidar, Pyay University

Rector-in-charge Dr Aung Aung Min, Pyay University

Editor in Chief

Pro-rector Dr Thwe Linn Ko, Pyay University

Editors (Arts)

Prof. Dr Maw Maw Wai, Head of the Department of Myanmar

Associate Prof. Daw Tin Tin Win, Head of the Department of English

Prof. Dr Lei Lei Win, Head of the Department of Geography

Prof. Dr Myo Myo Su, Head of the Department of History

Prof. Dr Kyaw Zaw Tun, Head of the Department of Philosophy

Prof. Dr Tin Htun Aung, Head of the Department of Psychology

Prof. Dr Tin Myo Myo Swe, Head of the Department of Law

Prof. Dr Nyo Mi Aung, Head of the Department of Oriental Studies

Editors (Science)

Prof. Dr Myint Myint Than, Head of the Department of Chemistry

Prof. Dr Soe Soe Nwe, Head of the Department of Physics

Prof. Dr Khin San Wai, Head of the Department of Mathematics

Prof. Dr Nyo Nyo, Head of the Department of Zoology

Prof. Dr Mee Mee Myint Shein, Head of the Department of Botany

Prof. Dr Kyi Kyi Swe, Head of the Department of Geology

A Study of Typical Collocations in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” Newspapers

Han Win Aung¹, Tin Tin Wynn², Han Tun Sein³

Abstract

This paper is mainly concerned with collocations or word partners used in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers. Collocation is a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance. Collocations are important to language learners, especially English, because it runs through the whole of the English language and no piece of natural spoken or written English is totally free of collocation. Learning collocations is a way of learning typical expressions in the English language. It can be difficult for learners of English to know which words collocate as natural collocations are not logical or guessable. Thus, acquisition of collocations makes learners competent socially at the personal and technical communication. This paper attempts to highlight on collecting data from “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers from March to June, 2017. This paper will be, to some extent, helpful to both teachers and learners since they can get great benefit in studying collocations.

Introduction

In the English language, collocation is a need to study. When the language learners write and speak in English, they usually produce grammatically correct sentences, but they often make errors in collocations. Most language learners find it difficult in using them. Thus, it is important for learners to be able to use appropriate words or word combinations. It takes a greater degree of competence with the language to combine them correctly. It is this knowledge that helps produce natural-sounding speech and writing. There are many collocations in English. Collocations in a language can be ranged on a cline from the totally free collocations to the totally strong and fixed collocations. Since collocation can take place both in written and in spoken English, studying collocations can be of great help in writing and speaking the language. The learners will be able to make his or her speech and writing sound much more natural and more native-speaker-like.

Aims and Objectives

This paper intends to study the collocations used in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers and the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- to find out collocations in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers
- to classify them according to the lexical and grammatical categories
- to examine them according to the types of collocation
- to be aware of the importance of collocations
- to improve the style in writing.

Literature Review

This section deals with the definitions and types of collocation.

What is collocation?

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2015), collocation is a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance. In other words, two or more words are often being used together, in a way

¹ Lecturer, Department of English, Pyay University

² Associate Professor, Department of English, Pyay University

³ Lecturer, Department of English, Pyay University

that happens more frequently than would happen by chance. In the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2007), collocation is the fact that a word collocates with other words. According to the English Collocations in Use Advanced by O'Dell and McCarthy (2008), collocation means a natural combination of words: it refers to the way English words are closely associated with each other. Collocation can generally be classified as strong collocations, fixed collocations, common or weak collocations, grammatical collocations and lexical collocations.

Compounds, idioms and phrasal verbs are sometimes described as types of collocation.

A compound is a combination of two or more words which functions as a single word. Usually the meaning of the compound can be guessed by knowing the meaning of the individual words. Some examples of compounds are car park, post office, narrow-minded, shoelaces and teapot.

An idiom is an expression which functions as a single unit and whose meaning cannot be worked out from its separate parts. For example, "pass the buck" is an idiom meaning "to pass responsibility for a problem to another person to avoid dealing with it oneself".

A phrasal verb is a verb consisting of a verb plus an adverb particle. Many phrasal verbs which are common in informal speech and writing have idiomatic meanings. Learners also need to know when specific collocations are appropriate. This is usually referred to by linguists as knowing which register to use.

