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TÜNDE NAGY

TEACHING COLLOCATIONS
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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SAPIENTIA BOOKS

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An Integrated Approach

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PREFACE

The present book can be regarded as a guide to teaching collocations in EFL and translation classes. While teaching vocabulary has received considerable attention over the last few decades, since the appearance of communicative teaching methods in the 1970s, and even more so with Michael Lewis's lexical approach in 1993, language course books often fail to include collocations in a satisfactory way. This book intends to reinforce the importance of teaching collocations in a way that creatively engages students and at the same time allows them to acknowledge collocations as constructions in their own right. It stresses the importance of raising students' collocational awareness through activities that foster noticing (which is considered an essential step in the acquisition process), while it also underlines the importance of revising previously acquired collocations through repeated exposure. The acquisition of collocations is supposed to consist of several steps that are as follows: noticing (which can be either incidental or guided), understanding (of the use and meaning of collocations in a given context), and experimenting (the attempt to use collocations in different contexts). With this being said, in order to be able to notice collocations (and also to become familiar with the vocabulary used), a sufficient amount of (repetitive) input is necessary, and it may also require the manipulation of texts by the teacher; the acquisition of collocations can happen only if students acknowledge the form of collocations together with their use and meaning in a given context.

Language (both written and spoken) is abundant in collocations. It is therefore desirable that teachers introduce them from elementary level onwards to make language learners aware of collocations and language chunks right from the start. Teaching collocations is advantageous at all levels: at elementary level, learning commonly used collocations helps students express themselves with more ease; at higher levels, the knowledge of collocations fosters students' language skills and enables them to move past the intermediate plateau and even sound more native-like (at advanced levels).

Besides EFL classes, collocations should also receive more attention in translation practices. Insufficient knowledge of collocations often results in translations being grammatically correct yet failing to convey the message of the source text in a natural sounding manner. Because of this, it is important that students focus on collocations (and language chunks) rather than on individual words when carrying out translations and learn how to use resources (including electronic databases and electronic corpora) that help them in the translation process.

The book is structured as follows: the first part attempts to give a definition of collocations (collocations are seen as constructions with varying degrees of collocational strength and transparency) and focuses on their morpho-syntactic and semantic characteristics, also pointing out their multifoldness and complexity. What makes collocations a challenge to teach (and also to learn) is their large number and great variety and the fact that typical collocations have a medium degree of observable recurrence, mutual expectancy, and transparency.

The second part presents the factors that influence the acquisition and processing of collocations, among them cognitive, linguistic and metalinguistic factors such as language transfer, collocational frequency and range, collocational awareness, the quality and quantity of input, the practice of linguistic skills and vocabulary learning strategies; furthermore, as language course books also play an important role in the learning process, an analysis of three language course books, the *New Headway* series (4th edition), the *New English File* (3rd edition), and the *Speakout* series (2nd edition) is also included.

The third part of the book tackles the aspects of teaching collocations (the questions of *what* to teach, *to whom*, and also *how*) and presents theoretical considerations on the topic. The book proposes an approach to teaching collocations that combines the considerations of the task-based instruction (as understood by Ellis 2003) with that of the lexical approach (Lewis 1993, 2000), the latter being more of a mindset than a practical approach to language teaching.

The need for a combined approach can be motivated as follows:

A task-based approach as a form of communicative approach often leads to a positive learning experience as it allows learners to use their language skills and problem-solving abilities to complete a specific task. Nonetheless, a task-based approach on its own does not guarantee a significant development in students' collocational knowledge as it does not put enough emphasis on input; neither does it define the role of "focused" tasks (that imply the practice of linguistic constructions). On the same note, the lexical approach, while it stresses the importance of input and of teaching collocations and language chunks, is neither satisfactory on its own, as it does not give clear guidelines on how to teach collocations (e.g. whether they should be content-related or not, what types of exercises would be the most adequate). While Lewis et al. (2000) give examples of exercises suitable for teaching collocations (see the section on lexical approach below), further specifications would be necessary with respect to their implementation in vocabulary practice.

Combining the lexical approach with a task-based one, along with some additional guidelines, however, can provide a suitable framework for teaching collocations, as it merges two different mindsets that can be considered as complementary (a creative way of language learning, where the primary focus lies on the completion of tasks vs. a language-focused practice that stresses

the importance of drawing students' attention to word combinations and language chunks). A task-based approach that allows for both "focused" tasks (targeting the use of specific linguistic constructions) and "unfocused" ones (where students can use their language skills freely) and does not discard more traditional teaching methods resonates well with the principles of the lexical approach.

Finally, the book also touches upon possible teacher roles within a combined approach and incorporates additional principles and strategies that need to be considered.

Completing a task may require the use of technology (the Internet, web 2.0 technology, electronic databases, electronic corpora), a reason for which the book includes a part on using technology for teaching collocations (Part Four). Technology can foster the acquisition of collocations due to the great variety of possibilities it offers for language learning and language use, for group or whole-class activities and also individual practice, both in and outside the classroom. While teachers already use some form of technology in EFL classes (e.g. DVD players, projectors, laptops), creating technology-based activities that actively involve students brings variety into the classroom and can also establish a positive learning environment (provided it is done correctly).

In the appendix, the book includes activities for teaching collocations at various levels (elementary to pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels, except for the advanced level, as it is considered, *The New English File Advanced* course book manages to draw students' attention to collocations quite successfully), so besides introducing the term to students (page 14), we find a variety of strategies that foster their noticing (e.g. highlighting (in some cases, even larger constructions and expressions), guessing lexis in context, filling in the missing collocate, error analysis, circling the right word, paraphrasing, etc.). The appendix also includes exercises for business English and for translation classes.

The suggested tasks are based on some form of input (listening or reading) and should be considered as recommended activities that need to be adapted to the lesson at hand, so the content (including the suggested collocations) and or the number and order of steps included in the task may be altered if deemed necessary.

One of the main ideas expressed in this book is that the teaching of collocations should be content-based and related to a particular lesson – in line with this idea, the exercises suggested complete the materials found in the course books (in this case, the *New English File Series*, the language course book that teachers at the Faculty of Miercurea Ciuc use in EFL classes). In the case of more specific courses, such as business English or translation classes, teachers often do not use a specific course book but rather gather materials related to a certain topic. In this regard, ready-made materials on a particular

topic can often be used with slight modifications (such as manipulating texts to highlight collocations, thinking of additional tasks that would draw students' attention to them, etc.).

Some of the assumptions that the book makes with respect to teaching collocations include the following:

– Collocations should be treated as constructions with varying degrees of collocational strength, frequency, and idiomaticity; from this follows that, whenever possible, collocations should be shown (e.g. written on the whiteboard, highlighted, etc.) in their entirety.

– Activities and exercises that present collocations as whole constructions should be given priority over the ones that present them in parts (e.g. matching parts of a construction, certain types of gap-fill activities). Similarly, it is advisable that exercises be content-related in order to give more possibilities for learners to produce them actively within a specific context.

– While incidental noticing is possible, a teacher-guided learning of collocations is necessary in many cases – teachers should make students aware of their importance in both spoken and written language by applying a variety of strategies (e.g. highlighting words in a text, asking students to look up/search for expressions related to a certain topic, write some useful word combinations on the whiteboard and ask them to reconstruct the main points of a text, etc.). This is even more important as students tend to focus primarily on individual words instead of word combinations and chunks when learning vocabulary.

– Teachers should strive to expose students to natural language use (or language resembling authentic linguistic material). While exercises in language course books may be suitable for vocabulary practice, they often lack authentic language use.

– Whenever possible, students should have the chance to see collocations several times (repeated exposure to collocations, e.g. through a post-task activity). This should be done in a way that does not seem forced to students and does not turn the exercise into a mechanic drilling.

– Language transfer (from L1 but also other languages) plays an important role in the acquisition of collocations. Students use a variety of learning strategies, and translating word for word from L1 is a common one, especially in lower-level classes, which in case of negative transfer can result in ungrammatical or unnatural-sounding word combinations. Because of this, it would be desirable that teachers point out the difference between word combinations in English and students' mother tongue whenever they consider it important.

This book has been written with native Hungarian language learners in mind, who usually learn English as their L3 (their L2 being Romanian) or even L4 (their L3 often being German or French). It is important to note that the order of the languages learnt is not straightforward, so their acquisition can be simultaneous or one preceding/following the other (students can have

English as their L2 and Romanian as their L3, for example). Taking this into consideration, besides examples from Hungarian, there are also several German and Romanian examples to be found in the book.

The book primarily focuses on drawing students' attention to collocations and also activating their knowledge of previously acquired collocations – aspects of testing and evaluating the knowledge of collocations are not considered.

CHAPTER 1

COLLOCATIONS. ON THE NATURE OF COLLOCATIONS

1.1. Towards a definition of collocations

Over the years, many definitions of collocation have been given; nevertheless, due to the great variety of collocations (grammatical and lexical, weak, medium-strength and strong collocations, etc.), giving a precise definition of these constructions is not an easy task. This can explain why there is no consensus as of yet with regard to how these constructions can be defined. The term itself originates from the Latin word *collocare* (*com-* together + *locare* (locus-place), meaning place together, referring to word combinations in which the constituent elements tend to occur together.

Generally speaking, approaches to collocations fall mostly into two major groups: they are either frequency-based (defining collocations mostly as co-occurrences of words in each other's proximity, distinguishing between occurrences that are frequent from the ones that are not) or semantically motivated, viewing collocations as abstract units of language. The definitions of collocations vary with respect to the approach taken.

One of the earliest researchers of collocations, H. E. Palmer defines collocations in his *Interim Report on Collocations* (1933: 13) as "the succession of two or more words that must be learnt together as an integral whole and must not be pieced together from its component parts" (title page) (as cited in Williams and Millon 2012). Another pioneer of collocation research, Firth (1957: 196), describes collocations as "the company words keep together". Frequency-based approaches include Lewis's (2000: 132) definition, who defines collocations as "the way words co-occur in natural text in statistically significant ways", and Sinclair's (1991: 170), who sees collocations as "the co-occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text". On a similar note, Conzett (2000: 73) defines collocations as "two or more words that tend to occur together".

On the other hand, Benson et al's (1986) approach to collocations as "fixed, identifiable, non-idiomatic phrases and constructions" (Benson, Benson, and Ilson 1986) and also Demir's one (2017: 293) as the "recurrence of two or more words in a way more than arbitrary, and is instinctively used by writers heavily in academic text" contain semantic considerations. Palmer (1968) introduces

the notion of "mutual expectancy", referring to the tendency of words to mutually select each other; in other words, "the occurrence of one of the words in such a combination can be said to predict the occurrence of the other's" (Kjellmer 1991: 112). Giving a semantic analysis of collocations, Schmid (2003: 235) believes the difficulty of analysing collocations mostly lies in them being "half-way entrenched word combinations with a half-way gestalt character".

Finally, Bartsch's (2004: 76) definition of collocations as "lexically and/or pragmatically constrained recurrent co-occurrences of at least two lexical items that are in a direct syntactic relation with each other" focuses in addition to the semantics of these constructions (e.g. degree of transparency) also on frequency, lexical selection, and the syntactic relation between the constituent elements.

Contrary to the interpretations that define collocations as co-occurring words, Woolard (2000: 29) takes a different view to collocations and defines them as words that we do not expect to appear together. His definition stems from pedagogical considerations; so, according to him, when teaching collocations, we should focus on the co-occurrences of the words that seem arbitrary instead of word combinations that could easily be explained. The example Woolard (2000) gives are the collocators of 'heavy': while *heavy furniture* and *heavy load* are expected word combinations and should not pose any difficulties for learners, *heavy seas* and *heavy smokers* are unusual constructions that may strike students as odd. Woolard (2000) restricts the definition of collocations to the co-occurrences of words, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs and does not label constructions with prepositions (nouns, verbs, adjectives + their prepositions, such as *reason for*, *depend on*, *guilty of*) as collocations.

While many prototypical collocations consist of two words, there are also collocations that contain additional words: to illustrate this, Schmid (2003: 241) gives as an example the phrases *keep my promise* but also *kept my terrible promise* (where more elements are inserted between the collocates).

1.2. Collocations as constructions

The notion of construction has "a time-honored place in linguistics" (Goldberg 1995: 1), being considered a basic concept not only in traditional grammar but in early transformative linguistics, too. While in later generative approaches constructions were neglected and considered epiphenomenal (resulting mostly from the interaction of general principles), in the last few decades the importance of constructions has been acknowledged again. This is fuelled mostly by the realization that the idiosyncratic properties of sentence patterns cannot stem from the properties of individual elements alone but

that the morpho-syntactic and semantic properties of linguistic structures must be recognized as constructions independent of the constituent elements (Goldberg 1995: 1). A bottom-up approach that is entirely lexically-based has been found inadequate, as it fails to account for all the idiosyncrasies found in the English language.

In this work, collocations are seen as constructions as mostly understood by Goldberg (1995, 2006, 2013). Goldberg (1995) defines constructions as conventional linguistic elements, learned pairings of form and meaning whose function and form (some aspects of it) cannot be solely predictable from its constituent parts (meaning that they are not compositionally derived from other constructions in the language). This definition is slightly altered in later works (2006, 2013), where even those linguistic structures are considered constructions that are fully predictable, provided they appear with enough frequency.

Goldberg (2006) points out that all linguistic analyses include constructions, as constructions are present at all levels (consider *Table 1* for the categorization of constructions). They include small units of language, such as morphemes and words, but also word combinations and larger linguistic patterns (e.g. argument structure of verbs). All sentence patterns (including basic ones) are assumed to include constructions – an example is the combination of verbs with their argument structure (transitive, intransitive, ditransitive, etc.) (Goldberg 2006: 6).

Table 1. *Examples of constructions, varying by size and complexity*

Morpheme	e.g. pre, -ing
Word	e.g. avocado, anaconda, and
Complex word	e.g. daredevil, shoo-in
Complex word (partially filled)	e.g. [N-s] (for regular plurals)
Idiom (filled)	e.g. going great guns, give the Devil his due
Idiom (partially filled)	e.g. jog <someone's> memory, send <someone> to the cleaners
Covariational conditional	e.g. The Xer, the Yer (the more you think about it, the less you understand)
Ditransitive (double object)	Subj V Obj1 Obj2 (e.g. he gave her a fish taco, he baked her a muffin)
Passive	Subj aux VP_{PP} (PP_{by}) (e.g. the armadillo was hit by a car)

Source: Goldberg 2016: 5

While it might be assumed that sentence patterns (the relation between the form and the meaning expressed) would be determined by the semantic and syntactic information inherent in the verb itself, this is not entirely so.

By giving various examples, Goldberg (2006) successfully points out that the patterns of a sentence and their interpretation are not always predictable from the specifications of the main verb. Thus, while the sentence pattern in 1) is specified by the verb ('give' – a three-argument verb that needs an agent, a recipient, and a theme as its arguments), the pattern of example 2) cannot be solely attributed to the specifications of the main verb ('sneeze' as a one-argument predicate would not be expected to generate a construction like this):

1) Chris gave Pat a ball.

2) He sneezed his tooth across town.

Constructions can represent basic, regular patterns of language and also more complex (and even) unusual patterns. Many constructions are results of generalizations; nevertheless, there are also a great number of constructions with limited generalizations, such as prefabricated utterances, idioms, collocations, and also minor constructions that show irregular aspects of language, contrary to expectations (Goldberg 2013: 18). The regular and irregular aspects of constructions can be captured in a default (usage-based) inheritance hierarchy through which the information on the morpho-syntactic and semantic properties of constructions are passed on (Goldberg 2013).

Some additional characteristics of constructions include the following:

– Constructions are symbolic in nature (representing a mapping between a particular form and the associated meaning) and have a unique morphological, syntactical, semantic, or pragmatic function.

– Constructions show a varying degree of schematicity[1] and abstraction, resulting from the generalizations of strings of lexical or grammatical phrases.

– Constructions (both lexical and grammatical) are related in a network of inheritance links.

– Constructions (e.g. multi-word expressions) can be partly compositional, which means that their meanings and the way the elements are combined are not totally arbitrary but predictable to a certain extent.

– Difference in form results in a difference in meaning: E.g. all configurations of a construction have their specific meanings. For example, ditransitive constructions and paraphrases containing a *to-infinitive* construction can show different semantic properties (consider examples 3a and 3b: while 3a) requires that its goal argument be animate, sentence 3b) does not) (Partee 1965 as cited by Goldberg (1995: 2). In addition, as Goldberg (1995: 146) notes, in many cases, the recipient must also be willing, which is the reason why sentence 4) strikes us as odd (in order to tell someone something, that person is supposed to be listening).

1 Schematic constructions contain empty elements, so-called slots that can be filled by various linguistic material to the language user's liking.

3a) I brought Pat a glass of water. (ditransitive construction)
3b) I brought a glass of water to the table.
4) Bill told Mary a story, but she wasn't listening.

– In constructionist approaches, there is no strict division between lexicon and syntax, and while lexical and grammatical constructions show a different internal complexity, they both represent a pairing form with meaning. Neither is there a strict separation between semantic and pragmatic meaning (Goldberg 1995: 7).

– Constructions vary in their specifics cross-linguistically (a construction in one language may result in a different construction in another language, not just with respect to the constituent elements but also to case – thus, for example, the Hungarian correspondent of the V + N collocation *play a musical instrument* will be *hangszeren játszik* in Hungarian (*musical instrument* carries accusative case in English, whereas *hangszeren* in Hungarian is inflected for the superessivus case – *en*).

Following Goldberg's (1995, 2006, 2013) definition of constructions, collocations are seen to a certain extent as frequently co-occurring constructions with varying degrees of transparency and compositionality. Goldberg's 1995 definition of constructions – pairings of form and meaning (semantic or discourse function) whose function and form (some aspects of it) cannot be solely predictable from its constituent parts but also fully predictable patterns that occur with sufficient frequency (Goldberg 2006: 5) – resonates well with the way collocations are defined here. Also, in line with these definitions, free combinations of words where elements can freely combine with each other (restricted only by semantic considerations) and that do not show mutual expectancy of co-occurrence are not considered constructions but free combination of words.

In conformity with Wolter and Gyllstad (2013) and Kurosaki (2012), who take both semantic properties and frequency as important factors in defining and analysing collocations, it is believed that these two factors are equally significant. The semantic characteristics of collocations, including the combinability of words within the collocations and their transparency, collocations representing a "fuzzy area on a continuum between free combinations and idioms" (Kurosaki 2012: 40), can give an answer as to why collocations are so difficult to define. Frequency-based considerations that view collocations as span of words of varying frequency give a slightly different but equally important focus on collocations, as frequency is a distinguishing characteristic of these constructions.

1.3. Types of Collocations

Regarding their morpho-syntactic properties, collocations pertain to two major groups, lexical and grammatical collocations, depending on the part of speech the constituent elements belong to (Benson, Benson, and Ilson 1986). The first category contains a variety of combinations, such as verb + noun, e.g. *make an enquiry*, adjective + noun, e.g. *light smoker*, noun + verb, e.g. *question arises*, noun + noun, e.g. *child care*, adverb + adjective, e.g. *surprisingly accurate*, verb + adverb, e.g. *respond accordingly*. Different from lexical collocations, grammatical collocations often contain a noun, a verb, or an adjective followed by preposition, or a grammatical construction such as a *to*-infinitive construction or a that-clause, for example: *range from… to*, *with regard to*, *with/for the purpose of… + -ing*, *it is recommended that…*, *s/he is likely to…, tends to…*, etc. The table below gives a summary of the types of collocations; the list is not exhaustive, as there are several collocational verb patterns (e.g. *give somebody something*, by which the indirect object is moved before the direct object) that are not listed here.

Table 2. *Types of collocations*

Types of Collocations			
Lexical Collocations		*Grammatical Collocations*	
Verb + Noun	Make money	*Verb + adjective + preposition*	Be happy about
Noun +Verb	Lions roar	*Verb + Noun + to inf.*	Make an attempt to
Noun + Noun	Cash flow	*Adjective + that clause*	To be afraid that
Adjective + Noun	Well-deserved rest	*Verb + Preposition*	Burst into tears
Adverb + Adjective	Incredibly difficult	*Noun + Preposition*	Exception to
Verb + Adverb	Remember vaguely	*Preposition + Noun*	In advance
		Adjective + Preposition	To be afraid to
		Predicate adj. + prep.	It was important to

In addition to these types, Lewis (2000: 133) also adds other categories, such as multi-word prepositional phrase (*a few years ago*), discourse markers (*to put it another way*), fixed phrases (*on the other hand*), incomplete fixed phrases (*a sort of…*), fixed expressions (*not half*!), parts of proverbs (*too many cooks…*), or parts of quotations (*to be or not to be…*). While it can be useful to pinpoint such multi-word expressions to students, the notion of collocation will be restricted to the types presented in *Table 2* above.

