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## PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNERS ON TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH COLLOCATIONS

### Abstract

English as a foreign language is becoming more popular, and studies of it are becoming more important. Collocations, which are common in ordinary English, are one essential subject to consider. These structures are made up of words that are frequently combined with other words and have a meaning that is not literal. Individuals who are studying English as a second language and have acquired a specific level of competency were tested on their understanding of collocations in this qualitative study. Even individuals who have mastered English have insufficient knowledge of these structures; additionally, structures in the form noun + verb are more difficult to understand

than structures in the form noun + noun. This research provides recommendations for further study of English as a foreign language.

**Keywords:** collocations, foreign language, meaning, figurative meaning, literal meaning

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## СӨЗ ТІРКЕСТЕРІНІҢ КӨМЕГІМЕН ЛЕКСИКАНЫ ОҚЫТУДЫ АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІН ҮЙРЕНУШІЛЕРДІҢ КАБЫЛДАУЫ

*Аңдатпа*

Қазіргі таңда ағылшын тілі шет тілі ретінде уақыт өткен сайын танымал бола түсуде және оны зерттеудің маңыздылығы артып келеді. Қарапайым ағылшын тілінде жиі кездесетін сөз тіркестері маңызды мәселе болып табылады. Бұл құрылымдар көбінесе басқа сөздермен тіркесіп, жанама мағынаны білдіретін сөздерден жасалған. Бұл зерттеуде ағылшын тілін екінші тіл ретінде үйреніп, белгілі бір құзыреттілік деңгейіне ие болған адамдардың сөз тіркестерін түсіну деңгейі тексерілді. Тіпті ағылшын тілін жетік меңгерген адамдардың да сөз тіркестері туралы білімі жеткіліксіз; сонымен қатар зат есім + етістік құрылымдарын түсіну зат есім + зат есім құрылымдарына қарағанда қиынырақ. Сонымен қатар, бұл зерттеу жұмысы ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде зерттеу мәселесі бойынша бірнеше ұсыныстар ұсынады.

**Түйін сөздер:** сөз тіркестері, шетел тілі, мағына, жанама мағына, тура мағына

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## ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ИЗУЧАЮЩИМИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА ПРИ ОБУЧЕНИЕ СЛОВАРНОМУ ЗАПАСУ С ПОМОЩЬЮ СЛОВСОЧЕТАНИЙ

*Аннотация*

Английский язык как иностранный становится все более популярным, и его изучение становится все более важным. Словосочетания, которые распространены в обычном английском языке, являются важным предметом для рассмотрения. Эти структуры состоят из слов, которые часто сочетаются с другими словами и имеют прямое значение. В этом качественном исследовании были проверены люди, которые изучают английский как второй язык и приобрели определенный уровень компетенции, на понимание словосочетаний. Даже люди, освоившие английский язык, имеют недостаточное знание этих структур; кроме того, структуры в форме существительное + глагол труднее понять, чем структуры в форме существительное + существительное. В данном исследовании даны рекомендации по дальнейшему изучению английского языка как иностранного.