Strong Collocations

A strong collocation is one in which the words are very closely associated to each other. It usually expresses fairly unusual ideas.

For example, the adjective 'mitigating' almost always collocates with 'circumstances' or 'factors': it rarely collocates with any other word.

Fixed Collocations

Fixed collocations are so strong that they cannot be changed in any way. For example, the words 'got on somebody's nerves' mean 'annoy somebody a lot' and an expression 'put up with' means 'tolerate or bear somebody/something'. Words in this collocation cannot be replaced as they are completely fixed. These collocations are called idioms.

Common Collocations

Common or weak collocations are made up of words that collocate with a wide range of other words. For example, 'dangerous' can collocate with a number of other words such as 'dangerous zone', 'dangerous decision', 'dangerous place', 'dangerous disease' and so on. These are common or weak collocations in the sense that 'dangerous' collocates with a broad range of different nouns.

Grammatical Collocations

A grammatical collocation is a type of construction where, for example, a verb or adjective must be followed by a particular preposition, a noun must be followed by a particular form of the verb or a preposition must be followed by a particular noun, as in:

verb + prep: depend on

adj + prep : afraid of

noun + particular form of verb: strength to lift it

prep + noun: at random

Lexical Collocations

A lexical collocation is a type of construction where a verb, noun, adjective or adverb forms a predictable connection with another word, as in:

verb + noun : commit suicide

noun + verb : lions roar

adj + noun : excruciating pain

adv + adj : completely satisfied

In this paper, fixed collocations and common or weak collocations are left out, and grammatical collocations and lexical collocations are classified according to types of collocation.

Types of Collocation

- noun plus noun
- adjective plus noun
- verb plus noun
- noun plus verb
- prep plus noun
- verb plus adverb
- adverb plus verb
- verb plus expression with preposition
- verb plus adverb or preposition
- adverb plus adjective
- verb plus adjective and
- adjective plus preposition

Sample Collocations

Noun Entries

adj+n	v+n	n+n	n+v	prep+n
regular exercise	commit murder	a round of applause	lions roar	under investigation
maiden voyage	do homework	ceasefire agreement	dogs bark	in progress
excruciating pain	make sb's bed	bars of soap	bomb goes off	under control

adjective + noun

- The doctor ordered him to take regular exercise.
- The Titanic sank on its maiden voyage.
- He was writhing on the ground in excruciating pain.

verb + noun

- The prisoner was hanged for committing murder.
- I always try to do my homework in the morning, after making my bed.

noun + noun

- Let’s give Mr. Jones a round of applause.
- The ceasefire agreement came into effect at 11 a.m.
- I’d like to buy two bars of soap please.

noun + verb

- The lion started to roar when it heard the dog barking.
- The bomb went off when he started the car engine.

prep + noun

- The whole issue is under investigation.
- A lecture was in progress in the main hall.
- Firefighters had the blaze under control by 9:44 p.m.

Verb Entries

adv+v	v+adv	v+adv or prep	v+expression with prep
slowly destroy	placed sth gently	take for	run out of money
flatly deny	whispered softly	draw from	filled with horror
quickly restore	argue heatedly	put up	burst into tears

adverb + verb

- Depression and despair slowly destroyed his life.
- He flatly denies that he has committed a crime.
- Order was quickly restored.

verb + adverb

- She placed her keys gently on the table and sat down.
- Mary whispered softly in John’s ear.
- She argued heatedly about her right to compensation.

verb + adverb or preposition

- She takes her dog for a walk every evening.
- Her ideas are drawn mainly from Chinese art.
- She soon learned how to put up her own shelves.

verb + expression with preposition

- We had to return home because we had run out of money.
- At first her eyes filled with horror, and then she burst into tears.

Adjective Entries

adv+adj	v+adj	adj+prep
utterly stupid	keep calm	busy with
richly decorated	make sth/sb perfect	weary of
fully aware	find attractive	guilty of

adverb + adjective

- Invading that country was an utterly stupid thing to do.
- We entered a richly decorated room.
- Are you fully aware of the implications of your action?

verb + adjective

- Sit down and keep calm.
- The town's position in the region makes it perfect for touring.
- This is an ideal that I find very attractive.

adjective + preposition

- She is busy with her homework.
- Students soon grow weary of listening to a parade of historical facts.
- We've all been guilty of selfishness at some time in our lives.