1.4. The semantic properties of collocations

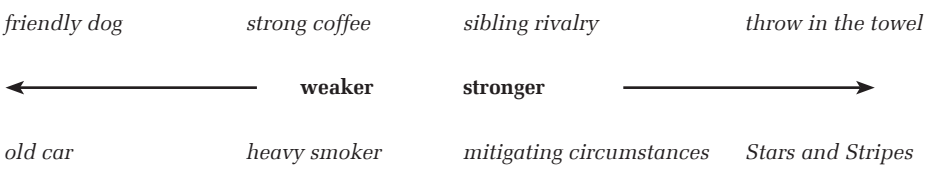
Collocations can be characterized by great complexity due to the varying degree of their arbitrariness, predictability, collocational strength, and idiomaticity. Semantically speaking, collocations are made up of two parts: the base that bears most of the meaning of the construction and that selects a collocator (McKeown and Radev 2000). To illustrate the presence of the base and that of the collocator, we can say that in the collocations *give a lecture* or *deliver a lecture*, for example, *lecture* is the base and this then selects for the collocators *give* and *deliver*, or another collocator, e.g. 'present' (*present a lecture*). Despite the fact that it is the base that selects for the collocator, the relation between the elements of collocations is based on mutual expectancy, in the sense that the base can only select for a collocator it shares mutual expectancy with.

While the relation between the base and the collocator can be semantically motivated – e.g. collocations with 'tall' and 'high' ('tall' refers to objects that are thinner than they are high (e.g. a *tall tower*, *tall trees*, but *high mountain*)) –, the link between the elements of a collocation is often arbitrary, and there is often no real reason why a base selects for a certain collocator but discards another; thus, we speak about *rancid butter* but *addled eggs*, *fast food* but *quick meal*, etc. According to Firth (1957: 181), an important characteristic of collocations is the habitual co-occurrence of word combinations, so "collocations of a given word are statements of the habitual or customary places of that word in collocational order" (1957: 195). This also means that collocations express the "mutual expectancies of words" (181) – they are words that mutually expect each other (that is, belong together) and are also recurrent. The notion of predictability can be interpreted as the pragmatic interpretation of the mutual expectancy of words. It refers to the expectancy that specific words will appear together, so native speakers are able to predict what elements belong together with some degree of certainty (Schmid 2003: 243). In other words, this can be understood as native speakers' ability to predict the co-occurrence of words.

Regarding collocational strength, there is a spectrum of weak, medium, and strong collocations.

Weak collocations are word combinations with a loose connection between the elements, e.g. *big/enormous/large* + *house/lorry/cup* (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar/collocation), that freely combine with each other and because of that are often not considered collocations but free combination of words (e.g. Conzett 2000, Nesselhauf 2003, Howarth 1998). On the other side of the spectrum, we find strong collocations: co-occurrence of words that we expect to find together (have a high degree of mutual expectancy) and that have very limited number of collocators (e.g. *curly hair*, *winding road*). Besides, there is also a high number of medium-strength collocations (that

allow for some collocates but disallow for others, e.g. collocations with 'make', 'do', and 'keep'), and they often represent a real challenge for language learners (Hill 2000, Conzett 2000).



Source: Conzett 2000: 74

Figure 1. *Collocational strength*

With regard to the restrictive nature of word combinations, a distinction can be made between restrictions on the substitutability of elements due to semantic properties (the case of "free combinations") and where this restriction is to some degree arbitrary (the case of collocations) (Nesselhauf 2003: 225). Thus, restrictions on word combinations are often semantically motivated: **drink a newspaper* and **read water* are not possible because of the semantic restrictions imposed by the verb and the accompanying noun phrase: the object of drink must be something liquid and that of reading a piece of written language. The fact, however, that a base selects for some collocators but not others is not always semantically motivated but rather conventional in nature: an example would be the use of the verb 'reach' with many nouns expressing a goal (*reach a conclusion/verdict/compromise/goal*), yet not with 'aim' (which is also goal-oriented) (Nesselhauf 2003: 225). The distinction between these two types of restrictions is sometimes difficult to be made, especially in the case of strong collocations that only allow for a very restricted number of word combinations.

The combinability and restriction of elements within a construction can be of various types. Analysing verb–noun collocations from this respect, Howarth (1998) classifies them into the following categories:

– Freedom of substitution in the noun – an open set of nouns appearing with a small number of synonymous verbs, e.g. *adopt/accept/agree* to *a proposal/suggestion/recommendation*;

– Some substitution in both elements – a small set of nouns with a few synonymous verbs: e.g. *introduce/table/bring forward a bill/an amendment*;

– Some substitution in the verb – complete restriction on the choice of the noun, e.g. *pay/take heed*;

– Complete restriction on the choice of the verb – a few nouns can be used with no synonymous verb, e.g. *give the appearance/impression of*;

– Complete restriction on the choice of both elements – no other noun can be used with the verb, e.g. *curry favour*.

Although many collocations seem totally predictable and logical, such as *open the window*, *play tennis*, *break your leg*, collocations that seem logical are often also conventional and idiomatic. We may wonder, Lewis (2000) says, why we say *open a meeting* and not *start a meeting*, *play music* and not *make music*, and *break silence* and not *explod*e or *interrupt silence* – so, these constructions are not fully predictable from their component parts. Indeed, while these constructions have an equivalent in several other languages (Hungarian, Romanian, German), we can notice some slight differences in the combination of words. In some cases, the difference is minimal and mostly noticeable in markedness for aktionsart; for example, the equivalent for 'open a meeting' is *a deschide şedinţa* in Romanian, which is a word-for-word equivalent, whereas in Hungarian and in German we have the preverbs *meg-* and *er-* – meg*nyitja a gyűlést* (HU); *die Sitzung* er*öffnen* (DE) – as a marker for aktionsart (reaching a goal by doing an activity). The case of *break silence* is interesting as the noun 'silence' is polysemous in English, as it expresses both the total lack of sound and the state of refusing to talk – in Romanian and German, we have the words *linişte* and *tăcere* (RO), *Stille* and *Schweigen* (DE), expressing (roughly) the first and second meaning respectively; nevertheless, the common expressions are a *rupe tăcerea* and *das Schweigen brechen*. The Hungarian version, *megtöri a csendet*, is a word-for-word equivalent of the English collocation.

Strong collocations only allow for a very limited number of partner words, e.g. *We had a blazing row/argument*, and are often idiomatic (Lewis 2000: 132). On the other hand, as they are very restrictive with regard to the combination of words ('shrug' only appears with shoulders, or it has to do with shoulders, e.g. *shrug off a problem*), they are relatively easy to learn and are not expected to cause much difficulty for learners. Another example would include the word 'nomadic', which as a base selects only for a very limited number of collocators, such as 'tribe', 'herders', or 'family'.

Regarding the complexity of word combinations, Lewis (2000: 137) argues that language does not consist of individual slots that need to be filled, but rather we have a spectrum of more and less fixed variable items. Sinclair (1991) illustrates this spectrum of variability by distinguishing between the open choice principle (when the speaker can choose between several constituents, where each position in the construction offers a choice) and idiom principle (where the collocations are pre-constructed, representing single choices) (Sinclair 1991: 110). According to this principle, we can say that the more idiomatic (and so less transparent) collocations are, the higher the likelihood that they are stored as pre-fabricated constructions in the mental lexicon.[2]

2 The idiom principle in Sinclair's (1991) understanding does not only include formulaic language and idioms but also "extended units of meaning", which is a word and its

Collocations vary significantly with respect to transparency and idiomaticity. Analysing the semantic transparency of collocations, Bartsch (2004) distinguishes four distinct cases. The first is when the collocations are fully transparent in meaning, and it is one specific meaning that will be dominant within the combination itself; the other possible meanings of the constituent elements will be obscured. One of the examples Bartsch (2004) gives is the different constructions the word 'commit' can appear in, and the different senses that the word can have in these constructions, such as *commit murder* (perform, carry out), *commit oneself to something* (take an obligation), *commit to memory* (learn by heart).

An interesting case of transparent collocations is when one of the constituents carries most of the meaning of the construction and the other element loses its full, independent meaning, only contributing to the *aktionsart* category of the construction. In the construction *give a smile*, *give* does not add much to the meaning of the construction besides changing its *aktionsart* category (*give a smile* expresses a voluntary as compared to *smile*, which does not). A subtype of these constructions is represented by ones that contain an obligatory functional element (e.g. bread *and* butter) and also support verb constructions that do not have a semantically full parallel verb (e.g. *make a point*, *take a picture*) (73).

Another group of collocations that Bartsch (2004) mentions is that of collocations that are only superficially transparent, *meals on wheels* for example, refers to social welfare, a service that helps the elderly with hot meals and drinks. Then there are opaque collocations, where one of the constituents acquires a meaning that is valid only within the specific construction. In the construction a *stiff drink*, for instance, 'stiff' refers to a strong and intense drink, a meaning resulting at the level of the construction as a whole. These constructions are idiomatic, the meaning of the constituents resulting from metaphorical extension. Other idiomatic expressions are, for example, the following expressions with 'run', e.g. *run a company*, *run a program*, where we again have the metaphorical extension of the primary meaning of *run*. Howarth (1998) distinguishes between four types of word combinations with respect to idiomaticity, collocability, and semantic specialization:

associated collocations, colligation, semantic preference, and prosody.

Table 3. *Collocational continuum*

	Free combinations	*Restricted collocations*	*Figurative idioms*	*Pure idioms*
Lexical composites verb + noun	blow a trumpet	blow a fuse	blow your own trumpet	blow the gaff
Grammatical composites preposition + noun	under the table	under attack	under the microscope	under the weather

Source: Howarth 1998: 28

In the light of the above, it can be said that collocations represent a complex phenomenon, not only because they are of different types (both morpho-syntactically and semantically) but also because they can be found somewhere in the middle on a continuum between free and fixed combination of words.

According to Schmid (2003), collocations are hard to pin down especially because they mostly capture "non-extreme, mediocre phenomena" (249). Prototypical collocations show medium rather than extreme values on the dimension of combined recurrence, predictability, and idiomaticity; they can be seen as "combinations of lexemes exhibiting a medium degree of observable recurrence, mutual expectancy and idiomaticity" (Schmid 2003: 249).

The mediocrity of collocations is also what makes collocations different both from free syntactic constructions and from idioms. In spite of the fact that collocations are often grouped together with idioms, the two phenomena are different, so while idioms can be regarded as holistic units and fully entrenched constructions, this does not hold for collocations. Idioms are fixed expressions, where the meaning of the construction is non-compositional. By contrast, collocations are semantically more analysable than idioms are, having a varying degree of transparency, compositionality (collocations can be fully or partly compositional) and also lacking the holistic, gestalt-like nature of idioms.

Finally, regarding the semantics of collocations, the notions of semantic preference and semantic prosody should also be mentioned.

Semantic preference and prosody describe two closely related phenomena: semantic preference refers to the appearance of a word form with a set of semantically related words (e.g. Stubbs (2001) in his analysis points out the preference of the word *large* with quantities and sizes such as numbers, scale, part, or amounts), and semantic prosody is the tendency of words and word phrases to appear in a certain semantic environment (e.g. positive or negative, formal or informal) that also defines their connotational meaning. Analysing the semantic preference and semantic prosody of the V–N collocation *make sense*, Begacic (2013) notes that all the word forms of this collocation constitute the semantic set of difficulty, collocating with verbs such as 'try', 'attempt', 'help', and 'struggle', constituting the semantic set of difficulty. By often co-occurring with

modal verbs, the collocation *make sense* also shows a semantic preference for uncertainty, expressing a hypothetical situation; appearance with a certain tense form, e.g. *makes sense* and *made sense*, can make the collocation more factual in nature (Begacic 2013: 413). Begacic concludes that the semantic preference for unpleasant events leads to an unfavourable semantic prosody of *make sense*, especially when the collocation is accompanied by the proposition *of*.[3]

Different from semantic preference and semantic prosody is the notion of colligation, which is the co-occurrence of words in a syntactic pattern (e.g. *gain insight* is followed by the preposition 'into'). Colligation shows the particular instances words appear in such as verbs appearing with a particular tense or aspect (e.g. verbs that are generally not used in the continuous form, e.g. *I reckon that…*) or followed by (a) particular pattern(s) with slight difference in meaning and use (e.g. *He continued to work / he continued working*, the first one being a more popular choice) or where the difference in meaning is significant (e.g. *he stopped to work / he stopped working*); similarly, nouns being preceded by a personal pronoun or a definite article depending on the construction (*pass my/your driving test*, *it is my/your/our responsibility to…* but I will *take the responsibility for…* etc.) (Lewis 2000: 137).

Colligation is often referred to as pattern + pattern (e.g. verb of motion + directional particle such as *run away from*, *rush down to*) instead of the grammatical pattern (word + pattern) a word appears in (Lewis 2000: 137).

3 Based on corpora findings, Sinclair (1991) concludes that the verb phrase *set in* tends to appear in negative contexts such as accidents and unpleasant events, and so does the word *happen*.

CHAPTER 2

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ACQUISITION OF COLLOCATIONS

2.1. Language transfer

Language transfer is an important notion in language acquisition theories, and it was originally used to refer to the effect the native language has in the learning process of a foreign language (one of the first studies on language transfer was Selinker (1966) (as cited by Selinker and Gass 1983: 6)). This can be positive, when L1 knowledge affects the acquisition of L2 positively, but also negative, when L1 knowledge hinders or impacts this process negatively. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis proposed by Lado (1957) was meant to explain the effect of L1 on L2 learning. According to this hypothesis, the linguistic structures of L1 greatly influence L2 learners' receptive and productive skills, so the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 are good indicators of the difficulties L2 learners are going to face in the learning process.

Later theories (e.g. Odlin 1989) extend the notion of language transfer to refer not only to the effect native language has on the acquisition of L2 but also to the effect all previously acquired languages have on the acquisition of a new language. Moreover, as Karim and Nassaji (2013) point out, language transfer can be understood not only as a linguistic and mental process but also as language learners' strategy to solve communication problems (120).

While both positive and negative transfer are present in a language acquisition process, it is mostly negative transfer that scholars have been interested in, especially as negative transfer (possible at all levels, phonological, morphological, syntactic, but also semantic and pragmatic levels) can lead to incongruities in L2 production due to the differences between the languages.

Regarding collocations, negative transfer can result in constructions such as **make a photo,* **wash my teeth*, **say the truth*, and **cook coffee* instead of *take a photo, tell the truth*, *brush my teeth*, and *make coffee*. The phenomenon gets complicated in the case of L3 language acquisition as the learning process may be influenced differently by L1 and L2. So is the case of Hungarian native speakers who learn Romanian as their L2 and English as L3.

While in some cases the transfer from L1 or L2 can affect the acquisition of L3 positively, it is very often the case that the transfer from both L1 an L2 is negative, which may explain why students tend to use a specific linguistic

structure in the wrong way. Regarding the phrases above, with the first two constructions, *take a photo* and *brush your teeth*, there is negative transfer from both L1 (Hungarian) and L2 (Romanian), so the corresponding Hungarian phrase is *képet/fotót csinál/készít*, the same as in Romanian [*a face poze/ fotografii*], where the verb 'csinál' and 'készít' and 'a face' mean 'to do' / 'to make'. Similar is the case with '*wash your teeth', which is *fogat mosni*, *mosni* meaning 'to wash', and *a se spăla pe dinți*, *a se spăla* meaning 'to wash', the only difference being that the verb is reflexive in Romanian.

Regard the collocation 'tell/*say the truth' *igazat mond*, where we have negative transfer from L1, as *mond* can express the meaning of both 'say' and 'tell' in English, depending on the context, and a negative transfer is also possible from Romanian, where both (*a spune/a zice adevărul* 'tell/*say the truth') are possible. Finally, in the case of **cook coffee*, there is negative transfer from L1 [*kávét főz*], *főz* meaning 'to cook', and a positive transfer from L2 [*a face/a prepara o cafea*], the Romanian phrase corresponding to the English phrase *make coffee*.

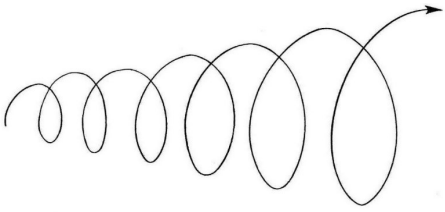
The number of studies that point out such ill-formed constructions are numerous. Duan and Qin (2012) and also Yan (2010) give examples of unnatural-sounding collocations used by Chinese students, such as **learn knowledge*, **learn the example*, **catch chance*, **eat medicine* (Duan and Qin 2012: 1892), **crowded traffic*, **receive the telephone*, or **make advantage of* (Yan 2010: 162). While all these mistakes have been made by Chinese native speakers, similar mistakes can also be found by all language learners whose native language is not English.

Lexical collocations are often found the most problematic for language learners, in which context Saudin's (2014) analysis of collocational use shows that a high number of *verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* combinations make up a high number all collocational errors (43% and 15% respectively); a similar conclusion is reached by Yan (2010), who in his analysis of lexical collocations in his students' writings reports a high number of collocational errors, especially with regard to *verb + noun* (50%) and *adjective + noun* (25%) constructions. In addition, the fact that several collocations contain an element that has a phonological neighbour, sharing every phoneme except for one (e.g. *make* a photo instead of *take* a photo), can also partly explain why learners often err in their word choices.

While students are generally expected to rely mostly on their L1 when producing utterances in a foreign language, the effects of L2 on the acquisition of L3 may also be significant, especially if language learners have a good knowledge of L2 and also speak and hear it with relative frequency. Third language acquisition differs from second language acquisition not only because it comprises a more complex phenomenon as it involves the (active and or passive) knowledge of an additional language, and thereby an increased

interplay between different linguistic factors, but also because language learners' language skills and needs can be highly varied. As Jessner (2008: 19) notes, the complexity of the language learning process is also influenced by the acquisition order of the languages involved. This may show several possible scenarios such as the simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2/L3, the consecutive acquisition of L1, L2, and L3, the simultaneous acquisition of L2/L3 after learning the L1, or the simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2 before learning the L3 (Cenoz 2000). Jessner and Herdina (2002) propose a dynamic model of multilingualism in which they describe multilingual language acquisition as a complex and dynamic system that changes over time, is non-linear, and also reversible, meaning that it can result in language attrition and/or loss in case language maintenance is not strived for. An important advantage of this theory is that it views language systems as being interdependent, constantly influencing each other, and it also stresses the importance of considering individual differences in the language acquisition process.

Because learning is primarily non-linear, repeated exposure to linguistic constructions (e.g. by reinforcement in a post-task phase or other future activities that involve their activation) is necessary. At the same time, it also justifies the need for input that gives students the opportunity to notice a construction in a specific context.



Source: Holló et al. 1996: 17

Figure 2. *Learning as a non-linear process*

Language transfer plays an important role in both the second and third language acquisition process. Knowing whether English (or the language the students are learning) is the students' first or second foreign language and also what foreign language they have knowledge of can help teachers in assessing more accurately the difficulties that language learners may face. Teachers may also make use of students' linguistic knowledge and help them in their acquisition process by pointing out the similarities and differences between linguistic structures in different languages (e.g. by translating them to students).

2.2. Collocational frequency

An important question that arises with respect to collocations is what role frequency (frequency of a specific collocation but also the extent of exposure to a specific collocation) has in collocation acquisition and processing. There are several studies (Siyanova-Chanturia and Schmitt 2008, Wolter and Gyllstad 2013, Wolter and Yamashita 2018, Durrant and Schmitt 2009, Vilkaité 2017) in this regard, touching upon several aspects of collocational frequency: collocational frequency and incidental learning, learners' sensitivity towards word-level frequency and collocational frequency also with respect to language proficiency, the relation between frequency and congruency (similarity to L1 structure), frequency and adjacency of collocations, etc.

Whether repeated exposure to collocations leads to incidental learning of collocations (understanding the message without the intent of learning particular constructions) is an important question that many studies (e.g. Pellicher-Sánchez 2017, Vilkaité 2017, Durrant and Schmitt 2009) seek an answer to. Using modified texts in order to ensure repeated exposure to (semantically transparent) collocations, Pellicher-Sánchez (2017) notes that incidental learning can already take place when students encounter a specific construction at least four times.

In conformity with Pellicher-Sánchez's (2017) findings, Vilkaité (2017) also considers repeated exposure necessary for incidental learning to occur. Discussing the learning (in Vilkaité's (2017) understanding, learning means recognition) of both adjacent and non-adjacent collocations, she states that reading academic texts can facilitate the incidental learning of collocations (although incidental learning tends to be relatively slow). Apparently, learners can acquire adjacent and non-adjacent collocations equally well (Vilkaité 2017) provided they receive enough input of naturally occurring collocations. Similar to Pellicher-Sánchez, Vilkaité (2017) even suggests that reading materials be manipulated to ensure that learners encounter specific word combinations repeatedly (repeated exposure to collocations being a prerequisite for both implicit and explicit learning).

Analysing the retention of collocations from exposure, Durrant and Schmitt (2009) argue that contrary to the belief that students only concentrate on individual words, they do in fact also focus on collocations, especially on the ones that are frequent in their input. They conducted a study that consisted of single-exposure, verbatim repetition and varied repetition of several sentences (with a follow-up test). The aim was to provide a fluency-oriented repeated exposure to collocations, testing the implicit learning of collocations through recall. The analysis yielded positive results in both conditions of repetition (the verbatim repetition yielding the best results), pointing to possible advantages of fluency-based repetition in collocational processing. As a conclusion, Durrant

and Schmitt suggest that teachers provide repeated exposure to collocations and design activities that give learners the opportunity to encounter the same construction several times as this affects the learning process in a positive way.