**Ключевые слова:** словосочетание, иностранный язык, значение, переносное значение, прямое значение

**Introduction.** Collocation is defined as the use of two or more language units in the same syntax with certain limitations and order [1]. Many researchers agree that the words used together during teaching vocabulary, which is one of the most important aspects of language teaching, should be taught together, and that collocational patterns are essential for fluency and natural speech in any language. Because collocations are the foundations of fluency. Halliday defines collocations as syntactic associations formed by a word with other words in which it can be used together. When collocations are known, one does not have to deal with each word in the text individually. In addition, collocations play a major role in transferring value and 70% of everything read, written, spoken or heard is collocation words [2]. It is believed that collocational patterns are difficult for foreign language learners for many reasons. These reasons; besides being figurative, they also have a real meaning and cause ambiguity, many language learning materials do not include these structures, and lastly, language learners do not know where and how to use them even though they know the structures [3] Nesselhauf argues that there is a causality principle between collocations. Collocations are illogical and uncontrollable. For the reasons stated, many foreign language learners avoid using these structures even if they reach a certain level of proficiency in the target language. This situation leads to the use of a simplified language. The fact that most of the collocations are both literal and figurative makes it difficult for language learners to gain competence in the use of these structures. One of the main reasons for this is the misinterpretation of keywords. When faced with collocational structures, it is quite natural for language learners to think about structures separately in their minds or to interpret them in real terms [3, 183-206] According to Giora [3] literal meaning is the most well-known and the first meaning that comes to mind when a word is heard or seen for the first time. The figurative meaning is the expressions that the speaker uses different from the real meanings. Correct interpretation of figurative meaning is possible by developing cognitive and linguistic abilities that support a more general understanding of language [4]. The understanding of metaphor by native speakers and later learners is different from each other. The main reason for this is that native speakers have been exposed to much more interpretation of meaning and making sense out of context. It is thought that native speakers see collocational structures as a single unit, and they accept the prominent figurative meaning depending on the situation. Most language learners do not need to analyze since they directly learn the meanings of these structures. In addition, while the acquisition of structures similar to the structures in their own language is easy for those who learn the language later, some problems such as mistranslation may occur in the acquisition of different and unknown structures.

**Method.** In this study, a descriptive research was conducted to determine the degree of understanding of English collocations that can be used figurative and literal meanings. It helps to investigate how familiar EFL learners are to collocational pattern in terms of teaching according to the figurative and literal meanings of structures and their degree of difficulty. The openness test was applied in the study. The purpose of the openness test is to evaluate how clear the figurative meanings are by looking at the real meanings of the word groups. Since clarity is not a feature that can be described in precise terms, the participants were asked how comprehensible the figurative meanings of the structures were compared to their literal meanings. The data were listed and the most easily found, easily found, hard to find and very difficult collocational patterns were determined. According to the results, a total of 24 collocational patterns were selected, three of each from name+noun structures and three each from names+action structures from each difficulty level.

**Reserch results.** As a result of the research, it has been revealed that collocational patterns are not known enough by foreigners. Collocational patterns that are very meaningful and used figuratively can cause confusion. Although they are frequently used in daily speech and written language, being unfamiliar with these structures causes communication breakdowns and the

inability to reach a competent level in the target language. Despite the fact that the learners of the target language as a second language have higher motivation to learn the language and are frequently exposed to many situations to learn the language, the fact that they do not know these structures reflects the fact that these structures are not given sufficient importance in language teaching. One of the aims of this study is to contribute to the field by ordering collocational patterns according to the degree of difficulty and ease. The collocations can be added to language teaching books as collocations, taking into account how foreigners interpret these structures. As Kövecses [8, 87-115] said, students' motivation to learn can be increased by giving both literal and figurative meanings and establishing a connection between them. Because figurative structures reflect the world of thought of individuals and societies. In this way, students' speech can be brought closer to native speakers. In addition, teaching the use of collocational patterns as patterns or words with other words will both prevent students from transferring from their mother tongue and enable them to speak the language more fluently. Knowing with which structures to use collocational patterns will provide natural language speech, while knowing and using the figurative meanings of these structures will increase the self-confidence of language learners and prevent them from feeling incomplete. Language learning will also be facilitated by the frequent use of collocational patterns in the lessons. Because, as mentioned before, native speakers actually use many structures in patterns without thinking. In this case, it is not possible to exclude these structures from the curriculum when it is aimed to learn a language close to native speakers. While learners generally agree on structures whose figurative meanings are very difficult to understand according to their meanings, different situations have emerged in structures that are thought to be "very easy" or "easy". While it cannot be decided how difficult some structures are, it has been seen that some structures are not suitable for that group despite being included in a group with a majority of votes.