It is hoped that learning these many different types of collocations makes learners of English be fully aware of the appropriate use of words in combination, not in isolation.

Methodology

In this paper, collocations are collected from “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers. They are grouped, classified and analyzed based on their types and grammatical categories such as Noun entries (noun plus noun, adjective plus noun, verb plus noun, noun plus verb, preposition plus noun), Verb entries (verb plus adverb, adverb plus verb, verb plus expression with preposition, verb plus preposition) and Adjective entries (adverb plus adjective, verb plus adjective, adjective plus preposition).

Findings and Discussion

In doing this paper, some of very weak collocations are left out. When collocations are collected, strong and fixed collocations are hardly found. In this paper, the distinction between weak, strong and fixed collocations will not be made as sometimes it is difficult to divide whether they are strong or fixed collocations. In this paper, many common collocations found in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers are shown in the following tables.

When the collocations from “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspapers are compared, types of collocation in which adjective plus noun and preposition plus noun are mostly found. On the other hand, the collocation type in which verb plus expressions with prepositions is least found. Besides, it is assumed that there will be difficulties for the learners to make sense of verb plus adverb or preposition type.

Many cultures encourage rote learning where learners memorize lists of words in isolation. They tend to write L1 equivalents of single words when they see the words in phrases they cannot understand. They may have intralingual problems. For example, instead of

“many thanks”, they might incorrectly use “several thanks”. They may make negative transfer from their mother tongue. For example, some tend to say “become lovers” instead of “fall in love”. They may look for general rules of collocation, for example, the use of prepositions in phrasal verbs. They could think that “put off your coat” is the opposite of “put on your coat”.

Noun Entries

adj+n	v+n	n+n	n+v	prep+n
heavy rain	take shelter	climate change	boat capsizes	under pressure
endangered species	tighten patrols	a spate of farmer suicides	accident happened	at random
growing popularity	make progress	striking points		in retrospect
global warming	play a major role	bipedal ability		in agony
developing countries	cast doubt			on principle
major damage	draw any conclusions			out of control
landing gear	launch a system			within reason
mental illness	shake hands			by choice
technical details	reject one's pleas			in public
polar bear	snap a selfie			under way
heavy downpour	surf the net			in readiness
protected area	deliver an address			at short notice
smooth traffic				behind closed doors
precious time				go on strike
final appeal				under construction

Verb Entries

adv+v	v+adv	v+prep or adv	v + expression
fully appreciate	act immediately	shut down	freighted with irony
deliberately steered	grow rapidly	call on	swelled with pride
heavily frequented		kick off	
		result in	
		gear up	
		come in	
		set out	
		embark on	
		check out	
		set up	

Adjective Entries

adj+adj	v+adv	adj+prep
densely	make sth successful	keen on
increasingly constrained	make sth bigger	likely to
usually fraught	keep sth/sb safe	available for sth
increasing frayed	declare sth illegal	untouchable in sth
strongly condemned	find sth/sb attractive	eligible for
	leave sth unanswered	unapologetic about
	prove sb wrong	close to
		short of
		happy about
		free from

When learners learn words through definitions or in isolation, their chances of using appropriate collocations or remembering the words decrease. They may fail to make sense of an idiom. For instance, the English idiom “It is raining cats and dogs” may not make sense to them because this idiom doesn’t exist in their culture. When learners read texts, they may not recognize collocations as meaningful phrases which would inhibit their understanding of the text. When teaching collocations, teachers need to pay close attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress and grammar. Learners need to know that learning collocations is crucial for learning English, and noticing collocations is an important stage in learning the language. Teachers should present collocations as they present individual words.

At higher levels, when learners learn less common vocabulary items, they need to be aware that some words are used in a very restricted number of collocations. Learners also need to know how to use new vocabulary items, which makes it necessary to know about their collocational field and contexts in which they are used. Learners need to have an organized vocabulary journal to record collocations. They can organize their journals in different ways: grammatically, by common key word, by topic, etc. They can also make use of tables, spidergrams or mind maps, which work well with visual learners. For example, learners can record certain collocations under headings such as have/take/do or make.