In addition to frequency, congruency also plays an important role in collocational processing (Vilkaité 2017, Wolter and Gyllstad 2013, Wolter and Yamashita 2018). As Wolter and Yamashita (2018) note, both frequency and similarity (or non-similarity) to L1 have an effect on the acquisition of collocations, as congruency can facilitate, incongruence, on the other hand, can lessen the effects of frequency in input. According to them, the acquisition of collocations occurs through repeated exposure to collocations. They believe that through repeated exposure congruent collocations become entrenched in learners' memory and become part of the active network of collocational associations; incongruent collocations, on the other hand, play a less prominent part in this network of associations. This does not mean that higher-frequency incongruent collocations cannot be activated, yet this is usually the result of repeated exposure; in such cases, non-transferable collocations may gain supremacy over low-frequency congruent collocations.

An important question is also how learners relate to word-level and collocation-level frequency. Based on an acceptability judgement task that had to be solved by three target groups (a native speaker group and two (an intermediate and an advanced) learner groups), Wolter and Yamashita's (2018) study aimed at analysing the processing of adjective–noun collocations. They found that the key difference between the groups consisted in how they attended to collocational frequency versus word-level frequency. While all three groups were affected by both single-word and collocation frequency simultaneously, the two learner groups appeared to rely more heavily on word-level frequency than the native group. Wolter and Yamashita (2018) conclude that reliance on word-level frequency decreased with proficiency, as higher-level students relied more on collocational frequency than on the frequency of individual words.

In conformity with Wolter and Yamashita (2018), Öksüz et al. (2021) analysed the processing of adjective–noun collocations by both native and non-native speakers of English and confirmed that both L1 and L2 speakers showed sensitivity towards word-level and collocation frequency. Also considering the processing of high-frequency versus low-frequency collocations, Öksüz et al. (2021) note that as the frequency of a collocation increases, the effect (the information carried by) of the individual noun word decreases both with L1 and L2 speakers of English. In line with Wolter and Yamashita (2018), Öksüz et al. (2021) conclude that usage-based models that put a focus on the frequency of input and the interface between L2 and L1 knowledge (the factor of congruency) should be considered more earnestly as far as L2 (or L3) collocational acquisition and processing are concerned.

In conclusion, studies seem to indicate that incidental learning of collocations is possible in case of repeated exposure to collocations, especially through reading. As texts, however, rarely offer a repetitive occurrence of collocations, their manipulation is often necessary (as Shin (2007) points out in a corpus-based study, collocations are not only different in spoken and written corpora but they also tend to appear much more frequently in spoken corpora than in written texts). In addition, studies point out that frequency also goes hand in hand with congruency, so learners are expected to learn congruent collocations with enough exposure the most easily. In case of incongruent collocations, however, incidental learning is less likely to occur, unless increased exposure to these collocations in ensured; in such cases, explicit (intentional) learning is not only deemed desirable but also necessary.

2.3. Collocational range and register-specific collocations

Collocational range refers to "the sum of all words (lexemes) with which a specific word can enter into a lexical combination" (http://www.kollokation.at/en/glossary/). Some words have broader collocational range than others: 'shrug', for example, typically occurs with shoulders, having a very limited collocational range, whereas 'run' can select for a series of collocations such as 'business', 'company', 'service', 'course', etc. A word's collocational range depends on a word's level of specificity and the different senses it can have (Beekman and Callow 1974) (as cited by Baker 1992). The more specific a word is, the more reduced its collocational range; similarly, more general words have a much broader collocational range. Some more commonly used words, such as 'run', also tend to have different senses such as 'manage' in *run a business*, *run a company*, 'operate' in case of *run a service* and *run a course*, *buses run*, 'compete' in *run for presidency*, 'to start and perform' in *run a program*, showing the uses of run as verb in different word combinations. In addition, 'run' is often used in the field of sports, e.g. *score runs* (unit of scoring in baseball and cricket), *home run* (used in baseball), and in many idiomatic expressions such as *be on the run* (escaping by running), *in the long run* (long term), *run out of something* (to be depleted of something), just to mention some of the most common meanings related to 'run'. Teaching words together with their context can show students that the different meanings of a word result from the meaning of word combinations they are part of. Therefore, it makes sense to talk about the meaning of a word combination rather than the different meanings of a particular word.

Collocations can be considered typical or untypical with respect to the expectations or norms of everyday language use. Unusual collocations, also

called marked collocations,[4] are often found in fiction, humour, or news advertisements meant to catch the reader's attention, and because of their peculiarity, they are often difficult to translate (Baker 1992). The examples that Baker (1992: 50) gives is *peace breaks out* in the passage from John Le Carre's *The Russia House* (1989: 102).

5) Some tout at the book fair wanted me to take UK rights in a book on *glasnost* and the crisis of peace. Essays by past and present hawks, reappraisals of strategy. Could real *peace break out* after all?

The phrase is unusual (peace cannot break out, only prevail), and an image is created that is contrary to the expectation of the reader. When encountering such untypical collocations, students should read the entire article carefully in order to understand what the author's intent may have been for creating such a word combination.

Besides typical and untypical collocations, there is also the group of register-specific collocations. This comprises collocations that although might seem atypical for everyday language use and be taken wrongly for marked collocations, they are commonly found in specific registers.

Sinclair (1966) (as cited by Baker 1992: 52) gives the examples *biased error*, *tolerable error* (expressions commonly found in statistics) and *dull highlights*, *vigorous depression* (expressions used in meteorology and photography). Baker (1992: 52) draws attention to the fact that register-specific collocations go far beyond the phrases that are listed in dictionaries and glossaries. She gives an example from computer language, saying that, for example, in the case of the word 'data', it does not suffice to know the word combination that 'data' can be found in phrases such as *data processing* and *data bank*, but it is also important to know what other words 'data' collocates with, listing such words as 'handle', 'process', 'manipulate', 'retrieve', 'shift', 'treat', 'arrange', or 'tackle', all of them collocating with 'data'. Teaching the meaning of the word 'data' as part of the word combination it belongs to is a good idea, as it can help students to learn specific vocabulary in a natural and easy way.

The use of collocations varies not only with respect to a specific field they are used in but also regarding the type of text they can be found in. Hill (2000) gives examples of collocations in different types of texts, also underlining the ones that he considers of interest.

Text A is an extract from George Elliot's novel *Middlemarch* – characteristic of this type of texts is the presence of common collocations (*have*

4 In his Markedness Differential Hypothesis (MDH), Eckman (1977) makes the observation that not all NL (native language) and TL (target language) differences cause equal difficulty for students. Linguistic structures that are marked (meaning that they differ or deviate from the expectation or the norm) are expected to cause more difficulties for language learners than elements that are not related by markedness (they are unmarked) (Eckman 2008: 101).

a misunderstanding, *expect the worst*, *Sunday clothes*) along more creative word combinations such as *worn woman*:

Text A

Overworked Mrs Dagley – a thin, worn woman, from whose life pleasure has so entirely vanished that she had not even any Sunday clothes which could give her satisfaction in preparing for church – had already had a misunderstanding with her husband since he had come home, and was in low spirits, expecting the worst.

Text B, a financial report, is full of field-specific collocations, many of which predictable, such as *shares recovered*, *shares fell sharply*, *the insurance market*, or *difficult trading*, often containing keywords (in this case 'share'); in addition, metaphorical expressions, e.g. *buck the trend*, can also be noticed.

Text B

Shares in Independent Insurance recovered by more than 5 per cent yesterday after the company bucked the trend in the insurance market by reporting a 22 per cent increase in underwriting profit. The share, which fell sharply last year after the company spoke of difficult trading, rose 14p to 263.5p.

The last example that Hill (2000) gives is a newspaper article – as these texts are full of fixed expressions and collocations, he considers them as more suitable for the EFL classroom than literary texts. Teachers, however, should be selective about what they teach to students and only concentrate on a handful of collocations at once in class, suitable for a specific level. Based on the latter text, what Hill suggests that teachers could teach is *spend time*, *still just 15*, *in recent weeks* for elementary level, *the world of…*, *known as…*, *the youngest… ever, qualify as a…* for intermediate level, and a *shy and introverted teenager, the forthcoming season, awarded the ultimate accolade* for advanced level.

Text C

The world of bullfighting has discovered a new legend in the form of a baby-faced 16-year-old called Julian Lopez, but known as "El Juli", who has become the youngest full-fledged matador ever.

El Juli, a shy and introverted teenager, has been booked up for the big bullfighting tournament of the forthcoming season and is expected to kill more than 200 bulls in his first full season in Spain. The teenager has spent most of his time in Latin America since he qualified as a matador last October when he was still just 15. His skill and courage has seen him awarded the ultimate accolade in bullfighting – being carried out of the bullring on the fans' shoulders – in more than a dozen Latin American cities in recent weeks.

Finally, there are collocations that are more typical of speech and not appropriate for writing. The examples below (Lewis 2000: 139) show collocations that are usable in both (academic) writing and speech (example 6) and constructions that are more appropriate in oral presentations and are not expected to be found in writing (examples 7–8).

6) The above examples all *seem to suggest*…

7) To *go back to the point I made* earlier…

8) That may be so, but *the point I want to emphasize/stress/remind you of*…

2.4. Collocational awareness

Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit (2014) distinguish between three types of language awareness: metalinguistic awareness (which is the awareness of the forms of language), metacognitive awareness (awareness of how language is learned, e.g. linking new learning skills to previously acquired knowledge), and social-cultural awareness (recognizing the connection between language and culture and being aware of the context in which a particular linguistic construction is used).

Collocational awareness can be defined as the ability of language learners and language users to acknowledge and use word combinations effectively. It can contain aspects of metalinguistic, metacognitive, and also social-cultural awareness, representing the ability of language speakers to combine words in the way native speakers do and also to reflect on the nature of language use with a special regard to word combinations in L1 and L2 (or L3 for that matter).

There is no consensus in literature about the role of awareness in language acquisition: while cognitive linguists argue that no learning can take place without it, generative approaches may question the role of conscious understanding in the language learning process.

According to the Noticing Hypothesis proposed by Schmidt (1990), noticing is an important constituent of awareness and is also key in language acquisition. Differentiating between three levels of awareness – perception, noticing, and understanding –, Schmidt (1990) claims that noticing is an essential part of language learning and that conscious awareness (consciousness is defined as attention, which may be intentional or not) plays an important role in the language acquisition process.

What learners notice can be constrained by a series of factors, as Schmidt (1990) notes, such as expectations (both expected and unexpected constructions can capture attention), frequency of linguistic constructions, their perceptual salience, the skill level of language learners (such as the automaticity of processing ability), and also task demands (the information needed to carry out a particular task). In his study on the role of consciousness in second language learning, Schmidt (1990: 139) poses the question as to whether noticing can be automatic, or learners must consciously pay attention to linguistic constructions in order for input to be converted into intake. He concludes that regardless of whether language learners pay attention to linguistic constructions deliberately

or unintentionally, if they are noticed, input can become intake. As Schmidt (1990) points out, it is difficult to predict what students notice. This is because in the process of noticing there may be also selective, voluntary attention at play, and attention can be directed voluntarily to one source of information while discarding another.

Schmidt (1990) sees the individual differences in language learning motivated by the relation between attention and awareness. He believes that paying attention to language form is advantageous in all cases and may even be necessary in the acquisition of redundant grammatical constructions. This does not discard the possibility of incidental learning that psychological findings would regard as "the gradual accumulation of associations between frequently co-occurring features" (Schmidt 1990: 149). According to Schmidt (1990), incidental learning may occur in case the demands of a task introduce or focus on items that need to be learnt. In other words, in order for incidental learning to occur, task characteristics should carry information crucial to the task.

There are many studies that stress the importance of raising students' collocational awareness by applying explicit teaching strategies.

One such study is that of Zaabalawi and Gould (2017), who used a pre-test and post-test approach to test whether coupling collocational awareness strategy with certain exemplar phrases would lead to increased collocational competence. The strategy involved input – a series of reading texts that students had to rewrite in their own words. The participants (N-70) were divided in two groups, the experimental and the control group, the former one receiving extensive training on the use and importance of collocations, while the control group did not receive such instruction. Zaabalawi and Gould's (2017) findings show that the experimental group's collocational knowledge increased significantly as compared to the control group, so when in the post-test phase students were asked to rewrite the very same texts they had received in the pre-test phase, the writings of the experimental group contained more collocations and less collocational errors than that of the control group. Based on their data, Zaabalawi and Gould (2017) stress the importance of input, especially of reading, as texts should be regarded as "a source for collocational content" (26).

Another way of raising students' collocational awareness according to Woolard (2000) is to keep a record of students' mis-collocations and make them aware of their mistakes, at the same time suggesting that teachers should primarily focus on lexical – *noun* + *verb*, *adjective* + *noun* – constructions that are not as well-formed as collocations. An example of mis-collocations is the following (Brown 1994, as cited by Woolard 2000):

9) Biochemists are *making research* into the causes of AIDS. The result was an *extreme disappointment*. We'll *experience many costs*, and few *benefits will come*.

Despite the fact that in this example the student's choice of vocabulary is adequate and all sentences are grammatically sound, the collocations show a mismatch of words. Although language course books usually draw students' attention to the difference between constructions containing *make* and *do*, due to the fact that they often represent an arbitrary combination of words, it can be difficult to choose between them, and this may lead to the use of incorrect constructions – such as the case here (*do/*make research*). Why the collocation in the second sentence is wrong could be even harder to explain to students, as the word combination *extremely disappointing* exists – *disappoint*, however, does not seem to collocate with *extreme*, reason why the construction *big/great/bitter disappointment* are suggested in place of *extreme disappointment*. With regard to the last two collocations – while not inherently wrong –, two better-suited collocations would be *incur costs* and *benefits accrue* (Woolard 2000: 31).

Other strategies include highlighting collocations in different types of texts, choosing a common word and asking students to look for collocations in a text containing that word (Hill 2000), reconstructing the content of a text, activities involving the use of collocation dictionaries, translating collocations, correcting mistakes (Woolard 2000), dictogloss techniques (Snoder and Reynolds 2018), incorporating an electronic corpus and concordance programs along with an inductive approach, helping students understand the use of collocations (Li 2017, Woolard 2000, Conzett 2000), and many more.

Especially for promoting the formation of associations and long-term retention, semantic strategies such as semantic feature analysis (analysing the meaning components of words), semantic mapping (brainstorming associations of words and diagramming the results), ordering (ordering and classifying words with respect to a specific criterion), and pictorial schemata (creating grids or diagrams) are considered to enhance retention by enhancing memory links (Sökmen 1997). (While Sökmen (1997) primarily discusses these strategies with regard to the acquisition and retention of individual words, they can also be useful for the learning of collocations, as the representation can include not only individual words but collocations too).

Eventually, a brainstorming activity can be performed in such a way as to include both individual words and collocations. For example, the teacher can ask students to think of words related to a specific topic (that s/he writes on the whiteboard) and then as a follow-up to add phrases to these words. A similar activity I have implemented in a heterogeneous (mostly elementary-level) business English class was related to the topic "jobs": the words included 'work', 'money', 'boss', 'responsibility', etc. After writing them on the whiteboard, students also completed them with additional phrases, such as *hard work*, *go to work*, *earn money*, *spend money on*, *meet the boss*, and also gave examples from their own lives (being master students, most of them have

already worked; the examples included sentences such as *I spend most of my money on petrol / I don't go to work on Saturdays*).

In the end, the bubble drawn on the whiteboard contained some individual words and several collocations).

Finally, Boers and Lindstromberg (2008) point out the importance of linguistic motivation of constructions in raising language learners' awareness of language chunks (also collocations). They note the importance of catchy sound patterning in the language learning process. According to them, linguistic constructions that have a catchy sound pattern (e.g. *baby boom*), vowel repetition (e.g. *small talk*), or assonance and also consonant repetition (*casual acquaintance*) are easier to learn than those that do not have such a patterning (Boers and Lindstromberg 2008: 15). Similarly, Snoder and Reynolds (2018) use rhyme as an important tool for collocation practice. Making use of the dictogloss technique (reading a shorter text to students several times and then asking them to reconstruct the text), Snoder and Reynolds introduced semantic and structure dictogloss exercises already in the pre-task phase, an important objective of the activity being to make learners (64 L1 Swedish learners of English) process collocations as intact wholes. There were 12 targeted collocations used: 6 of them as part of a semantic dictogloss activity (learners having to write sentences including the targeted collocations) and 6 as a structured dictogloss activity (writing sentences that rhymed with them). Snoder and Reynolds (2018) conclude that the semantic dictogloss generated higher learning outcomes in the case of verb–noun collocations and was more effective with regard to the production of incongruent collocations than structural dictogloss.

2.5. Integrated skills approach and input

In foreign language classes, the four language skills that need to be developed are listening, reading (also called input-based language skills), writing and speaking (output-based language skills), which are best practised in an integrative way. In fact, while there are classes that focus on a specific skill, such as communication or writing practice, language skills are rarely practised separately; oral or writing tasks, for instance, often require that students gather data beforehand by researching a specific task, listening to audio recordings, etc.

According to Oxford (2001), forms of instructions that take an integrated skills approach to teaching (e.g. task-based, content-based, or some other hybrid approach) have several advantages. These include learning about the complexities of the English language and how it can be used for various communicative situations, learning of real content and also natural language use, interacting and sharing content in English. She also believes an integrated

approach can be found as highly motivating by students of all ages and backgrounds and as useful by teachers as they can track learners' progress in multiple skills concomitantly (Oxford 2001: 11).

An integrated approach to language skills can be basic (incorporating language skills in the same medium) or more complex (which presupposes the use of a range of skills). A basic approach would focus, for example, on speaking skills (linking speaking to listening) or writing (including both reading and writing) (Hinkel 2012). This means providing input (targeting learners' receptive skills) in order for an output (e.g. speaking) to take place. In a spoken medium, this would include, for example, a listening exercise followed by a communicative practice and in the written medium a reading exercise that would give the basis for a writing task.

A more complex integrated approach would presuppose a complex use of language skills and require, for example, listening and reading input for a speaking or writing task or for a task that implies both. Such tasks would often be theme-based and be part of a lesson that presents a particular topic together with content and content-specific vocabulary, relevant grammar constructions, and discourse organization features (e.g. characteristic of a certain genre – narrative, descriptive, persuasive, etc.). This latter approach offers an integrative and holistic form of teaching that presupposes a wide range of multi-dimensional and interrelated skills (cognitive, socio-emotional, task-related) in addition to the techniques specific to these skills (e.g. scanning, skimming, in-depth readings as basic reading strategies).

Regarding the teaching of collocations, especially in the initial phases of the acquisition, it is important that students be given enough input (preferably in the pre-task but occasionally also in the post-task phase) that enables the noticing of some targeted collocations. Input can be defined as "language sources that are used to initiate the language learning process" (Richards 2002: 157). With insufficient input, only a very slow development of collocational knowledge and competence can be expected due to the impediments that hinder the incidental noticing of collocations (consider Section 3.2.3 below). By providing students with input, students have the chance to notice their existence and use in various contexts. Forms of input could include a reading or listening exercise where students have exposure to the targeted collocations. Depending on the level of students, and also the frequency and usefulness of a specific construction, it may be necessary to draw students' attention to it by employing some input enhancement strategies such as increasing the visual salience of target forms (by highlighting them through underlining, capitalizing, or italicizing), writing the targeted collocations on the whiteboard and asking some comprehension check questions related to them, etc. While at lower levels this may make students aware of the existence of word combinations and pre-fabricated constructions, at higher levels it shows the preference of

specific words to co-occur (words that students are most likely familiar with) as constructions in their own right.

As noticing alone does not guarantee the acquisition of collocations, combining receptive and productive language use is necessary. In line with Lewis (2000: 184), who points out that noticing language chunks is a necessary but not sufficient condition for input to be turned into intake, it is believed that input should be accompanied by tasks and activities that foster the productive use of collocations (e.g. through writing or speaking).

In what follows, an example will be given of an integrated skills approach to teaching collocations. It is meant for intermediate level and above (allocated time: between 25 and 30 minutes) and can be used in a lesson related to travel – as an introduction to the topic or as a supplementary material – after learners have already got acquainted with the topic in some form. Taking the *New English File* course book as a reference material (the language course book used at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Faculty of Miercurea Ciuc), the activity can be used as an additional material to the lesson on air travel (*New English File Upper-Intermediate*, Unit 2B).

The aim of the activity is to give students the chance to use collocations that they already know (e.g. *travel by plane*, *book a flight*, *take a flight, check into a hotel*) and notice other constructions that they may not be familiar with (*board a plane, find someone… + -ing*, *come face to face with someone*, *encounter something/someone*, *have a laugh*, *travel somewhere via…*, etc.). The activity is based on input, which is a humorous text that relates about a person finding his look-alike while travelling. The text is suitable for describing travelling experiences and expressing preferences by the use of specific constructions (I *have never…* / I *have…* a *few times*, *I prefer… to*, I *would rather…*) also coupled with some targeted collocations (highlighted in the text). (Occasionally, the text could serve as an introduction to a grammar practice, for example, for highlighting the difference between the present perfect and the past simple tenses, the use of second conditional phrases – *What would you do if…*? –, the use of *would rather / had better*, etc.).