**Conclusion.** As a result of this study, the following conclusions and recommendations emerged:

1. Multi-meaningful collocational patterns are not sufficiently known and used even by those who speak English at an advanced level. For this reason, these structures should be placed in the English language teaching curriculum by looking at their sequence and frequency according to their ease of difficulty.
2. Since figurative collocations are frequently used in daily language and learned as patterns, if they are known, they will both ensure fluency and increase the self-confidence and language command of language learners.
3. Since collocational patterns and figurative structures reflect the culture and mentality of a nation, their explanation and inclusion in language teaching programs will increase student motivation and interest. While these structures are being taught, telling, animating and including events from life such as the culture of daily speech, life styles and customs of English will increase students' interest in both language and culture.
4. When responding to constructs, participants perceive these constructs more easily when they encounter uses in their mother tongue or in a language they already know. In this case, knowing the background areas of the students will facilitate the teacher and accelerate the language learning of the students.
5. Special language teaching programs can be created for people learning languages from similar cultures. Thus, separate programs are implemented for different nations. In the courses, certain nationalities can be gathered in a class and the course can be done by taking into account the background of the students. This will provide convenience to both the teacher and the students, and time loss will be prevented.

6. Since the context used in the teaching of collocations provides the formation of meaning, structures should be taught by specifying the contexts and the environments that can be used. Otherwise, structures may be perceived as isolated words and unnatural usages may occur.

7. Giving collocational patterns in language lessons will enable knowing the structures in which words are used together and transferring from the mother tongue will decrease. In this case, creating a wide vocabulary by giving the patterns they are used together while teaching the words will enable the students to have a wider perspective. In addition, the creation of mind maps in teaching will facilitate the connection between expressions and contribute to learning.

8. While presenting collocational patterns in the lesson, it should be noted that they are verbs or nouns, and it should not be forgotten that structures formed with nouns are remembered more. More emphasis should be placed on the teaching of actions. The fact that verbs are used together with many words and affect other structures in the sentence can be a confusing element. Focusing on the syntax in English, it should be explained how the structures as nouns or verbs affect them.

9. While preparing the resources for teaching English, attention should be paid to the use of natural language, the inclusion of different uses of collocations in the resource, and cultural elements. In addition, a comprehensive list of collocations can be made, and grammatical and lexical dictionaries can be created to contribute to language learning.

The results of this study prove how important collocation patterns and figurative uses are in English language and prove that learning these structures is essential for learning English in the full sense. In order to contribute to the field of English as a foreign language, other collocational patterns and their usage can be examined. Such studies will contribute to the more efficient teaching of English and the spread of the English language to the world.

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## БАСТАУЫШ СЫНЫПТА ТІЛ БІЛІМІН ОҚЫТУ ӘДІСТЕМЕСІНІҢ МӘСЕЛЕЛЕРІ

### Аңдатпа

Мақалада қазақ тілін оқыту әдістемесінің тарихы және тілді оқытуда жанама еңбектер мен отандық ғалымдардың еңбектері жан-жақты қарастырылады. Қазақ тілін оқытудың мәселесін ұлы ағартушылар мен ғалымдар тереңдете зерттеп, тілді меңгерудің басты нысандарын айқындады. Қазақ тілінің әдістемесіне байланысты жарық көрген оқулықтар, еңбектер тіл білімінің барлық салаларын қамти келіп, қазақ тіл ғылымын теориялық, практикалық жағынан өрістетуге ықпал етті. Қазақ тілі саласын зерттеу тілді оқытуға қатысты ой-пікірлерді зерттеп-зерделеуді қажет етеді. Мақалада қазақ тіл білімінің салаларын оқытуға байланысты аса көрнекті тілші-ғалымдардың еңбектері мен тұжырымды ойлары қарастырылады. Тіл білімін оқытуға байланысты оқушының ойлау қабілетіне, білім мазмұнына, тақырыпты меңгерудің тиімді әдіс-тәсілдеріне көңіл аударылады. Бастауыш сынып оқушыларының тіл меңгеру дағдысын дамыту мен қалыптастырудың мүмкіндіктеріне талдау жүргізіледі.

**Түйін сөздер:** бастауыш сынып, тіл білімі, оқыту, әдістеме, сабақ.

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