When teaching collocations, reading and listening skills which help learners notice collocations cannot be ignored. Writing and speaking skills, on the other hand, give them the opportunity to practise collocations. Unless learners are taught in context-based classes, collocations will not make sense to them, and meaningful learning will probably not take place.

To sum up, we should learn collocations as our language will be more natural and more easily understood, we will have alternative and richer ways of expressing ourselves and it is easier for our brains to remember and use language in chunks or blocks rather than as single words.

We should be aware of collocations, and try to recognize them when seeing or hearing them. We should also treat collocations as single blocks of language and think of them as individual blocks or chunks, for example strongly support, not strongly + support. When learning a new word, we should write down other words collocating with it (remember rightly/distinctly/vaguely/vividly). Moreover, we should read as much as possible as reading is an excellent way to learn vocabulary and collocations in context. And we should revise what we learn regularly and practise using new collocations in context as soon as possible after learning them. Besides, we should learn collocations in groups, especially by topic (time, number, weather, money, family) or by a particular word (take action/ a chance/ an exam). We

can find information on collocations in any good learner's dictionary and find specialized dictionaries of collocations.

Conclusion

In this paper, all types of collocations from "The Global New Light of Myanmar" newspapers were studied. Studying collocations can give language learners a great value. Thus, if the learners want to improve their English with natural and accurate use of language, a study of collocations is highly recommended. By studying collocations in "The Global New Light of Myanmar" newspapers, learners will write and speak more naturally than before. It is argued that without a wide range of vocabulary, grammar does not help learners much. Having a wide range of vocabulary per se is not adequate because a single word rarely stands alone. Therefore, language teachers need to make sure that their students know which word goes with which other word(s). Doing so will help learners acquire the language more quickly and effectively. It is hoped that this paper will be of some help for EFL learners in developing their speaking and writing skills.

Acknowledgements

Our profound gratitude goes to Dr. Khin Thidar, Rector of Pyay University, Dr. Aung Aung Min, Acting Rector of Pyay University and Dr. Thwe Linn Ko, Pro-Rector of Pyay University who encourage everyone to do the research at every department of Pyay University. Especially, our great gratitude goes to Daw Tin Tin Wynn, Associate Professor and Head of English Department of Pyay University for her training and precious guidelines to get a fruitful research. We would like to acknowledge our special thanks to our colleagues for their help and useful advice.

References

- Deveci, T. (April 2004), "Why and How to teach Collocations, *English Teaching Forum*, 42(2): 16-19.
- Gairns, R. & Redman, S (2012). *Oxford Learner's Pocket Word Skills*: Oxford University Press.
- Hornly, A. S. (2015). (9th Ed) *Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary*: Oxford University Press.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2014). (5th Ed).
- Macmillan Collocation Dictionary* (2010). Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
- Macmillan English Dictionary* (2007). Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
- O'Dell, F & McCarthy, M (2005). *English Collocations in Use-Intermediate*: Cambridge University Press.
- O'Dell, F & McCarthy, M (2008). *English Collocations in Use-Intermediate*: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford Collocations Dictionary* (2003). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, Jack C. Platt, John. & Platt, Heidi (1992). (2nd Ed). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. Harlow: Longman.
- Swan, M. (2005). (3rd Ed) *Oxford Practical English Usage*: Oxford University Press.
- The Global New Light of Myanmar Newspapers*: (30, 31) March: 12 April; 25.26.27 May; 4, 7, 8 June, 2017)
- <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations>