Description of the task

Pre-task phase

The teacher introduces the topic (whole-class activity) by asking learners a few open and closed questions (e.g. *Have you ever travelled by plane? Did you like it? How is flying different from travelling by bus/train? Would you like to fly (again)? Why (not)? Which places would you like to visit and why?*) as a form of a priming activity. The number of the questions asked (ideally only a few) depends on how open the students are towards the topic and the answers they give (short vs. more elaborate) (allocated time: 5 to 10 minutes).

The task

As a next step, the teacher divides the class in small groups (3 to 4 students), gives a copy of the story below to each student in the group, and asks them to talk about whether they find the story funny or not and how they would handle a similar situation. The teacher may also ask students to try to guess what the expression – *meet your doppelganger* – means (5 to 10 minutes).

Bearded man meets doppelgänger on plane

Neil Thomas Douglas ***encounters a stranger*** *with whom he shares an uncanny resemblance on flight to Galway*

A man has spoken of the "total weirdness" of encountering his doppelganger after **boarding a flight** and **finding him sitting in his seat**. Neil Thomas Douglas, a photographer from Glasgow, was travelling to Galway via Stansted on Thursday night when he **came face to face with** the bearded stranger.

Douglas said: "When I **got on the Ryanair flight**, there was a dude already on my seat – when the guy looked up, I thought: 'He **looks like me**.' We had a big laugh about it – everyone around us **had a laugh**, we took a selfie and that was it."

But the pair were later to **encounter a further coincidence** when they **checked into the same hotel** in Galway. Douglas said: "Later that night, I went to the pub and again, there was my twin. Total weirdness. We had a laugh and a pint."

Doppelganger Story (source: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/oct/30/neil-thomas-douglas-doppelganger-flight-galway-bearded)

After students give a short feedback to the teacher about the story and the way they would act in a similar situation, the teacher asks them to have a look at the collocations highlighted in the text. Then s/he shows students a video covering this story, the task being that students listen for the targeted collocations and underline the ones they hear. (5 minutes) (*board a flight*, *come face to face with*, *check into a hotel*, *look like*)

(Link to the recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKNSWcUD0fM)

Post-task phase

A possible follow-up activity includes listening for detail. The teacher plays the video again and asks students to listen for additional details that can be found in the recording (the man was a wedding photographer, both men were ginger-bearded, they were travelling from Scotland to Ireland, the picture was shared on Twitter, the two became Facebook friends) and eventually ask what the phrases below refer to in the story and what they mean (as found in the recording); (between 10 to 15 minutes):

– *surprise of his life*, *the two parted ways*, *bearded twin*, *ginger-bearded man*

This exercise requires the use of various language skills (reading, listening, speaking) and also includes various strategies learners should employ in order to complete the task (scanning the text followed by active reading, sharing and expanding ideas (while interacting and exchanging information), noticing linguistic constructions, listening for detail, comprehension and recall, etc.). It provides students with input affecting various receptive skills (reading and listening) and also fosters output-based, productive skills (speaking and eventually also writing). In addition, it contains authentic language material with real language use and also a real-life story that is quite humorous (or unusual, at least). All this can grab students' attention and make them relate more easily to the story and consequently to the task as well.

Some tasks may target the revision of topic-related collocations. As students should already be familiar with them, less input in the form of linguistic material (written or oral text) is necessary at this stage. The input can be visual and/or audial (picture, silent short movie, etc.) targeting the use of some earlier acquired collocations (e.g. using them to accomplish a specific task).

For example, in case the revision of some topic-related collocations is targeted (e.g. flying-related ones, such as *plane takes off/lands*, *plane crashes*, *board the plane*, *catch a flight*, *be good at operating a machine*, etc.), visual materials (pictures, short movies) can also be used as input. The link used herein (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJ8UL2Kx7io) is to a short silent movie (duration 1:39 minutes) on flying (after some introductory questions on the history of flying (pre-task phase), the task could involve students watching part of the movie and then in pairs or small groups making guesses about the possible outcome (about 10 minutes)). In the post-task phase, the teacher gets feedback from the students and writes the possible endings on the whiteboard (by using the phrases given by the students), and then students watch the movie to the end (between 5 to 10 minutes).

In order to teach collocations effectively, teachers should have a good understanding of the vocabulary learning strategies that language learners employ and of how this affects the acquisition of collocations. As such, the next section deals with vocabulary learning strategies commonly applied by language learners.

2.6. Vocabulary learning strategies

Before talking about the use of vocabulary learning strategies in EFL learning, we need to define what is meant by learning strategy. While no clear definition has been given of what a learner strategy is, Carver (1984) manages

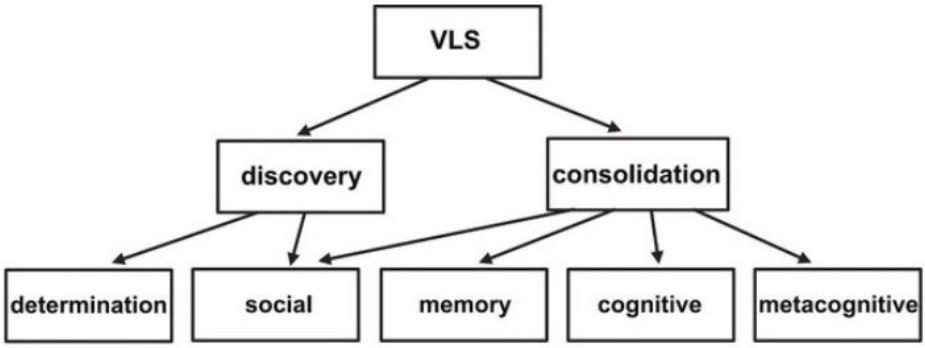
to define it along a series of interconnected concepts. In his approach, a learner strategy is seen as a part of a learning methodology that leads to a learning style, characterized by "work habits" which then lead to working plans. Learner strategies result from these work plans, and there can be both a conscious (self-directed) and an unconscious type of behaviour (Carver 1984: 125). Oxford (2003) also distinguishes between learning style (a global or analytic, auditory or visual approach to language learning) and learning strategy, which is "the specific behaviour or thoughts learners use to enhance their language learning" (1). The latter is defined by Oxford and Scarcella (1992: 62) as "specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques – such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task – used by students to enhance their own learning". The choice of a strategy and how effectively it is implemented depends on a variety of factors, such as the "degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age, sex, nationality, general learning style, personalities, motivation level and purpose for learning the language" (Oxford 1990: 13).

The description of language learning strategies has attracted great interest over the last decades, which resulted in a number of classifications and interpretations from various perspectives. Thus, for example, Gu (2003) talks about task-dependent and person-dependent vocabulary learning strategies, Schmitt (1997) distinguishes between discovery and consolidation strategies and gives a large number of subcategories, and Oxford (1990) makes a distinction between direct and indirect learning strategies, dividing them into six other categories (memory, cognitive, compensation (direct), metacognitive, affective, and social (indirect) strategies).

Drawing on Oxford's (1990) influential work, Schmitt (1997) defines vocabulary learning strategies based on her classification, also adding a new category that he calls determination strategy (used by learners to guess the meaning of new words without asking for someone's help). The strategies are meant to help students guess the meaning of new words (discovery strategies) or consolidate previously acquired knowledge (consolidation strategies) and are further subcategorized as follows: determination and social strategies (discovery), memory, cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategy (consolidation). The processes involved in these strategies are guessing (from the structure of linguistic construction, from context, from an L1 cognate), asking someone for clarification, using reference materials (discovery strategies), linking new information to previously inquired knowledge (memory), making predictions, translating, summarizing, linking with prior knowledge or experience (cognitive), self-regulation, planning, and monitoring one's development (metacognitive).

By including social strategies in both groups (discovery and consolidation strategies), Schmitt points out an overlap of strategies used by language learners.

In his analysis of vocabulary learning strategies, Schmitt (1997) makes three important observations: 1. Language learners tend to use more strategies for vocabulary learning than other aspects of language. 2. Students tend to overuse some mechanical strategies such as memorization, note taking, and repetition in comparison with other deep-processing strategies such as guessing, imagery, and keyword technique. 3. Successful learners use a variety of strategies.



Source: Ahmadi et al. 2018: 16

Figure 3. *Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies*

Another taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies is that of Nation (2001), offering a more complex approach in that it contains and also separates aspects of vocabulary knowledge, the source of this knowledge, and the learning process. His classification includes more general strategies that can be further classified into more specific ones (consider *Table 4*).

Table 4. *A taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies*

General class of strategies	Types of strategies
Planning: choosing what to focus on and when to focus on it	Choosing words Choosing the aspects of word knowledge Choosing strategies Planning repetition
Sources: finding information about words	Analysing the word Using context Consulting a reference source in L1 or L2 Using parallels in L1 or L2
Process: establishing knowledge	Noticing Retrieving Generating

Source: Nation 2001: 18

When it comes to collocations, students are also believed to use a variety of strategies, depending on the goal at hand, i.e. discovering the meaning of a specific construction or attempting to produce it in speaking and writing. While the former includes such strategies as asking for information, trying to guess the meaning of words from the context (also consider the strategies mentioned by Bytheway 2015), the latter becomes apparent by the use of synonyms, paraphrasing, repetition, the overuse of common collocations, and also word combinations created by analogy between the collocates of two synonymous words. Carrying out a corpus-based study (*International Corpus of Learner English* and a native control corpus), Waibel (2008) notes the presence of collocational deviations resulting from false analogy such as **carry out a race / revenge* (from *carry out work/task/duties*) or **make up a proposal* (false analogy from *make up a story/rules*, etc.) in students' writings.

Especially in lower-level classes, a word-for-word translation from L1 is a common strategy employed by students. In the case of Hungarian native learners, structures like **Do you have brother?* / **My brother doctor* can sometimes be heard in elementary classes, resulting from the word-for-word translation of the Hungarian equivalents [*Van bátyád? A bátyám orvos*], where we can notice the lack of articles and that of the verb respectively. Although these constructions are presented along with their articles to students, negative transfer from L1 often prevails. Another example would include constructions with an empty subject in English such as *there is/are*, e.g. *there is a book on the table*, where students might omit the word 'there' (*is a book on the table) due to the fact that the Hungarian equivalent of this construction consists only of the verb 'to be' *van/vannak*. Also, when the construction is used in the plural, the adverbials 'some' and 'any' are often inserted, which may or may be not the case in Hungarian, so the phrase *there are some books on the table* can be translated both as *könyvek vannak az asztalon* and as *van néhány könyv az asztalon*.

Research findings show not only that language learners use a variety of strategies during the language learning process but that there are also individual differences with regard to the number of types of strategies they use. Gu and Johnson (1996) in their analysis of vocabulary size and of the use of strategies by Chinese language learners (850 in total) distinguish between five different groups of language learners. The first two groups, made up of readers (students who sought to improve their vocabulary skills mostly through natural exposure such as reading) and active strategy users (who generally used more strategies than others, were hard-working and highly motivated), accounted for less than 11% of the learners in the study. The following two groups made up of non-encoders and encoders (making average use of strategies, encoders using more memorization strategies) accounted for 87%, and, finally, passive strategy users (who strongly believed in memorization and were the least successful users) only made up 2%.

Bytheway (2015) offers an interesting analysis of vocabulary learning strategies of language learners playing digital games, a very popular practice that also contributes to the development of foreign language skills. Her analysis based on semi-structured interviews, observations, elicited email texts, and extant texts showed that participants used a great variety of strategies such as looking up words in Google or dictionaries, noticing the frequency and repetition of words, requesting and giving information, receiving and giving feedback, matching images and actions with words, guessing from context, noticing the word in another context, observing other players, etc. (Bytheway 2015: 514). Bytheway's study is useful not only because it sheds light on vocabulary learning strategies in the digital world but also because it gives an insight into language learners' preference for certain strategies. Students recognized the value of practice and repetition in the learning process and reported often using the strategy of noticing the frequency and repetition of words. They also reported ignoring the word they thought was not necessary for that particular game and selected words for attention and learning (Bytheway 2015: 517). One of the most valued strategies language learners also recommended was interacting with others.

In conformity with Bytheway's (2015) findings, Lawson and Hogben (1996) also mention repetition as a common vocabulary learning strategy among learners. In their analysis of vocabulary learning strategies, Lawson and Hogben (1996) wanted to find out whether more advanced learners used more complex learning strategies during the acquisition process and also the extent to which language learners relied on context when trying to learn the meaning of new words. Their study included a vocabulary acquisition task along with a think-aloud protocol, which reflected students' thoughts during the acquisition process. The task consisted in learning L2 words (formally unknown to students) written on a card along with a sentence containing that word. The words were chosen according to five criteria: being unknown to students, containing affixes (four of them), not being longer than three syllables, representing familiar objects or concepts, and having one "related" word (i.e. accompanying adjective, adverb, noun, or verb often listed in the dictionary); one half of the sentences contained some clues to the students about the meaning of the words, and the other half did not. As a follow-up, students were administered a test, checking the recall of the 12 words.

Based on the analysis of tape transcripts, Lawson and Hogben (1996) conclude that the most preferred learning strategy in the study was repetition, which was applied by most students to most of the words (Lawson and Hogben 1996: 120). Also, while most of the students did use some kind of elaborate strategies, only some of them relied on sentence context when trying to establish the meaning of words in the acquisition process and only on a few of the words. Lawson and Hogben (1996) also point out that language learners

give relatively little attention to the morphological properties of words and that the use of mnemonic strategies (linking the words to mental images, letters, or sound patterns) was not common either.

To conclude, it seems that students tend to use a variety of strategies, and the choice of a particular strategy varies not only with respect to the level of students but also individually. In addition to mechanical, simpler strategies, such as repetition, that are common strategies employed by students of all levels, other, more elaborate strategies, such as guessing, exposure to natural language use (e.g. through reading, imagery, contextual encoding, etc.), are also used, although more occasionally. Furthermore, as has been pointed out by Bytheway (2015) and Lawson and Hogben (1996), language learners do not really pay attention to context or word structure.

When it comes to acquiring collocations, the observations made in the studies – while they cannot be considered conclusive – can definitely help in predicting some typical behavioural patterns of language learners. They seem to confirm the assumption that students do not generally pay attention to the context a word appears in – something that would be of great importance in the case of collocations. In accordance with Carver (1984), who points out that strategies stem from work plans that in turn are motivated by work habits, it is believed that students' vocabulary learning strategies are a result of learned behaviour. A particular tendency of vocabulary learning behaviour – learning words in isolation – can result in lacking collocational competence. While inherently there is nothing wrong with learning words in isolation – this also being a part of the vocabulary acquisition process –, it would be important to make students aware of the importance of word combinations and language chunks. This would mean altering the learning habits of learners in such a way that besides individual words they also include the acquisition of collocations and other multi-word expressions. While the acquisition of vocabulary happens in both an explicit (through the application of deliberate teaching/learning methods) and an implicit (unintentional) way (as Vilkaité (2017) notes: the implicit learning of collocations is different from the implicit learning of words, so in order for this to happen learners need to notice collocations), through exposure to language while carrying out a task, in some cases this may not be enough. Medium-strength collocations in particular, which exhibit a medium degree of observable recurrence, mutual expectancy, and idiomaticity, but also range-specific collocations, are expected to be difficult for learners in general. The acquisition of such constructions often requires extra attention and practice and also a deliberate intervention (through guided activities) on the part of the teacher.

2.7. Language course books

Representing the primary source for teaching (language teachers often teach from a specific course book that they complement with other language materials) and also for learning (as a reference material for learners), language course books have a great impact on the language learning process. Because of this, it is important that teachers give tasks that complete the materials found in these books. In line with Holló et al. (1996: 49), who advise teachers not to deviate too much from language course books, this being a source of reference for students, it is believed that teachers should try to adapt the language material found in these books to the purpose at hand (in this case, to teaching collocations) and complete it with additional materials. They should replace parts of the book only if they consider it beneficial for students (e.g. in terms of topic). Using the language course book as a primary source can help teachers keep track of what has been taught, and it also gives a sense of security to students (they can evaluate their progress more easily and can also catch up with the materials in case of absences) (Holló et al. 1996).[5] Last but not least, language course books are usually well structured, and the tasks follow a certain structure and logic, resulting from careful planning and consideration.

Language course books can foster the acquisition of collocations through strategies that bring learners' attention to these constructions (e.g. by "focused" activities and exercises that show collocations in context and with enough frequency) and also by activities that allow the practice of these constructions (e.g. through "unfocused" activity – see the distinction in the Section 3.3.1. below).

Analyses of language course books in this regard have been already done – for example, Meunier and Gouverneur (2004) analyse five ELF course books, *Cutting Edge*, *Initiative's, Inside Out*, *New Cambridge*, and *New Headway*, from the perspective of how they address collocations in the syllabus. They manage to detect some differences with respect to how phraseology is presented in the books. Their findings show that in some cases the sections dealing with collocations are topic-related (*Initiative's*), while in other cases they are more word-related and only occasionally related to the topic of the lesson (*Cutting Edge*). They also represent a mixed approach where the selected collocations are both word-related and connected to the topic of the unit (*Inside Out*). Among the course books analysed, the *New Headway* series were found to focus the least on phraseology (Meunier and Gouverneur 2004: 131).

5 Holló et al. (1996) believe that, apart from cases when following the course of a book may not be possible (e.g. very short language courses, courses with special needs or mostly focusing on one specific need, teaching a specific subject in a foreign language, etc.), teachers should stick to the content of a specific language course book (and complete it with additional materials).

Meunier and Governeur (2004: 130) conclude that the way the exercises in these books are structured often follows a three-step pattern that includes focus on compositionality (step I) followed by focus on meaning (step II) and then focus on use (step III). These steps, while they include similar task types (matching parts of a construction, replacing parts of a sentence with given items, writing sentences with the given constructions), are labelled and also understood differently in the more traditional 3p (present–practise–produce) and in more modern (o-h-e: observe–hypothesise–experiment) methods. Thus, the learning process involved in the first step would be understood as presenting in the 3p approach (the teacher presenting the linguistic construction to students) and as observing in the o-h-e approach (students noticing the constructions by themselves or the teacher drawing students' attention to them but not directly explaining their meaning or use). The next two steps involve practising and producing in the 3 p approach, which would correspond to hypothesising and experimenting in the o-h-e approach (consider *Table 5*).

It seems then that the differences between the two approaches lie not so much in the type of the tasks used (which are quite similar) but in the way they conceptualize their implementation, more specifically, the way the roles are divided between the teacher and the students (while in the 3p approach the teacher oversees and controls the entire activity, within the o-h-e methods the students have a more active role, observing, hypothesising, and also experimenting with the use of linguistic constructions). Based on their findings, Meunier and Gouverneur (2004) identify two areas where ELF course books are lacking. One is the fact that the presentation of collocations in exercises shows no content-relatedness or connection to the topic of the unit. Furthermore, the presentation of collocations is not salient or visible enough, nor are there sufficient explanations of the formulaic aspect of language. Overall, Meunier and Gouverneur believe that language course books should put more emphasis on presenting language from a phraseological perspective.

Table 5. *A three-step pattern followed by exercises in EFL course books*

Steps	*Exercises*	*Tasks*	*Learning process*	*3p method*	*O-H-E method*
Step I	Focus on compositio-nality	Match two parts of an expression	Noticing	Present	Observe
Step II	Focus on meaning	Replace part of a sentence with items from a box	Retrieving	Practise	Hypothesise
Step III	Focus on use	Write a sentence with the expression	Generating	Produce	Experiment

Source: Meunier and Governeur 2004: 132

Michael Lewis's (1993) lexical approach that the present book partly follows favours the o-h-e cycle, adopting a learning through discovery approach. In this approach, students – also guided by the teacher – are expected to observe linguistic constructions on their own (discovering their regularities and irregularities) and also experiment with their use in different contexts. In order to be able to do that, students need to be provided with a suitable amount of input for the completion of a specific task.

In what follows, a more in-depth analysis of three language course books will be carried out – the *New Headway Series* (4th edition), *the New English File Series* (3rd edition), and the *Speakout* (2nd edition) language course books –, also providing examples of collocation-related exercises taken from these books. First, however, a short description of these language course books will be given, as this can be also an indicator of how much emphasis is laid on the practice of vocabulary, especially that of content-related words and expressions in a communicative context.

All three language course books are popular worldwide, being published by the Oxford University Press (*New English File*, *New Headway Series*) and Pearson Education Limited (*Speakout*). They are available in six levels (beginner/starter, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced) and come with a workbook and a teachers' book. The structure of the books, while very similar in some respects (i.e. dividing the content with respect to skills – grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, colloquial English, reading, writing and speaking, additional material included at the end of the book together with the tapescripts and a grammar bank), also shows some subtle differences:

The New English File contains a *What do you remember?* section at the end of each unit, with a variety of exercises, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening and reading, and there is a vocabulary bank for each unit at the end of the book. Here, along with individual words, we can also find useful expressions together with their contexts. Similar to the *New English File* series, the *New Headway* series also contains a grammar section and a list of words at the end of the book, yet wider context is often missing (the words – often only individual words – are only listed without any context. Also, the he grammar section is mostly illustrative, containing a few example sentences without larger context or exercises). There is no section that would summarize the key points of the units in the student's book, but the teacher's book contains a *stop and check* session after every four units in the form of a test. Finally, compared to the *New Headway* and *New English File* series, *Speakout* seems to introduce more vocabulary within the units, mostly linked to or as part of speaking tasks. It also contains a short *Look Back* section after each unit, and there is a communicative bank (additional material to the lesson), a photo and vocabulary bank, and a grammar bank at the end of the book. What makes

Speakout different from the other series is that it is accompanied by a DVD with BBC material on it – each unit in the book contains tasks related to a BBC video.

Finally, there are also some differences with respect to how the topic of the units is structured: the *New Headway* series contains well-structured units with a topic approached from different perspectives (all points mentioned can be linked to a specific topic (e.g. unit 7 – pre-intermediate book *Living History* contains texts on life stories, including stories of houses, life of an archaeologist, family history), and the elements of the units complement each other in a well-balanced manner, except for the *Everyday English* parts (ways of agreeing) that are in themselves difficult to match with a particular topic. The structure of *Speakout* is quite similar to that of *New Headway*, yet it has more diverse content (e.g. Unit 1 called *Identity* includes the topics *Who do you think you are*? *Men and women? Tell me about yourself! Second Life*), and the topics are structured with respect to specific language skills (vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading). The *New English File* series are different from both the *New Headway* and *Speakout* books in that units do not have a specific topic that would link the exercises, rather each part has a different topic, and their sequence seems to be motivated by grammar. Unit 3 (pre-intermediate), for example, contains the topics *Where are you going?*, *The pessimist's phrase book*, *I'll always love you*, *I was only dreaming*, topics that seem to have (not necessarily the only) link to the grammar tenses *going to*, *present continuous* (for future arrangements), and *will/won't* (for predictions, promises, offers, and decisions) and a review of tenses (present, past, and future).

In the light of the above, it can be said that the language course books differ in their focus: while all of them take an integrated skills approach to language learning, the way they are structured shows an inclination towards one specific skill that gets a more prominent role. The differences can be defined along the lines of grammar- vs. lexis-orientedness and accuracy- vs. function-orientedness, understood not in absolute terms but rather as a tendency to shift the focus in one direction or the other. It seems then that the *New Headway* and the *New English File* series are more grammar-focused than the *Speakout* language course books, which lay more emphasis on speaking and on the integrated use of language skills in communicative context. Apart from the fact that both the *New Headway* and the *New English File* series highlight the grammar section in the table of contents (the *New English File* also in the units), the topics of the units are often centred around a particular grammar construction (especially in *New English File*) that receives special attention (e.g. through grammar spots within the lesson). By contrast, *Speakout* focuses on the communicative aspect of language and on bringing receptive skills (reading and listening) in balance with productive skills (speaking and writing).

Concerning language course books, Holló et al. (1996: 49) note that they usually need to be completed by additional teaching materials, especially because

grammar is not presented in sufficient detail in the books. While this may be the case in some books, we can say that generally it is rather the presentation or focus on collocations and language chunks that is lacking. In addition, the context in which linguistic constructions are presented is missing. Taking the *New English File* series, for example, we can say that the grammar section is well structured, and the vocabulary exercises are connected to the topic of the lesson (they are sometimes also connected to particular grammar constructions, e.g. the vocabulary bank – *feelings* on page 151 starts with the questions *how would you feel if?* – being closely related to a grammar lesson on conditionals). Nevertheless, we can also find examples where a particular section is not embedded in context, which makes the introduction of additional material necessary. Unit 3C in the *New English File Upper-Intermediate* book, for example, introduces first conditional sentences without embedding them into a larger context, or the vocabulary exercise (expressions with 'take') on page 44 does not include any follow-up activities (other than students taking turn to ask each other questions), which calls for additional materials or ideas that would elaborate the topic in more depth.

The analysis of these books focused on the following points:

– *Strategies used for developing collocational awareness*: to what extent do language course books draw attention to collocations? Is the notion of collocations introduced in the books?

– *The types of exercises that introduce collocations* (and also other word combinations such as idioms) with specific regard to the questions below:

- Are they varied or mostly of the same type (e.g. gap filling or matching)?
- Do they present collocations in parts or in their entirety (or both)?
- Are collocations (or other word combinations) introduced to learners via tasks that require the use of various language skills (listening, writing, reading, speaking)?
- Does the content-relatedness of exercises (how well they are related to the topic of a lesson) and also the context in which they are found resemble real-life-like language use?

Based on the analysis of these books, we can say the following:

All books make use of strategies meant to draw students' attention to specific constructions (mostly to individual words and less to word combinations) through "focused", often topic-related exercises. The most common strategy is highlighting words in a text and then giving a task involving the use of these words such as asking students to guess what they could mean or to match the words with a definition given.

An example of this is the exercise below, taken from *New Headway Beginner (72),* containing collocations related to daily activity; as the focus is on the past form of the verbs, only the verbs are highlighted. Nevertheless, as the exercise itself is linked to a listening task (Instruction: *Listen to Angie. Tick the things she did yesterday. What day was it?*), students have the chance

to listen to the collocations in their entirety. The exercise is also followed by a speaking activity, where learners talk about Angie (Instruction: *Tell the class what she did*.) and about themselves (Instruction: *Underline the things that you did last Sunday. Tell a partner.*).

Exercise. Listen to Angie. Tick the things she did yesterday. What day was it?

Source: New Headway Beginner, p. 72

Figure 4. *Collocation exercise. Listening and speaking*

Highlighting collocations is a less common practice, except for *Speakout* series, where collocations are more often highlighted The exercise below, taken from the *Speakout Pre-Intermediate* book (90), serves as an introduction to the topic of Unit 9.2. *Into the Wild*).

Exercise. Work in pairs and read sentences a–h. What do you think the words in bold mean?

a. I'd like to live in a **rural area** when I'm older; it's nicer than in the city.
b. The north of my country is in an area of **natural beauty**; tourists often visit it.
c. Where I live, there is a lot of **beautiful scenery**; it's good for walking.
d. I went camping in a **national park;** it was very quiet and peaceful.
e. We visited the **wildlife centre**; there were lots of unusual birds.
f. I'd like to visit a **tropical rain forest** and see the trees and insects.
g. My country has interesting **geographical features**, like volcanoes and forests.
h. I like being out in the **fresh air;** it's nice to be out of the city.

Besides highlighting, underlining can also be noticed as a strategy, although to a lesser extent. In the exercise below (*Speakout Intermediate*: 15), learners are asked to underline linguistic constructions that introduce an opinion, as shown to them in *Extract 1*:

Exercise. Read the extracts below and underline the expressions that are used to introduce an opinion:

Extract 1

S. I've studied English for many years and spent time in Britain, but that was a few years ago. So, for me, the most important thing is to just refresh... and try to remember my English and practise speaking and listening.

Extract 2

I: Ok. And you enjoyed it?

A: Yes.

I: What aspect, what part did you enjoy, would you say?

I: I suppose I'd have to say I liked the games best.

I: And any problems?

A: Um, no.

[..]

The notion of collocations often appears in the *Speakout* series, and there are also tasks related to them. In the exercise below, for example (taken from *Speakout Intermediate*: 78), learners are asked to find the collocations by rearranging the scrambled letters.

Exercise. Verb–Noun Collocations. Rearrange the letters in blue [here in bold] to complete the sentences with *watch/hold/raise/do/get/cut*:

1. We should go to the concert early so we can **est gates**.
2. They are going to **heal loads** to sell their old clothes.
3. The schoolchildren decided to **ease my iron** for cancer research.
4. I'm going home early because I want to **grammar two peach** on TV.
5. He gave up his job because he didn't want to **opened term six** on animals.
6. My cousin **i shut car** for a living.

Another useful strategy that can be observed mostly in the *Speakout* series is introducing collocations in a sequence of exercises, providing various contexts for their use. In this way, students learn to activate and also acquire topic-related vocabulary (including collocations) in a wider context. An example is the following series of exercises taken from the *Speakout* elementary book (29), revolving around the topic of guests: after the introductory section (questions about receiving guests), several topic-related collocations are introduced, and

there are additional, follow-up exercises that allow the use and further practice of these linguistic constructions.

Exercises.

A. Work in pairs and discuss:

1. Do you like having guests in your home?
2. What's good about having guests?
3. What don't you like?
4. What are three problems with bad guests?

B. Work in pairs and complete the sentence:

'A good guest…' with three different endings. Give examples. Choose from the topics below. Ex. *A good guest brings a small gift, for example, chocolates.*

bring a big/small gift	*use the phone*
help with the cooking	*arrive early/late*
bring food/drink	*speak in your/their language*
give money	*stay a short/long time*

C. Listen to two people talk about being a good guest. Which topics do they talk about?

D. Listen again and tick the key phrases you hear.

Phrases

– What do you think?
– What does a good guest do?
– For example, he…
– Yes, I agree. That's bad.
– What do you mean?
– A good guest doesn't….
– I think, it's important to…
– I don't agree.
– It depends.

E. Work in groups and use the key phrase to help. Write five top tips for being a good guest in your country or in another country.

A good guest in Poland…

…brings flowers for the hostess and perhaps something to drink… arrives…

F. Tell the rest of the class. Other students listen and make notes. Then ask one or two questions about the ideas.

2.7.1. Types of exercises

While they may not actively draw students' attention to collocations (in the *New Headway* and the *New English File* series, the notion of collocations (also called as word combinations, e.g. verb + noun combination) appears much less frequently than in the *Speakout* series), all language course books contain various vocabulary exercises that focus on collocations. Very often, however, they do not show collocations in their entirety but only in parts, learners having to fill in the missing word or choose the right word from various alternatives or match parts together, etc., as shown in the exercise below, where learners have to fill in the right preposition from the ones listed (*first exercise* – taken from *New Headway Pre-Intermediate*: 12) or complete the phrases with a suitable verb (*second exercise* – taken from *New English File Pre-Intermediate*: 26).

Exercise. Complete the sentences with the correct preposition.

to	from	at	about	of	on	in	with	for

He comes *from* Istanbul *in* Turkey.
a. He is crazy _____football, but I'm not interested _____it at all.
b. I am married _____John. I met him _____university _____2007.
c. I live _____my parents _____a flat _____the first floor.
d. He's very good _____playing the piano.
e. I like going ____a walk _____the park.
f. This is a photo _____me _____holiday _____Spain.
g. I got this jumper _____my sister _____my birthday.

Exercise. *Holiday verbs*. Complete the phrases with a verb.
__*go*___shopping
a. _____photos
b. _____for a walk
c. _____in a hotel
d. _____two days in Paris/1,000 Euros
e. _____a good time

There are also content-related exercises that either introduce or elaborate on a specific topic. The exercise below (taken from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*: 82) is based on a text about Vikings – after reading the text, learners need to match the verbs with the nouns; as a follow-up activity, learners use these words (together with some pictures that accompany the text) to retell the story they have read before.

Exercise. *What did the Vikings do? Match A with B.*

Table 6. *Collocation exercise. Matching*

A	B
Tended	Stone
Carved	Gods
Traded	Monasteries
Raided	Money
Worshipped	Livestock
Extorted	Far and wide
Settled	Expeditions
Mounted	In many lands
Explored	Goods

Source: New Headway: Upper-Intermediate, p. 82

Finally, we can also find exercises that present collocations in their entirety. The exercise below is also based on a matching-type activity (match A and B, where A is a topic and B is a collocation or a multi-word expression); the exercise is content-related, followed by a listening task that ties in with the topic indicated (exercise taken from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate*: 97).

Exercise. *Match the stages of life in A with activities in B.* What do you think is the best or usual age to do the things in B? *Compare ideas in groups.*

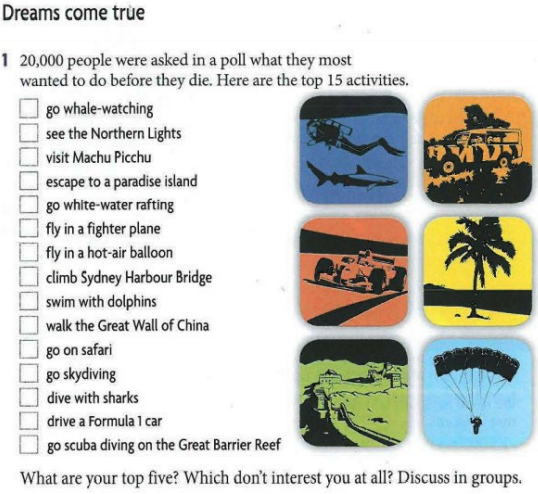
Table 7. *Collocation exercise. Matching*

A	*B*
Infancy	Own your own home disagree with parents
Childhood	Settle down go travelling
Teenage years	Set up a business have fun
Young adult	Walk and talk start a first job
Adulthood	Start primary school have children
Middle age	Retire leave school
Old age	Get married be made redundant

Source: New Headway Upper Intermediate, p. 97

Finally, questionnaires – found in all of the language course books – can be ideal for practising collocations, as they are usually shown in their entirety. The questionnaire below has been taken from *New Headway Upper-Intermediate* (171).

Exercise. Answer the questions related to the questionnaire.



Dreams come true

1 20,000 people were asked in a poll what they most wanted to do before they die. Here are the top 15 activities.

- ☐ go whale-watching
- ☐ see the Northern Lights
- ☐ visit Machu Picchu
- ☐ escape to a paradise island
- ☐ go white-water rafting
- ☐ fly in a fighter plane
- ☐ fly in a hot-air balloon
- ☐ climb Sydney Harbour Bridge
- ☐ swim with dolphins
- ☐ walk the Great Wall of China
- ☐ go on safari
- ☐ go skydiving
- ☐ dive with sharks
- ☐ drive a Formula 1 car
- ☐ go scuba diving on the Great Barrier Reef

What are your top five? Which don't interest you at all? Discuss in groups.

Source: New Headway Upper-Intermediate, p. 171

Figure 5. *Collocation exercise. Questionnaire*

While all the exercises can be used for introducing and practising collocations, the ones that introduce collocations in their entirety (the last two exercises) are assumed to be more suitable for this purpose as they contribute to leaners' seeing and also practising collocations as phrases in their own right. They are also suitable for a task-based learning; in fact, they are introduced in the books as pre-task activities, containing topic-related vocabulary and preceding a specific task (in both cases related to a listening exercise). From this follows that giving a purpose to an exercise (i.e. making it task-based) other than language practice is an important criterion for task efficiency. Generally speaking, students tend to enjoy those activities that they can relate to in a certain way (they have experience related to or are knowledgeable about the topic) and that do not seem forced or are not created solely for language learning purposes (that is, there is a specific goal they need to accomplish). This also means that a task should allow students to use their problem-solving abilities along with their language skills.

The tasks in the exercises below, for example (taken from *New Headway Elementary*: 44), lack the characteristics that would make them interesting for language learners: they are not content-related (there is no connection to a specific topic), there is no specific goal to the activity other than language practice, and also no real-life-like language or context can be found. Because of this, the tasks seem somewhat unnatural and are not really suitable for learning and practising collocations.

Exercises. *Verb + noun. Match a verb with a noun.*

Table 8. *Collocation exercise. Matching*

Verb	*Noun*
Send	A car
Drive	Children
Ride	A lot of text messages
Speak	A suit and tie
Earn	TV a lot
Live	Three languages
Play	A motorbike
Wear	On the third floor
Look after	A lot of money
Watch	The guitar

Source: New Headway Elementary, p. 44

B. Ask and answer questions:
– Do you send a lot of text messages? No, I don't.
– Do you earn a lot of money? Don't be silly. Of course, not.

C. Listen to the short conversations, and then say which verb + noun combination you hear.

D. Work with a partner. Look at T 5.15 (the tapescript of the recording) on page 123. Choose two of the conversations and learn them by heart.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING COLLOCATIONS. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Why teach collocations?

There are various reasons why collocations should get more attention in classes, such as the tendency to focus on individual words and only to a lesser extent on word combinations, low collocational awareness, the fact that the meaning of words often results at the level of collocations as a whole, that the acquisition of collocations improves fluency and contributes to native-like proficiency, and, last but not least, using wrong collocations in speaking and writing exercises. In what follows, these factors will be presented in more detail.

3.1.1. Focus on individual words instead of word combinations

Language learners tend to learn words in isolation and often do not realize that ready-made expressions such as collocations exist (Zaabalawi and Gould 2017: 21). They often learn the meaning of words independently of the context, partly because they rarely see collocations highlighted in texts or by the teachers themselves. This then carries the risk of not realizing what a specific word may mean in different contexts. The example that Duan and Qin (2012: 1892) give is the different meanings of the word 'handsome' depending on the context: while a *handsome man* refers to a good-looking man, a *handsome woman* is a woman who is physically proportionate and harmonious; other constructions with handsome are *handsome reward* (referring to a large amount of reward) and *handsome present* (a generous present). In the case of learning words separately, language learners may not know what *handsome* refers to in different constructions and may also end up using unusual word combinations that sound unnatural for native speakers due to negative inference from L1.

Because language learners generally focus on individual words, it often happens that although they do know the words of a collocation, they do not regard the co-occurrence of the words as a construction. Most intermediate students know, for example, the meaning of 'hold' and 'conversation' as single items yet may not know the existence of *hold a conversation* as a collocation. Similarly, they will know the meaning of 'make' and 'mistake' but may not regard *make a mistake* as a word combination (Hill 2000: 64). Generally, this type of

medium-strength collocations, where the base allows for some collocators but not others, poses the greatest difficulties for language learners. In line with this thought, students may also lack the ability to put parts of a collocation together once its parts have been separated (Lewis 2000: 132). The example Lewis (2000) gives is *initial reaction* – students may know the meaning of both words yet may not be able to put them together to form a collocation, even if they have seen it before. Lewis concludes by stating that teaching collocations from the start could be more advantageous than teaching students individual words and expecting them to combine the words to form collocations.

Furthermore, a common occurrence is that students notice only parts of a collocation, especially when it contains a word they are familiar with. Students tend to focus on words they do not know, so when collocations contain a "hot verb" (e.g. *get*, *take*, *have*) or frequently used function words, they already know they may discard them completely. Even if word combinations contain a word that the learner is not familiar with, because of the presence of a frequently used word, the importance of the collocation as a phraseological unit is often overlooked. This is also partially due to the fact that in such word combinations (often verb + noun collocations) the verb contributes little to the meaning of the construction as a whole, and it is usually the noun that carries most of the meaning of the construction (e.g. have *a discussion*, make *an assumption*, do *business*). As a consequence, language learners may only focus on the noun and not pay attention to the verb preceding it.

Just as importantly, the synthetic-analytic distinction between the languages (English and Hungarian) impacts the way students notice collocations. Due to the large number of preverbs and synthetic forms in Hungarian at the lexical level, Hungarian native speakers may struggle to acknowledge certain constructions as collocations in English. In Hungarian, it is very often the case that a collocation also has a single-word alternative, (e.g. 'make an effort' *erőlködik/küszködik* / *erőfeszítést tesz*), which is not always the case in English, where some collocations lack a single-word alternative (e.g. *make an effort*, *get ready*, *have dinner*, *tell a story*, etc.). Since the ideas can often be expressed by individual words in Hungarian, these sometimes being more commonly used and sounding less elevated than the corresponding collocation (in the example above, *erőfeszítést tesz* sounds more elevated than *erőlködik*), students may only focus on the part that carries the most meaning of the construction and not regard the words in question as constitutive parts. Taking this into consideration, drawing students' attention to word combinations is sometimes very much desired.

3.1.2. The meaning of words often results at the construction level

According to Lewis (2000), in many cases it is not only advisable but also necessary to teach words together with their collocates. This is because very often the meaning of a word results from the meaning of a construction as a whole (e.g. the meaning of 'get' differs depending on the construction it appears in (Lewis 2000: 19)). A similar idea is expressed by Hill (2000: 60), who states that some words are useless to teach without the context, as students will not know how to use them. Such words are 'impetuous' or 'initiative': instead of teaching them as individual words, teachers should teach the construction they can be found in – in this case: *impetuous behaviour*, *take the initiative* –, as it is at the level of the construction that the meaning of a word gets its meaning from.

Grammatical constructions, such as *aware of* or *interested in*, are never used on their own but need at least one more word for the construction to acquire its meaning, such as *aware of the problems*, *interested in football* (Lewis: 134). As such, when highlighting them to students, it makes sense to add a wider context the collocation appears in.

Other examples include homonymic constructions, containing words with distinct meanings, such as correspond$_1$ meaning exchange letters and correspond$_2$ to match / be connected to. The two constructions also show different colligation patterns (*correspond with* and *correspond to/with* respectively; also, correspond$_1$ appears in continuous tense, whereas correspond$_2$ does not). It is at the level of the construction as a whole (e.g. *correspond with friends* as in: *The two friends have been corresponding for some time*); *corresponds to / with truth/ needs / truth/ advertisement/ reality/ expectations*, etc. (Hargreaves 2000: 215)) that the meaning of the construction results from.