APPENDICES

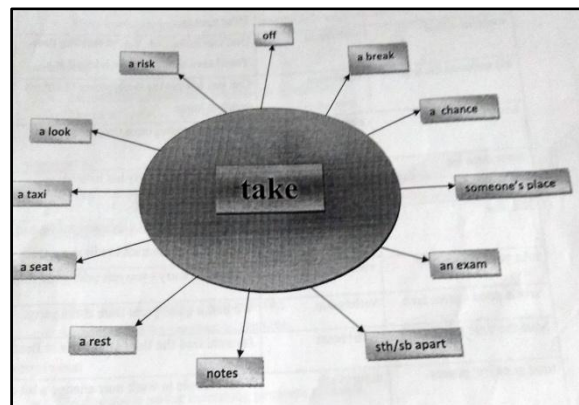
Appendix-1

Collocations with common verbs

do	give	have	make
a test	a sigh	cancer	a cake
damage	a speech	a drink	a choice
a course	advice to sb	an accident	a connection
a deal	birth	a bath/shower	a decision
a translation	sb a headache	a nap	a face
an experiment	sb a hug	an operation	a film/movie
the/some shopping	sb a lift/ride	a heart attack	a guess
a sketch	sth a pull	breakfast	a mark
an operation	sb a push	a cold	a mess
some work	sb a choice	a holiday/vacation	a mistake
a crossword	sb an answer	an argument	noise
the dishes	sb an order	an impact	a photocopy
good	sb time	a meeting	a suggestion
the accounts	your opinion	an idea	a trip
lunch	a lecture	fun	an appointment
the food for a party	a party	an interest	an attempt
a degree	sb a chance	a break	an effort
the washing/laundry	sb a present	a party	an impact
your job	a smile	trouble	changes
Business	instructions	difficulty	dinner
an exam exercise	sb a kiss	a feeling	friends
your duty	sb a shock	a plan	money
an impression	sb an idea	a chat	peace
research	sb lessons	a guess	progress
your hair	a performance	a look	the bed
your homework	sb help	an opportunity	your point

Appendix-2

Spider gram



Appendix-3**Collocations using the word 'time'**

Collocation	Type	Example
spend time	verb+noun	I spend some time in South America when I was younger.
waste/save time	verb+noun	Don't do it like that. You're wasting time. You'll save time if you do it like that.
tell someone the time	verb+noun	Can you tell me the time, please? I left my watch at home.
have time to	verb+noun	I'm sorry, I didn't have time to do my homework.
make time for	verb+noun	The doctor's very busy but he'll try to make time for you.
kill time	verb+noun	We got to the airport very early, so we had a meal in the restaurant to kill some time.
take your time	verb+noun	No need to hurry-you can take your time.
have a good/great time	verb+noun	We had a good/great time at the party.
have the time of sb's life	verb+noun	Jayanthi had the time of her life in Brazil.
time goes by/passes	noun+verb	Your attitude to work may change a bit as time goes by/passes.
free/spare time	adjective+noun	What do you like to do in your free/spare time?
big time	adjective+noun	You'll be sorry big time for speaking to me like that!
run out of time	verb+expression with preposition	I couldn't finish the exam because I ran out of time.

Appendix-4**Examples of some typical collocations found in the newspapers.****Noun entries****adjective + noun**

- There will be heavy rain in most parts of the country.
- The Scops owl is now a seriously endangered species.
- Many developing countries do not have the infrastructure for a successful tourist industry.

verb + noun

- The men took shelter in a bombed-out farmhouse.
- The security forces tightened their patrols in the area.
- We have made great progress in controlling inflation.

noun + noun

- NASA scientists have discovered new evidence of climate change.
- A spate of farmer suicides has been brought about by the destruction of crops.
- This was one of the major striking points in the negotiations.

noun + verb

- **Their boat** struck a rock and capsized.
- **Accidents** like this happen all the time.

prep + noun

- The director is under increasing pressure to resign.
- Names were chosen at random from the list.
- In retrospect, I think that I was wrong.

Verb entries**adverb + verb**

- The sound quality was poor so we couldn't fully appreciate the music.
- Joel deliberately steered Don and Louise towards the backyard.
- The bar was heavily frequented by actors from the nearby theatre.

verb + adverb

- The government must act immediately to change this law.
- The economy has grown rapidly.

verb + adverb or preposition

- The computer system will be shut down over the weekend.
- The UN has called on both sides to observe the ceasefire.
- The match kicks off at noon.

verb + expression with preposition

- He delivered a speech, freighted with irony.
- His heart swelled with pride as he watched his daughter collect her prize.

Adjective entries**adverb + adjective**

- We live on a densely populated island, and create a lot of waste.
- He felt increasingly constrained to accept the invitation.
- The carpet was increasingly frayed.

verb + adjective

- The new product made the company more successful.
- Make sure you keep the documents safe.
- The war was declared illegal by the International Court of Justice.

adjective + preposition

- I'm not keen on spicy food.
- No figures are available for the number of goods sold.
- Students on a part-time course are not eligible for a loan.