It is also important to bear in mind that collocations have a pragmatic power, a communicative force that may be lost if we do not use them in their entirety. It would be hard to imagine, for example, a situation, Lewis (2000: 15) argues, that someone would say *This is a corner*; rather, we would expect *this is a dangerous corner*, and this would immediately evoke a situation or speech event like a dangerous spot where accidents happen. The collocation *dangerous corner* exists as a prefabricated chunk with a separate meaning of its own, and it makes sense to teach them as such to students. Other examples that Lewis gives are collocations often found in spoken language and in the media such as *widely available*, *routine check-up*, *disperse the crowd*, *catch up with the news* (Lewis 2000: 15).

In the light of the above, collocations should be taught with their wider context to students, as they appear in authentic language use, and not be unnecessarily taken apart in the classroom (Lewis 2000: 132).

Regarding authentic language use, Harmer (1990) notes that a distinction needs to be made between texts written to illustrate a specific language point and the ones written to be authentic that, although sounding authentic, have been manipulated for a specific purpose (Harmer (146) points out the necessity to adapt certain texts to the level of students (lower-level students may not be able to handle genuinely authentic texts) in order to improve receptive skills). The point made by Harmer is important, as both genuinely authentic texts and manipulated texts can be useful for teaching vocabulary.

3.1.3. Incorrect use of word combinations

Students' incorrect use of collocations can be attributed to a number of reasons. Besides negative interference from L1, a possible cause is overgeneralization (Duan and Qin: 1893), which can be described as a strategy to generalize parts of a construction in order to make new ones. An example of this is the extension of 'do' from the construction *do harm to* to form other constructions by analogy such as **do good to* or **do bad to*, whose use is considered infelicitous in English.

Yan (2010) also mentions the influence of the native language and names the partial understanding or misunderstanding of lexical meanings and inadequate choice of thesaurus as causes of lexical collocation errors. In addition, as Yan (2010: 163) notes, some teaching materials may not be appropriate for teaching collocations, as they do not reflect how collocations are used in actual life. The examples he gives are the adverb + adjective collocations *very mad/crazy* and also the verb + noun collocation *become mad*. While the constructions are grammatically correct, they do not reflect authentic language use, as English native speakers would most probably say *she is absolutely crazy/mad* and *she went crazy/mad* (136) instead. The first example also shows an inappropriate use of intensifiers – 'crazy' and 'mad' – as non-gradable adjectives would take *absolutely* or *really* as modifiers.

Hill (2000: 49) notes that the mistakes students make in writing are often due to their lack of collocational competence. Teachers often focus on correcting grammatical errors, yet students' writings often contain an insufficient number of or ill-formed collocations. Conzett (2000: 70) gives as examples three sentences produced by her students, containing ill-formed collocations:

10) Be careful. That snake is toxic.

11) We will sever this class because it is too large.

12) A Ferrari is a very potent car.

In particular, Hill (2000) notes lacking collocational competence in the use of delexicalized verbs such as *get*, *put*, *make*, *do*, *bring*, or *take*, resulting in ungrammatical constructions such as I **make exercise* every morning in the gym (Hill 2000: 49). Similarly, the lack of collocations can lead to unnatural

sentences that also sound a bit forced such as *His disability will continue until he dies* (Hill 2000: 50) instead of the natural-sounding construction (verb + adjective + noun collocation) *having a permanent disability*: He *has a permanent disability*.

Lewis (2000: 15) gives examples of collocations and students' attempts to express their meaning in their own words due to a lack of collocational competence:

Collocation	*Students' attempt*
[…]	[…]
Major turning point	a very important moment when everything changed completely
Cause insurmountable difficulties	make problems which you think have no answers
Revised edition	a new book which is very similar to the old one but improved and up to date

Demir (2017: 75) notes that although intermediate-level students tend to make less collocational errors, their knowledge of vocabulary stagnates as they keep using the prefabricated items they have acquired before – this stagnation, also called *the intermediate plateau*, is the topic of the next section.

3.1.4. The intermediate plateau

Language learners often stagnate at a level where they feel they are not improving, despite being able to express themselves with ease. They tend to keep using the same constructions, without any noticeable development in their vocabulary. Durrant and Schmitt (2009) note that intermediate (and upper-intermediate) students mostly rely on collocations containing high-frequency words (such as *good example* or *hard work*) and rarely use those that are made up of low-frequency words (such as *immortal souls* or *tectonic plates*) (Durrant and Schmitt 2009: 167). It seems that while language learners manage to acquire high-frequency collocations easily, they take more time acquiring collocations that are less common and have a more specific use such as *densely populated*, *preconceived notions*, *bated breath* (Durrant and Schmitt: 175). Durrant and Schmitt's results are confirmed by Granger and Bestgen (2014), who note a larger proportion of high-frequency collocations in intermediate learner texts, whereas advanced learner texts were characterized by the use of lower-frequency but strongly-associated collocations.

Richards (2008) lists the following reasons as to why students often cannot progress beyond the upper-intermediate level:

– there is a gap between receptive and productive knowledge: language learners may have advanced reading and/or listening skills but not speaking skills;

– there are persistent fossilized language errors: some of the errors made at lower levels persist at advanced level;

– fluency may have progressed at the expense of complexity: vocabulary and communication strategies as well as grammatical knowledge acquired at lower levels can lead to fluency that lacks the use of sophisticated language patterns;

– the learner has limited vocabulary range – overuse of lower-level vocabulary and lack of more advanced vocabulary;

– language production may be adequate but often lacks the characteristics of natural speech.

Lewis (2000: 14) believes that the reason why students tend to get stuck at the intermediate plateau is because they lack the skill to notice words in their context. Although they may know a lot of words, they would not have enough knowledge of possible word combinations. Lewis (2000: 14) also believes that students' vocabulary knowledge would improve dramatically if teachers focused less on students' grammatical accuracy and more on teaching students how to combine the words they already know into collocations.

Students may feel that they are not progressing, yet they may not be aware of the causes (fossilized language errors, wrong word combinations); in addition, they may also lack the motivation to address the problem and/or may not care enough about the mistakes they make (Richards 2008: 7).

According to Richards (2008), some of the strategies that could help students move past the intermediate plateau are output-based activities that make the productive use of selected items possible, including the ones with stretched output (that expand or restructure the use of linguistic structures), activities that put *focus on form* and that centre on consciousness raising and noticing of linguistic items and are also guided by discovery (students actively taking part in the discovery process) and contextual guessing. Teachers can choose to implement them in the pre-task phase (by pre-teaching certain linguistic forms and thereby reducing the cognitive complexity of an activity), during the task (by procedures used to complete an activity, e.g. dividing it into various subtasks; also the product focus of an activity, e.g. written assignments allow students to focus more on form), or after the task (performing the activity again in front of another group or the class enables students to self-monitor themselves, also repeating it with some modified elements, carrying out noticing activities by listening to their colleague's performance, etc.).

Another way to help students move past the intermediate plateau is to focus more on lexis and less on grammar (Hill 2000: 68). Alternatively, teachers can teach the use of grammatical constructions in conjunction with word combinations and language chunks.

3.1.5. Collocations can lead to native-like proficiency

The correlation between language proficiency and the knowledge of collocations is pointed out in many studies (e.g. Zhang 1993, Sung 2003, Keshavarz and Salimi 2007, Waller 1993, Shin and Nation 2008, Demir 2017, Kjellmer 1991, Bahns and Eldaw 1993, etc.) that also compare native and non-native language use in this regard. According to Kjellmer (1991) and also Bahns and Eldaw (1993), an important reason why language learners' knowledge of collocations is lacking and lags behind their general linguistic competences is the fact that language learners tend to use bricks (individual words) rather than strings of words as language material. As good as their level of English may be, their language use differs from that of native language speakers', who use prefabricated sections and chunks of language in their communication. When talking about native and non-native language use, MacKenzie (2018) states that the different exposure to language input leads to a difference in the language use of native and non-native speakers and that expecting the latter to reach native-like level is not realistic.

Analysing the use of lexical collocations by native and non-native (Turkish) writers of English based on a corpus of 40 research articles written by 20 Anglophonic authors and 20 Turkish authors, Demir (2017) observes a higher number of collocations in the writings of native speakers – overall, native speakers of English used more collocations than their Turkish counterparts. Besides, there was also a difference in the type of collocations used: Turkish authors tended to use more noun + verb collocations, along the lines of *the table shows*, *the study reveals*, *the data indicate*, etc. than the native writers, who, in turn, used more adjective + noun collocations with boosters like 'effective', 'key', 'intense', such as *effective ways*, *key research*, *intense criticism* (Demir 2017: 84).

González and Ramos (2013) also carried out a corpus-based contrastive analysis of the writings of native and non-native (this time Spanish) speakers from the perspective of collocational use. In their study, they tried to find out whether the native speaker model was appropriate for language learners, using collocational richness in writings as an indicator.

The following corpora were used for the purposes of the analysis: a learner corpus of Spanish (*Corpus escrito del español L2*) structured into different levels and a parallel native speaker corpus; the analysis was carried out on a subcorpus of 200 texts (100 native texts and 100 learner texts) used for annotating collocations. González and Ramos (2013) measured collocational richness along four parameters: collocational density (the number of collocations produced in relation to the total number of words or tokens of the subcorpus), collocational variety (the number of the different collocations used, which

resulted from dividing the number of lemma collocations[6] by the total number of collocations), collocational sophistication (low-frequency collocation being considered the most sophisticated), and collocational errors.

The findings show that the writings of native speakers of Spanish and that of language learners mostly differed with respect to two parameters: collocational errors and collocational sophistication. While language learners made significantly more mistakes than native writers (as it was expected) (547 errors to 25), incorrect collocations could also be detected in native speakers' writings. The reason for collocational errors was interference in both cases, yet of different types: intralingual in the case of language learners (due to negative transfer from L1, resulting in constructions such as **gastar el tiempo* (instead of *pasar tiempo*), **andar de bicicleta* (instead of *andar en bicicleta* – created from the false analogies of *spend time* and *ride a bike*)) and interlingual in the case of Spanish speakers (resulting from mixing two correct collocations).

The difference with regard to collocational sophistication was also significant, so the sophistication index of native speakers (93 sophisticated collocations) tripled the learners' index (37 sophisticated collocations)).

González and Ramos (2013) conclude that contrary to the general assumption that learners do not use enough collocations in their writings, they do; nevertheless, the collocations used lag behind the degree of variety, sophistication, and accuracy found in the writings of native speakers. This conclusion is in line with Siyanova and Schmitt's (2008) findings, who note that students are capable of producing frequent recurrent collocations, yet they do not have the native speakers' intuition of collocations. Siyanova and Schmitt's (2008) study is also corpus-based and includes offline and online testing, focusing on collocation (adjective + noun) use and the mental processing and recognition of collocations. The study shows that non-native speakers of English (Russian advanced learners) are generally slower in judging collocations and cannot really differentiate between high-frequency collocations and medium-frequency ones (Siyanova and Schmitt 2008: 453).

While the results are not conclusive with regard to the use of collocations by native and non-native speakers, it seems that, overall, native speakers use more restrictive collocations and also have a better collocation intuition than their non-native colleagues. Although there are studies that question the reliability of native-speaker intuition (Sinclair 1991, Wray 2002, Biber et al. 1998), there is no doubt that one major difference between the native and non-native production of language lies in the type and accuracy of the collocations used. As Shin and Nation (2008) note, learning collocations is an efficient way of improving fluency and native-like selection of language use. In order for this to happen, a special emphasis should be laid on the acquisition of more

6 A lemma collocation is the base form of all inflected forms of a given collocation, e.g. *make breakfast* is the lemma collocation for *made breakfast* and *makes breakfast*.

restrictive and also genre- and register-specific collocations and also on the reinforcement of earlier acquired (medium-strength) collocations.

3.2. What, to whom, and how?

The three questions – what collocations to teach, to what target group, and how to teach them – represent three important issues that teachers need to take into consideration when planning to teach collocations to students. In what follows, these questions will be presented in more detail.

3.2.1. What?

Among the factors that have been considered decisive in selecting collocations, there are frequency, congruence, and restriction. Nizonkiza and Van de Poel (2019) in their attempt to define what collocations teachers should focus on regard frequency as one of the most important factors (although not the only one). They believe special attention should be given to collocations containing nouns, as they account for about 50% of the lexical collocations, *adjective + noun* and *verb + noun* being the most frequent, whereas *noun + noun* having the lowest occurrence (this, however, also depends on the words combined, so, for example, 'research' appears frequently *in noun + noun* collocations, e.g. *research programme* (Nizonkiza and Van de Poel 2019: 22)). Nizonkiza and Van de Poel suggest that teachers should teach *adjective + noun* and *verb + noun* collocations simultaneously, as *adjective + noun* collocations are the most frequent collocations found and *verb + noun* collocations carry the most important information. They also believe that the teaching of collocations should be gradual, starting with a few (two, three, four, or five), taking into consideration the amount that students can manage.

In conformity with the ideas expressed by Nizonkiza and Van de Poel (2019), Hill et al. (2000) also draw attention to the importance of nouns when selecting collocations (in the case of writing about a topic, they suggest looking at nouns associated with that topic first, then at the verbs and adjectives that collocate with the nouns, and, finally, at adverbs collocating with the verbs). While *adjective + noun* and *adverb + verb* collocations are important as they add meaning (*He ambled slowly down the street.* is more descriptive than *He ambled down the street.*) (Hill et al. 2000: 93), *verb + noun* collocations are especially important as they can offer various ways of expressing an idea.

Shin and Nation (2008) also consider frequency an important factor in selecting collocations. They even compile a list of the most frequent collocations based on electronic corpus data (BNC), suitable for several levels. While the authors call for caution regarding the list, stating that it has its limitations,

being mostly based on British, largely adult language use and containing a mixture of casual and formal style, the list is useful as it gives an insight into the most frequent collocations that should also be included in EFL classes. The list contains both lexical and grammatical collocations and also includes lexical bundles such as *you know*, *and so on*, *mind you*, *as far as*, etc.

Besides frequency (both in neutral and any special register depending on the need of language learners – in academic writing course, collocations such as *conduct/do/carry out a study*, *make an analysis* can be practical), Nesselhauf (2003) considers congruency and restriction as important criteria for selecting collocations. Nesselhauf believes that non-congruent collocations such as *heavy rain*, *deep trouble*, *good faith*, which do not have a word-for-word equivalent in learners' L1, can cause many problems for students, and for this reason they should receive special attention in ELF teaching (Nesselhauf adds that congruent collocations can equally pose difficulty for learners and as such should not be neglected either). With regard to restriction, it is believed that restricted (medium-strength) collocations (such as *exert pressure* and *perform a task*) are the most difficult to learn. Bahns (1993) believes priority should be given to collocations that do not have a direct equivalent in L1. She gives several examples from German of noun + verb collocations that have a direct equivalent in L1 (such as 'find solution' *Lösung finden*, 'swallow anger' *Ärger hinunterschlucken*, or 'bear responsibility' *Verantwortung tragen*) that should pose no difficulties for German students learning English, and also of others that need to be taught to them as there is no direct equivalent to them in German. Examples of this are *start* a family [Familie *gründen*], *make* sacrifice [Opfer *bringen*], *lay* the table [Tisch *decken*], etc. In Bahn's (1993) opinion, an important criterion in deciding what collocations to teach should be students' L1 (Bahn 1993: 61).

According to Hill (2000), when choosing which collocation to teach, several factors need to be taken into consideration such as frequency (how frequent a collocation is spoken and written), suitability (some native-speaker items might be inappropriate for learners), the level of students and the type of course (business English students might need other collocations than general classes). Collocations need to be taught to students under two conditions: if they are suitable for students' level and if they have larger applicability.

When it comes to teaching collocations, knowing what to teach is just as important as knowing what not to teach (Hill 2000: 63). Teachers should refrain themselves from going overboard and trying to teach all the collocations that come up in a lesson. They should rather concentrate on the important collocations that should, however, not be confused with rare and obscure collocations. Hill (2000) believes the importance of a collocation is given by the collocational strength, the most important collocations to teach being medium-strength ones.

In conclusion, it seems that, overall, medium-strength *verb + noun* collocations are considered the most useful for learners. Non-transferable, incongruent constructions that do not or only partly correspond to the structure in L1 are often challenging for students. Examples of this are the collocations with 'pay' expressing a more abstract meaning: 'pay attention to sg' *figyel/figyelmet fordít vmire* [HU] / *auf etwas achten* [DE] / *a acorda atenție* [RO] and 'pay respect' *tiszteletben részesít* [HU] / *Respekt zollen* [DE] / *a aduce un ultim omagiu* [RO].

Similarly, as it has been noted before, delexicalized verb constructions where the verb carries little to the meaning of the constructions (e.g. *make an effort*) and the fact that collocations are often expressed synthetically in Hungarian ('pay attention' *figyel*, 'give a presentation' *előad/bemutat*) can pose difficulty for language learners.

Constructions may also express different cases and involve the use of different prepositions from L1 structures. Consider the following collocations and their counterparts in Hungarian:

– 'answer a question' (in Accusative case) *kérdés**re** válaszolni* (Sublativus case), 'help someone' (Accusative case) *valaki**nek** segíteni* (Dativus),

– 'arrive **in** Budapest / **at** the railway station' (the use of the preposition is not consistent with the ones in Hungarian) *megérkezni Budapest**re** / az állomás**ra***.

It is important to note that collocations should be acquired along with their colligation patterns (e.g. *aim at… -ing* / *aim + to infinitive*), otherwise students may not be able to use them correctly.

3.2.2. To whom?

Teaching collocations to students can bring along a series of benefits and can be beneficial for elementary, lower-intermediate, and advanced learners alike. Seeing and learning words together with their context can help language learners develop collocational competence right from the start. In line with this idea, Antle (2013) and also Shin and Nation (2008) encourage teachers to introduce collocations from elementary level onwards, as this can help students to communicate efficiently even with limited vocabulary and grammar. Verb + noun collocations in particular are considered useful for students (Antle 2013: 1), as these types of constructions can convey a lot of information.

Though teachers in general may refrain from teaching collocations to lower levels, believing that they may be too difficult for them, Hill (2000: 66) suggests that a practical way of doing it is to increase the number of individual words and introduce a few collocates that would be useful for students. The example Hill gives is teaching the word 'holiday' together with its most common collocate, such as *go on holiday*.

Introducing collocations to pre-intermediate classes can help students expand their vocabulary and also reinforce their knowledge of the collocations acquired before. Drawing students' attention to collocations and including them in tasks and activities can lead to students using their language more freely and also feeling more confident about their language skills. Frequently used collocations related to the topic discussed in class (both lexical and grammatical) would be useful at this level.

From intermediate level and up, it is advisable to focus on the teaching of medium-strength collocations as students usually struggle with them. At this level, students already know many words in English, so showing them word combinations with words they most possibly know can be advantageous. Going back to the example of 'holiday', Hill (2000: 66) suggests increasing students' collocational competence by teaching them such collocations as a *package/ beach/adventure holiday*. He believes that at this stage students need to develop their language skills by reading extensively and should act as autonomous learners, having understood that learning new words without their context is inefficient (Hill 2000: 67).

At upper-intermediate levels, students are usually quite confident using their language skills, as they can already express themselves with ease. A few tendencies can be observed at this stage: as it has been mentioned above, students often find it difficult to progress past the intermediate/upper-intermediate plateau, which manifests itself in language learners overusing certain high-frequency collocations and underusing low-frequency ones. As they usually have no communication problems, upper-intermediate students often do not feel the need to learn new words and word combinations thinking that what they know is enough to get by. Similarly, negative transfer from L1 may still be strong at this stage, and despite advanced grammar skills and vocabulary knowledge, students may not be aware of the subtle differences between their L1 and L2 (or L3). Bahns and Eldaw (1993: 101) note that even advanced learners struggle with collocations. Investigating the use of verb–noun collocations used by advanced German learners of English (overall number of participants: 48) based on a cloze test (half of the students) and a translation test (the other half), Bahns and Eldaw (1993) note that students managed to get only around half of the collocations right.

Also, as Nesselhauf (2003: 231) notes, many collocation mistakes made by advanced learners are due to the wrong choice of the verb or noun, whereas mistakes in non-lexical collocations (the ones containing a preposition), although present, are not that common. Based on the analysis of (argumentative, non-technical) essays (32 in number) by German speakers of English, Nesselhauf (2003) concludes that, overall, incongruent collocations (regardless of the degree of the restriction of elements) were the most difficult for students.

It seems then that reinforcing the use of some collocations (especially incongruent, medium-strength ones)[7] is important at the advanced level. In addition, teaching register- and genre-specific collocations (depending on the focus of the language material) would also be advisable in order to make students aware of the fact that collocations vary with respect to written and oral communication, style, and also the type of text they are used in.

3.2.3. How?

Many studies suggest that teachers should shift their focus to collocations and language chunks when teaching vocabulary to students. Hill (2000: 60) recommends that when teaching new words teachers should also present some of the most common collocations these words appear in. Thus, for example, if the word is *ferry*, the teacher could write *go on the car ferry*, *a roll-on/roll-off ferry, take the ferry (from Liverpool) to (Belfast)*. Hill also recommends that teachers avoid teaching students strong collocations that are also rare, as they can confuse or overwhelm students. According to Holló et al. (1996), the ideal number of words (individual words) that a teacher should introduce in the classroom is between 8 and 12 and that teachers should repeatedly come back to them to make sure that input becomes intake. They also suggest a variety of strategies that teachers can implement to facilitate the acquisition of new words, among them giving explanations (using strategies such as giving a definition, paraphrasing, giving synonyms, antonyms, occasionally pictures, objects, drawings, figures, giving the translation of the word), teaching words as part of a word family, semantic sets, word trees (word-in-context methods), motivating students to use dictionaries (or electronic databases) when confronted with unknown words, and also trying to have them infer the meaning of words and linguistic constructions from contexts (this latter one can be especially useful in the case of collocations, as it is often the case that students already know the meaning of the words that make up the collocations (or at least part of them)). Harmer (1990) notes that translation as a strategy has gone out of fashion; nevertheless, in cases when words are difficult to translate, this strategy can be useful as it can also save time (Harmer 1990: 86) (this can also apply to collocations where no L1 equivalent exists).

Ellis (1997), in line with many others (e.g. Stanovich and Cunningham 1992, McCarthy and Carter 1997), believes that reading is a primary way of enriching the vocabulary (it is assumed that people who read more have a larger vocabulary). Nevertheless, the mere exposure to authentic text is often not enough for the acquisition of new words, but inference of meaning through context is often necessary. Training students to use such strategies is advantageous (Ellis 1997: 135). There are three steps involved in this process (Sternberg 1987) as follows:

7 While students tend to find non-congruent collocations difficult, they also err in the use of congruent collocations, as shown by Nesselhauf (2003: 238).

selective encoding (separating relevant information from irrelevant one), selective combination (combining relevant cues into a workable definition), and selective comparison (connecting new information to already acquired knowledge). Decisive factors in these processes are the number of occurrences of unknown words and their density (too high density can deter learners from attempting to infer the meaning of words), the variability of contexts in which the occurrences of the unknown words can be found, the importance of the words in understanding the context, and, finally, the helpfulness of a context in guessing the meaning of unknown words (Sternberg 1987).

Conzett (2000: 80) notes that many language course books contain useful collocations to students and suggests that teachers should make a list of them when teaching a thematic unit. She goes on to give an example of such a list for the topics *prison and workplace* (considered a common topic in ESL books) based on the texts found in ESL books:

Prison	*The workplace*
prison sentence	mental challenge
correction officer	prospective employees
prison-issue clothing	job autonomy
self-help courses	hourly wage
kill time	straight salary
re-entry into society	employee turnover
doing time	incentive schemes
alternative sentence	unskilled workers
prison capacity	external recognition

Lewis (2000: 19) goes even further suggesting that teachers should present collocations to students with as much context as possible, to keep the language chunks as they find them in texts. Below we can find two different ways of representing the same collocations – on the left-hand side without context, as the students put down in their notebooks, and on the right hand side as found in the text (and as Lewis (2000) believes would be a more appropriate representation):

Take the hint	OK. I can take a hint.
Follow in someone's footsteps	He's following in his father's footsteps.
Turn a blind eye	I decided to turn a blind eye.
To rule out the possibility of	We can't rule out the possibility of + -ing
Stand on your own two feet	It's time you stood on your own two feet.

Similarly, Nesselhauf (2003: 239) points out that it is often not enough to just teach elements that go together, but it is necessary to present the

entire combination to students, including prepositions and articles (teaching *pass judgement* would be less efficient than teaching *pass judgement on*). Nesselhauf is also among the few to observe that grids separating the elements of collocations (and that are often suggested for vocabulary practice) are not ideal for presenting and practising them.

Studies that stress the importance of raising students' collocational awareness by implementing explicit teaching methods are numerous (Nesselhauf 2003, Lewis 2000, Shin and Nation 2008, Schmidt 1990, Conzett 2000, etc.); some of these studies, while highlighting the active role of the teacher in drawing students' attention to them, do not discard the possibility of acquiring collocations through implicit learning either, yet consider it less likely. Lewis (2000: 163) believes that it is especially important from an acquisition point of view that teachers become proactive in making students aware of the language chunks found in texts. Schmidt (1990) believes that teachers should guide students to notice linguistic forms, as implicit learning is possible only in case a task requires the use of or contains specific targeted vocabulary.

According to Conzett (2000: 77), teachers should not only draw students' attention to collocations but also reinforce their use through questioning, for example. Asking students questions (Conzett 2000: 77) that draw attention to collocations is a good reinforcing technique, giving students repeated exposure to the linguistic structures (e.g. *What kind of things are (severed)*? *What kind of things are (potent)*? With regard to questioning, Lewis (2000: 162) points out the importance of asking the right questions in order to avoid the ones that may confuse students (e.g. note the difference between *Did you notice…*? and *What did you notice*?, the latter being potentially confusing for students). Holló et al. (1996) also consider the importance of asking good questions; they believe good questions make students think, whereas the ones where students only have to look at a sentence and find the answer word-for-word are not.

As it has been noted before, noticing collocations incidentally during the acquisition process is less probable; some additional reasons that Boers et al. (2014) give to the ones already mentioned and that Boers et al. also point out (noticing individual words instead of word combinations, semantic salience and the presence of high frequency verbs, one element overshadowing the other) include the following:

– Perceptual salience: parts of collocations may be lacking in perceptual salience, e.g. may be phonetically reduced in a stream of discourse and be less clearly articulated and audible. Coupled with the presence of a phonological neighbour (words being the same except for one phoneme), this can explain why learners produce collocations such as **make a photo* instead of *take a photo*.

– Not enough encounters in a short span of time: in order to notice collocations and also retain them in memory, it is important to see them with enough frequency.

– Variation of collocations: words tend to appear in various combinations, e.g. *conduct/carry out research*, from which it follows that learners will need to see the word several times in order to remember the construction it is part of.

– Constituents of a collocation may not be in each other's vicinity, reason why learners may not even perceive them as belonging together (e.g. *an offence* which some of his acquaintances suspect Dave Singleton *may have committed* when he was […] (Boers et al. 2014: 48)).

– While alliterative expressions (such as *private property*, *a question concerning*) and salient vowel repetition, or assonance, e.g. *small talk*, *grow old*) can catch students' interest, other patterns, in particular consonant repetition (e.g. *casual acquaintance*, *absolute beginner, body odour*, *break a record*, *attract criticism*, *whiff of perfume*), may be in fact anti-mnemonic (hinder collocation recall).

Boers et al. (2014) believe that because all these factors may hinder implicit learning, the explicit teaching of collocations may be necessary. They also add, however, that the way collocations are introduced can a make a difference, and that matching type of exercises that ask students to look for the right collocate of a word can lead to confusion and erroneous word associations. Boers et al. (2014) conclude that the best way to teach collocations is probably to teach them intact (e.g. by drawing students' attention to intact collocations in reading and listening texts).

According to Lewis (2000: 183), teachers' primary role in teaching collocations is to help students notice input (making them familiar with the idea of chunks), guide their choice of materials and activities (also avoid wasting their time on useless activities), and, finally, keep them motivated through the process. Lewis stresses the importance of input in the learning process, stating that the acquisition of new knowledge happens mostly through input (listening and reading). While he does not question the importance of output (speaking), he believes the acquisition of new knowledge does not primarily happen trough speaking but rather through input, which is key to the long-term improvement of language skills.[8] Lewis believes that in order to retain collocations in memory, noticing and understanding are both necessary.

In conformity with Lewis (2000), it is believed that input (containing content-related collocations) is often necessary for noticing and retaining collocations in memory. Similarly, the teaching of collocations should allow noticing them (either explicitly, being guided by the teacher, or implicitly), especially in the initial phases of acquisition, when students are not yet familiar with a given construction. In order to allow the input to become intake, students should be able to notice constructions in several contexts and also have

8 Lewis (2000: 183) states that communicative approaches that emphasize language production (especially speaking) right from the start can be inefficient, as classroom activities that help learners notice input are more valuable.

the chance to actively produce them afterwards (e.g. in a speaking or writing task). Providing contexts that show authentic language use and resemble real-life situations is considered to be beneficial as it affects students' (intrinsic and possibly also extrinsic) motivation positively. Embedding tasks in such contexts could motivate them to pay attention to the linguistic constructions they use when completing a task.

The present work proposes a mixture of task-based learning and lexical approach to teaching collocations. It is believed that combining the two methods can lead to a better understanding and acquisition of collocations. While lexical approach can be considered more like a mindset to teaching foreign language than a practical approach, it ties in well with task-based instruction.

In what follows, the main principles of task-based learning and lexical approach will be presented, and then reasons will be given for adopting a combined approach.

3.3. Task-based teaching. The notion of a "TASK"

Van den Branden (2006: 1) defines task-based teaching as "an approach to language education in which students are given functional tasks that invite them to focus primarily on meaning exchange and to use language for real-world, non-linguistic purposes".

Different from traditional approaches that focus on the repetitive practice (drilling) of linguistic units, a task-based approach is based on the idea that students will learn more efficiently if they focus primarily on the completion of a certain task and less on the language itself. While in all interpretations of task-based learning the completion of a task is considered the most important element, they differ with respect to how much importance they attribute to the use (and practice) of linguistic elements (e.g. through the introduction of focused tasks) in the completion of a task or in the phases preceding/following it.

The central concept of a task-based approach is the task itself. Several definitions have been given of tasks, and some of them also include educational considerations (Crooks 1986, Richards et al. 1986, Willis 1996, Nunan 2004). While they may focus on different aspects of tasks, common to these definitions is that they see tasks as activities that involve a communicative process and a goal that needs to be accomplished.

Crookes (1986: 1) defines a task as a "piece of work or an activity, usually with a specified objective, undertaken as part of an educational course, at work, or used to elicit data for research". An educational task is seen as:

> an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language, i.e. as a response. For example, drawing a map

> while listening to a tape, and listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Tasks may or may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make teaching more communicative (...) since it provides a purpose for classroom activity which goes beyond practice of language for its own sake. (Richards et al. 1986: 289)

Willis (1996: 23) also stresses the communicative aspect of a task carried out with a specific objective in mind. In his definition, a task is an activity "where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome".

According to Ellis (2009: 223), an activity should meet the following four criteria in order to be considered a task:

– It should focus on meaning (both semantic and pragmatic).

– There should be some kind of a "gap" (i.e. a need to convey information, to express an opinion, or to infer meaning).

– Learners should largely have to rely on their own resources (linguistic and non-linguistic) in order to complete the activity.

– There is a clearly defined outcome other than the use of language (i.e. the language serves as the means for achieving the outcome, not as an end in its own right).

The criteria given by Ellis (2009) not only defines what a task is but also distinguishes tasks from "situational grammar exercises", as Ellis calls them. According to him, a task is different from a situational grammar exercise in that in the case of the latter students are instructed to use a specific linguistic construction that they are made aware of before the exercise, whereas in the task-based approach, while the teacher can introduce targeted linguistic constructions, students are free to use any language construction they want to complete the task.

3.3.1. Types of tasks

The description of tasks has received considerable attention over the years, also giving rise to different approaches: the psycholinguistic approach, a social interactive approach, a cognitive perspective, and also a structure-based approach to tasks (Skehan 2003). The psycholinguistic approach is concerned mostly with how students negotiate meaning when they encounter communication difficulties. Long (1989) states that divergent tasks (where students need to agree on a certain topic) require more negotiation of meaning than convergent tasks (where no agreement needs to be reached), and he represents a contrastive view of the social interactive approach (that focuses

on how participants take part individually in the completion of a task, presupposing that each member contributes differently to its completion).

Cognitive approaches analyse how the performance of students is affected by the characteristics of tasks, including the conditions under which they are carried out. They also analyse how students draw on the knowledge and experience acquired before and the role of post-tasks in consolidating knowledge. Foster and Skehan (2013) show that interactive tasks followed by post-task activities can lead to greater accuracy. Finally, a structure-based perspective deals with the relation between a task and particular language structures (see the distinction between focused (structure-based, comprehension, and consciousness-raising tasks) and unfocused tasks (Ellis 2003)).

Focused tasks target the practice of some linguistic structures in a communicative context and are often introduced to students in an indirect way, in the sense that they are not told explicitly what linguistic feature they should concentrate on during the task. They can be of various types: structure-based production tasks (meant to elicit a targeted linguistic construction – e.g. eliciting the present continuous tense form by making students exchange travel itineraries), comprehension tasks (through input processing: students pay attention to the input, and a task is carried out based on what they understand), and consciousness-raising tasks (students are made not only to notice language but also to make their own rules based on their observations) (Ganta 2015: 2762). On the contrary, "unfocused" tasks give students the possibility to use the language in general, with no specific linguistic constructions targeted.

There are different types of tasks proposed within a communicative, task-based approach such as: information gap activities, reasoning gap activities, opinion gap activities (Prabhu 1987), jig-saw tasks, information gap tasks, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion exchange tasks (Nunan 1989), and also sharing personal experience, attitudes and feelings, narrative tasks, decision-making tasks (Foster and Skehan 1996), etc. These tasks involve understanding and working with various types of information, comparing data, analysing several aspects of a topic, finding new ideas and solutions to a situation, etc., and they can be more or less "focused" (involving the introduction of particular constructions that may be used during the task). Other tasks may involve predicting (e.g. predicting the content of a text from the title or other details, e.g. a picture), elaborating on topic-related questions, matching (e.g. an expression with a paragraph), transformation (transforming a text based on specific criteria), role-play, gap-fill (not just words but phrases and entire sentences), putting parts of texts in the right order or in the right place, word (or expression) searching, grouping of words and expressions according to some criteria, completing a text with additional details (relying on the clues provided, students have to guess or add additional details), continuing/finishing a story, deleting/leaving out details (e.g. making students shorten a

text and highlight only relevant information to the story), explaining, giving arguments in favour or against something, etc. (Holló et al. 1996).

Along the distinction between "focused'" and "unfocused", tasks can also be regarded either as knowledge-constructing, which are the ones that help students learn new forms (and thereby improve their interlanguage), or as knowledge-activating, which motivate learners to use and consolidate the knowledge they have acquired before (Samuda 2001).

3.3.2. Characteristics and stages of a task-based approach

A task-based approach takes a communicative perspective of language learning, promoting an interactive language use, based on interaction and cooperation.

Mimicking real-world situations and allowing a natural flow of language use are seen as prerequisites for the language-learning context. A task-based approach is learner-centred, so language learners plan the activity and carry it out to their own liking. It implies a *focus on form* approach, meaning that the formal elements of language are considered as closely linked to the meaning and function of linguistic constructions (this is what differentiates the *focus on form* instruction from the *focus on forms* approach, where the primary focus lies on practising the formal elements of language (Lang 1998: 41)). A focus on form approach stresses the importance of meaning-focused interaction, which also means that students engage in meaning before paying attention to form.

Long (1998) defines *focus on form* instructions in terms of "how attentional resources are allocated" (stressing the importance of noticing constructions in context as they arise incidentally in lessons) and also "form-focused activities that arise during, and are embedded in, meaning-based lessons" (Long 1998: 40–41).

A task-based approach is often considered to involve three phases. The first one is the pre-task phase, where teachers make students familiar with the topic and, depending on the perceived difficulty of the task and students' familiarity with it, also introduce topic-related words and phrases that might help them accomplish the task at hand. This idea is in line with Conzett's (2000) suggestion, who considers it important to introduce students to relevant vocabulary before a task is given. The examples given by her concentrate on the use of collocations in writing: Conzett (2000: 80) suggests that when students are given the task of writing an essay, useful expressions related to the topic should be written on the whiteboard in the pre-task phase. If the topic is, for example, the pros and cons of childcare, useful collocations could include: *physical well-being*, *emotional well-being*, *quality time*, *high turnover of pre-school teachers*, *childcare workers*, *working outside the home*, *double-income family*, *women in the workforce*, *teacher–child–rations*, etc. Another example

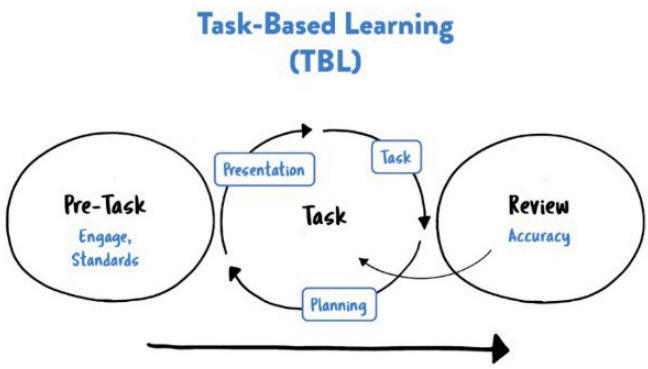
given by her is for practising summary writing (applicable in advanced classes where academic writing is discussed). In this case, the collocations suggested by her to be introduced in the pre-task phase also include the colligation patterns of the expressions:

In his/her article/book etc., John Doe	*Contends that (+ that clause)* *Maintains that (+ that clause)* *Addressed the issue of (+ noun phrase)* *Disputes (+ noun phrase)* *Suggests (+ that)* *Discusses (+ noun phrase)* *Points out (+ that clause)*

In the pre-task phase, the teacher gives basic instructions as to how the task needs to be performed (whether it needs to be performed in pairs or groups, the time allocated to the task, and also the aim of the task) and shows possible ways of carrying it out (s/he may also model the task at hand, exposing learners to several examples and also showing the purpose of the task at hand). It is, however, important that the teacher only give suggestion with regard to how a task can be carried out but neither give clues to the expected outcome nor try to impose on students the use of vocabulary suggested for its completion (the vocabulary items that the teacher introduces in the pre-task phase should be understood as suggestions and a linguistic source that students can use to complete a specific task and not as constructions that they need to use, unless the task focuses on the items themselves).

In the second phase, also called the task cycle, students work together and follow the instructions to accomplish the task given. The teacher monitors, gives advice to students, and clarifies any doubts they might have. Students complete the task (mistakes do not matter at this point) and report back to the class, talk about their findings, and eventually compare their results.

In the third, final phase, focus is on language practice in order to clarify any doubts that students might have with regard to their language use. As a follow-up activity, the teacher may introduce additional exercises that help students practise the vocabulary relevant to the topic.



Source: https://www.barefootteflteacher.com/

Figure 6. *Phases of task-based learning*

Below we can see a possible model of a task-based instruction as developed by Foster and Skehan (1996), summarizing the stages of a task-based lesson, the methods used, and also the objectives and principles of the approach.

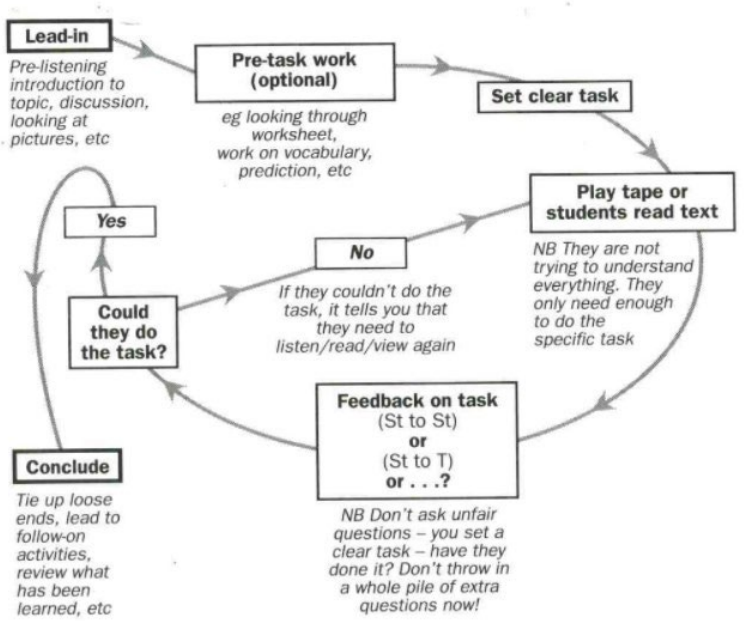
Table 9. *Task-based instruction*

Stage	*Goal*	*Typical techniques*
Pre-task	Introduce new forms to	Explicit and implicit
Linguistic	interlanguage repertoire	teaching
Cognitive	Reduce cognitive load	Consciousness-raising
		Plan linguistically and cognitively
		Observe similar tasks
	Push learners to express more complex ideas	Plan
		Observe
Mid-task		Use analytic scheme
Task choice	Balance difficulty of task	Introduce surprise
Task calibration	Increase or reduce difficulty	Provide (visual) support
Post-task	Raise consciousness for a focus on form	Use public performance and post-task activities

Source: Foster and Skehan 1996: 303

Scrivener (1994) illustrates the necessary process and techniques involved in task-based teaching (consider *Figure 7* below) and gives useful tips on how to implement a specific activity. He stresses that it is the task that determines the expectations of learners and not the material itself. Scrivener (1994) draws attention to the fact that giving clear instructions and keeping to the requirements at hand are prerequisites for tasks to be carried out successfully. He also gives advice to teachers with respect to planning and carrying out tasks. Applied to

listening exercises, the tips given by Scrivener (1994) include the following: keeping the recording short; playing the recording several times if necessary; not acknowledging right answers immediately (with words or facial expressions), rather asking if students agree with a specific answer; making sure the task is within their abilities; when checking understanding, looking at the majority instead of one strong student; not changing the requirements halfway, etc. His suggestions are based on the task-based cycle (lead-in and pre-task (that he considers optional), the task itself (with clear instructions given)) followed by feedback on the task and also follow-on activities that may contain additional activities and reflect on what and how has been accomplished during the task.



Source: Scrivener 1994: 150

Figure 7. *The task-based circle*

Ellis (2009: 224) notes that a task-based lesson does not have to involve all these phases, the task phase being the only mandatory one – this can be carried out in a whole-class context, in pairs, groups, or by learners working on their own.

3.3.3. The good and the bad

The task-based approach as a relatively new approach to language teaching has found considerable support worldwide among both teachers and educational experts due to the advantages it offers.

Task-based learning is an experiential form of learning that presupposes an active involvement from the learners who become active agents of their learning. Being mostly a student-centred communicative approach (although, as Ellis (2009) notes, within this approach the teacher can still have a well-defined role in managing the tasks, giving instructions, and overviewing the whole process), it clearly differs from the traditional 3p – present–practice–produce – form of teaching, where learners acquire knowledge from the teacher in a passive way. Unlike the 3p approach that gives the teacher a central, active role (with him/her presenting a specific construction to students who then proceed to practise and then produce it), the task-based learning is based on the concept of "learning by doing", implying that while the teacher is there to assist and guide the students, it is the students' responsibility to plan and carry out a specific task.

In a study that analyses both the benefits and drawbacks of the task-based approach, Ganta (2015) lists as advantages the following:

– Task-based learning leads to spontaneous interaction between students: while performing a task, the communicative competence of learners (e.g. negotiating the use of language) will be improved.

– Automaticity: by performing a task that resembles real-life situations, automaticity of linguistic knowledge can be achieved.

– Task-based learning gives language learners the opportunity to learn vocabulary: even in the pre-task phase, the teacher can think of creative ways of introducing words and phrases to learners (by drawing word clouds together, through an interactive glossary, etc.).

– Incidental learning of vocabulary: by taking part in a communicative task, students will inevitably notice and pick up new words and phrases.

– Optimal conditions for language learning: a task-based learning approach imitates a real-world-like situation, where students can interact spontaneously with each other, with less control on the part of the teacher.

– It maximizes scope for communication: students can assimilate what they notice and can also practise the newly acquired knowledge while performing the task.

– Experiential learning: as mentioned before, how a task is performed is shaped by the experience students have obtained before. They also gain new experience while completing the task given.

Despite the advantages it offers, a task-based approach also has some weaknesses that need to be considered and that have drawn a considerable amount of criticism over the years (this included the loose definition of "tasks" (difficult to distinguish from traditional activities), the negligence of semantic meaning (Widdowson 2003), impoverished interaction (Widdowson 2003, Seedhouse 1999, Swan 2005), inadequate coverage of grammar, less new knowledge acquired (Swan 2005), etc.).

Ganta (2015) mentions the following pitfalls of task-based learning: task difficulty, mismatch between the learners' and teachers' perception, the authenticity of tasks, different outcome from the one defined in the planning phase, learners' perception of the task and the way it relates to their needs, the fact that learners' needs may be neglected and fundamental issues may remain unresolved, the diversity of classes.

With regard to task difficulty, Skehan (1998: 99) proposes a three-way distinction for task analysis as follows: code complexity, cognitive complexity, and communicative stress. Code complexity includes linguistic complexity and variety, vocabulary load and density, and redundancy and density. Cognitive complexity includes cognitive familiarity (familiarity of topic and its predictability, familiarity of discourse genre and familiarity of task), cognitive processing (the organization of information, the amount of "computation", clarity and sufficiency of the information given, information type), and two elements that are complementary to each other (cognitive familiarity offers to "a packaged solutions to tasks" and cognitive processing to working out the solution for a specific task (Skehan 1998: 99)).

Finally, communication stress refers to the conditions under which a certain task needs to be accomplished, including the urgency of the task and the pressure involved in completing it (as perceived by the student).

In order to ensure that a specific task is suitable for a group of students, the teacher needs to take into account all the above-mentioned factors (as Skehan (1998) notes, some aspects of task difficulty, such as linguistic complexity, can be managed through structural syllabus considerations and developmental sequences). Should the implementation of a task be unsuccessful, there may be other factors at play that teachers need to be aware of (individual differences with respect to: language level, the interest in a specific topic and task, and the way they prefer to take up roles within the group).

Brown et al. (1984) analyse task-based spoken language activities in terms of task difficulty. Dividing the tasks into static (where information does not change during the activity, e.g. describing the visual information of a diagram), dynamic (where the information changes over space and time such as in a story – e.g. a task could be to retell/finish a story), and abstract tasks (expressing opinions, e.g. for and against a certain topic), they conclude that static tasks are the easiest to complete and abstract ones the most difficult. Brown et al. (1984) also analyse task difficulty with respect to another dimension – the scale of the task and the interrelation between the elements, which shows that the fewer elements (relationships, characters) a task involves, the easier it is to carry it out (consider *Table 10*).

Table 10. *Tasks of ascending difficulty*

Degree of difficulty →		
Static tasks	*Dynamic tasks*	*Abstract tasks*
Task A Task B →	Task G Task H →	Task L →
e.g. Diagram e.g. Pegboard	e.g. Story e.g. Car crash	e.g. Opinion
Many elements, relationships, characters, etc. (more difficulty) Few elements, relationships, etc. (less difficulty)		Levels of difficulty ↑

Source: Brown 1984: 64

Besides task difficulty, the other factors listed by Ganta (2015) should also be considered when assigning tasks to students. As Ganta (2015) notes, there is often a discrepancy between learners' and teachers' perception with regard to the cognitive and linguistic aspects of a task (the degree of knowledge to understand and carry out the task and also the vocabulary and register needed), clarity of pictures/stories, the amount of information (too much or, on the contrary, insufficient information provided by the teacher), task structures (the way the task is organized), and affective factors (whether students like a certain task and to what degree).

The other factors listed by Ganta (2015) – the authenticity of a task, the outcome (the fact that it may be different from what has been expected), linguistic deficiency (students not having enough linguistic resources to complete a task), neglecting students' needs (certain expectations of students (fuelled by their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation) not being met), or the difficulty to assess and fulfil the needs of heterogeneous groups and diverse classes – can hinder the processing of collocations. As such, in order to implement a task successfully in the class, careful planning that takes into account all possible aspects of implementing the task is necessary (time needed to accomplish it, age and level of students, task difficulty, the possibility of natural language use, working environment preferred by students, etc.).

3.4. The lexical approach

The lexical approach originates from Michael Lewis (1993), who in his book entitled *Lexical Approach* presents a language-learning methodology that puts focus on lexis instead of grammar. The basic principle of the lexical approach is that the dichotomy between lexis and grammar is invalid and language is in fact grammaticalized lexis, consisting of prefabricated combinations of elements, also called chunks. In the lexical approach, besides individual words,

collocations, word combinations, polywords (e.g. *by the way*), semi-fixed phrases and fixed phrases (e.g. *make ends meet*), and also institutionalized utterances (e.g. *that will do*) (formulaic sequences being stored and processed as wholes in the mental lexicon) constitute the basic units of language. Lewis believes that many mistakes that learners make are due to lexical deficiency, so lexis (which means much more than vocabulary in the traditional sense) should be given priority in foreign language classes. According to the principles of the lexical approach, learning a language means combining chunks into coherent texts, and it may also involve breaking down larger units of language (chunks) into smaller parts.

Using the lexical approach for teaching requires taking into consideration the following factors (Lewis 1993, 2000):

– Input, awareness-raising, learner training, and language practice are all important when learning a foreign language.

– Input can raise language awareness and help students become autonomous learners (explore the language on their own through noticing) – exposing learners to real language use is important in this regard.

– Receptive skills (especially listening, also including listening to the teacher) should receive special attention in EFL classes. The input should contain comprehensible language and be well chosen for the task at hand.

– Chunking texts – identifying different lexical items is a useful skill for language learning – helping students acquire this skill is desirable.

– Communicative competence is wider than grammatical accuracy, which means that teachers should focus on successful communication rather than on grammatical errors.

– Pointing out the contrast between students' L1 and L2 can aid the language learning process.

– With regard to error correction, teachers should focus on reformulation rather than on formal correction.

– Language is learnt in a non-linear way, and it is difficult to predict what students will notice and retain in memory; this then modifies their intergrammar, which again also influences what students notice. Non-linear teaching strategies, such as mind maps and brainstorming, that help learners see a topic from different angles can be useful for students. Because of the non-linear nature of acquisition, reinforcement of content is necessary.

Lewis (1993) and Lewis et al. (2000) give examples of exercises that could help implement the lexical approach in the EFL classes. In particular, gap-fill, drill, and cloze test types of exercises are not discarded; nevertheless, a difference is made between inefficient mechanical exercises and meaning-based ones.

With regard to gap-fill exercises, the selective deletion of elements is important; this can include the deletion of either the collocate or the entire

word combination. Lewis (1993) explains why deleting the collocate is also an efficient way for raising students' awareness of collocations. In sentences a–d, the main information is carried by the noun or the adjective ('ticket', 'job', 'convenient', 'briefcase'); the collocations these words are part of – *book your ticket*, *change my job*, *be convenient*, *put my briefcase* – represent the expansion of the lexical centre, in other words, the grammaticalization of the lexical content. In such cases, deleting the verb phrase (and occasionally also the subject of the sentence, e.g. *Have you booked* in sentence a) can facilitate the acquisition of collocations (Lewis 1993: 156). While Lewis's (1993) suggestion sounds plausible, giving some clues might also be necessary in such cases in order to make it easier for students to guess the missing words (given in brackets below); and if there are more alternatives possible (*change my job*, *quite my job*, *leave job/position*), they all need to be accepted by the teacher.

a. _____ your ticket yet? (you want to have a ticket)
b. I am going to _____my job (my job no longer satisfies my needs)
c. Would next Friday _____? (be ok for you?)
d. I have no idea where _____(I cannot find my briefcase)
Key: have you booked, change my job, be suitable, put my briefcase.

The following paragraph offers a slightly different alternative to this exercise, the only difference being that the collocations can be found in a larger, coherent text. As Lewis et al. (2000: 182) note, larger units, such as complete texts, an episode of a soap opera, or self-contained parts of a dialogue, can help students to retain chunks more easily in their memory. The exercise (suitable for advanced levels) requires that students fill in parts of a collocation after consulting a dictionary:

Exercise. Look up 'news' in the collocation dictionary. Then try to complete this short text:
A hundred years ago, news was slow to …….. in. Today as soon as news ……., it is flashed across the world by satellite. It is almost impossible for governments to ……. news. No matter what they do to stop it ……., it will always…….out.

Lewis et al. (2000) also suggest deleting entire collocations from a text. For example, in case of preparing students for a written assignment (like an essay), the teacher can look up a text related to the given topic and transform it into a cloze text, with some of the target (verb + noun) collocations removed and then ask students to think of words or word combinations that may fit into the gaps. According to Lewis et al. (2000), there may be cases when only one natural choice is possible but also when several other alternatives can be given;

the objective of this exercise is not to reconstruct the original text but to make students aware of the importance of word combinations, including the lexes that are useful for their writing.

Similarly, oral drills can also be efficient if teachers implement them in a purposeful way, ensuring a positive learning atmosphere and applying teaching techniques that are appropriate to the purpose of the activity (Lewis 1993: 159). In order to reduce the dryness of mechanic repetition, it would be particularly useful to add something extra to the activity; this could be done, for example, by attempting to repeat or give back a sentence/construction in different tones (such as thoughtful, serious, angrily, hesitantly, etc. (Lewis 1993: 160)). A similar idea is brought forward by Holló et al. (1996: 125), who suggest giving life to the dialogues found in the language course books (and that are meant for practice in the classroom) by giving students emotion word cards (each of them showing different feelings such as sad, happy, excited, etc.) and asking them to act out that particular conversation accordingly.

Other activities include giving students some collocations and asking them to look up alternatives for them (e.g. an alternative to *new idea* would be an *innovative idea*), also looking up collocates for a specific word, highlighting collocations in a text, collecting collocations, correcting mistakes, sorting, translating collocations, collocation games, odd verb out, etc.

Some of the activities suggested by Lewis et al. (2000) show collocations in their entirety and also require creativity and problem-solving skills from students. One such exercise is called *collocation dominoes*, and it focuses on *noun* + *noun* collocations: the task is to continue with the second word, as illustrated in the example below (activity suitable for advanced-level groups).

Exercise. Continue the line with the second word:
blank cheque – cheque book – book club – club sandwich – sandwich board – board room.

Alternatively, depending on the level of the group, the teacher may make the activity easier and run more smoothly by allowing students to use *verb* + *noun* combinations as well, as students can struggle with *noun* + *noun* combinations.

Another exercise requires that students talk about themselves (suitable from intermediate level and up). The procedure is as follows: the teacher gives a handful of collocations to students and asks them to think of real situations (situations they once found themselves in) for each collocation and write a sentence related to them (this may be a bit overwhelming for a five-minute task, as Lewis et al. note). An alternative to this exercise could be to ask students to think of situations that have happened to them (or might happen to them in the future) and then select two or three collocations that describe these

events (students working individually at this stage). As a follow-up, students write sentences that describe situations related to the collocations given. When finished, students work in pairs and try to guess the collocation their colleague thought of by asking questions about the situation described (activity best done in pairs; allocated time: between 10 to 15 minutes).

Exercise. Write true sentences for yourself by using the collocations given:

an embarrassing situation	*a unique situation*
a bewildering situation	*an extraordinary situation*
a tricky situation	*a tense situation*

(Source: Lewis et al. 2000)

Despite not being topic-related, the last two exercises can be useful in discussing everyday life situations or for exercises that require the use of adjectives.

Apart from classes where students have more or less the same language skills (especially smaller classes), it can also be the case that the individual differences between students are noticeable. Prodromou's (1995) study, focusing on teaching methods for mixed-ability classes, gives important insights into the type of exercises that would be suitable in such cases. He distinguishes between closed and open-ended exercises and remarks that although closed exercises may be adapted to the needs of such classes, open-ended exercises give more opportunities for weaker learners to participate in an activity. Among open-ended activities, we find prediction, matching, reordering, use of charts, labelling, describing, and drawing. Closed exercises include yes/no and wh-questions, multiple choice, gap-filling, dictation and drills (Prodromou 1995: 80). In order to make it easier for all students to contribute to an activity, Prodromou (1995) advises to make it open-ended, which requires that students draw on their linguistic skills, but also on their own experience, knowledge of the world, and other subjects (Prodromou 1995: 80).

While teachers can make an exercise more suitable for the practice of collocations (by making it more open-ended, manipulating a text to fit the needs and level of students, using strategies to highlight them, etc.), there are also strategies that are less effective when teaching collocations. As Hoey (2000: 228) notes, in the case of a reading exercise, it can be counter-intuitive for teachers to create thematic word lists for students without any specific task given, as this would stop them from exploring the text by themselves. Far more effective would be to ask students to find expressions related to a specific topic in a text and do some guess work, and, by doing so, help them to become autonomous learners. In addition, as Hoey (2000) points out, there is no guarantee that by learning word lists students will recognize them in a text or would produce natural-sounding sentences.

In conclusion, it seems that there are many activities that can foster the acquisition of collocations, and even more traditional exercises, such as gap-filling, drill, and matching, could work (these exercises are especially suitable as a reinforcement strategy for the revision of collocations). Although not all the exercises mentioned above put a focus on content-relatedness, nor on presenting collocations in their entirety, these factors can play an important role in the acquisition process. Unless collocations are related to a specific context – e.g. as part of a larger text or embedded in a specific topic –, it is expected to be more difficult for learners to notice collocations (which is a prerequisite for both incidental and guided learning). Although the lexical approach does not discard the value of decontextualized context in language practice, I believe it does little for the acquisition of collocations.

3.5. Combining the task-based learning with the lexical approach

Approaches to task-based learning can differ with respect to a variety of factors such as the realization of the *focus on form* method (that regards form and meaning as equally important), the acceptance or disapproval of the more structural approach of traditional methods, and also whether the instruction is meant to be entirely learner-centred.

Table 11 below compares three approaches (Long 1985, Skehan 1998, Ellis 2003) to task-based teaching: as it can be seen, it is only one characteristic – natural language – that they all share. Learner-centredness, on the other hand, is not a prerequisite in Ellis's (2003) approach – different from other theories mentioned, Ellis does not reject traditional approaches (which may come into play in the case of "focused" tasks). The approaches also differ with respect to the tasks they use (both "focused" and "unfocused" in Ellis's (2003) and Long's (1985) models, only 'focused' in Skehan's (1998) approach) and also to the way they visualize the realization of the *focus on form* method. Long (1985) puts more focus on feedback, whereas Skehan (1998) stresses the importance of task design and pre-task planning. On the contrary, Ellis (2003) attaches equal importance to all phases of a task.

Table 11. *A Comparison of three approaches to TBLT*

Characteristic	***Long (1985)***	***Skehan (1998)***	***Ellis (2003)***
Natural language use	Yes	Yes	Yes
Learner-centredness	Yes	Yes	Not necessarily
Focus on form	Yes – through corrective feedback	Yes – mainly through a pre-task	Yes – in all phases of a TBLT lesson
Tasks	Yes – unfocused and focused	Yes – unfocused	Yes – unfocused and focused
Rejection of traditional approaches	Yes	Yes	No

Source: Ellis 2009: 225

Of all the three methods presented above, Ellis's approach seems to be the most plausible one for teaching collocations. Due to the fact that it enables the *focus on form* in all phases of a lesson, it allows for the implementation of both "focused" and "unfocused" activities (making both an implicit and explicit learning possible). Another advantage of Ellis's approach is that it is not entirely learner-centred, which would make students the ultimate agents of carrying out a particular task. Rather, Ellis's approach allows students and the teacher to be co-creators of a specific activity: while giving students the freedom to perform a task as they consider best, teachers can also suggest ways of carrying it out (including the suggestion of useful vocabulary for a task) and also intervene when considered necessarily. It does not reject traditional teaching methods either, acknowledging their importance in enhancing students' linguistic skills. Gap-fill exercises, for example, can be used as an addition to other ("focused" or "unfocused") activities to consolidate students' collocational competence. When it comes to teaching collocations, they can be useful for drawing students' attention to these constructions, especially if they are topic-related and/or focus on students' personal experiences.

Some of the reasons underlying the choice of a combined approach are the following:

Task-based methods are not efficient on their own as:

– They are not enough for the acquisition of new material. In particular, with approaches that do not deal with "focused" tasks (that would allow the practice of linguistic constructions also by more traditional means, e.g. gap-fill, matching, rephrase, etc.), it is questionable how the consolidation of the language material comes about. In case of poor exposure to language (i.e. outside the classroom), task-based instruction can have serious limitations; some of them are listed below:

– In some cases, it is difficult to see how new knowledge can be acquired only through interaction (Swan 2005).

– There may be curriculum and also time constraints that hinder the implementation of a purely task-based approach.

– There is a difference between task as a work plan, task as a process, and what it implies: while the teacher may wish to target specific language structures to be practised during an activity, this does not always result in the anticipated language use. Overall, it is often difficult to predict what constructions language learners will use while engaging in a task.

– A task can be carried out with minimal language use or through impoverished interaction, with students giving very short answers (e.g. agreeing: *yeah/right/yes*; disagreeing: *no/not really*; asking for information: *point a)? next?* or clarification: *what*…?), and it can also involve cases when learners switch to their mother tongue or alternate between two languages.

– Implementing it can be difficult in large classes, where differences between learners with regard to language levels, individual needs, and personality (some learners prefer taking charge, while others prefer staying in the background) inevitably occur. Also, bright students may overshadow slower/shyer students in group work (Bhandari 2020).

– More focus is laid on the output (the completion of the task) than on the input (in the pre-task phase), and it is questionable how rich the input is and if it is enough for students to carry out the task adequately.

– Teachers may not know how to use the task-based approach adequately and engage students in the task phase without a proper introduction to the topic (observation made by Bhandari (2020)). While a pre-task is not a necessary phase in the task-based approach, proper instructions are still necessary, otherwise students may not be able to carry out the task.

– Focus on form implies briefly focusing on linguistic structures that arise in a text (Lang 1998: 40). Nevertheless, in some cases, pointing out targeted, content-related collocations to students is necessary.

Finally, some arguments can also be brought against a purely lexical approach:

– While it underlines the importance of students' becoming autonomous learners, the lexical approach does not provide sufficient guidelines on how to realize this in practice.

– Noticing (an important principle of the lexical approach) is essential in the learning process, yet it does not always require guidance from the teacher. As such, it can be more effective if the possibility of noticing is linked to tasks (both "focused" and "unfocused") that give learners the opportunity to notice (and use) collocations.

– A task-based approach does not necessarily consider content-relatedness to be important in the teaching process (which would, however, be important for noticing and retaining collocations in memory).

–On a similar note, while more traditional exercises can be useful for learning linguistic constructions, if they are not content-related or do not involve students in some way (focusing on their personal experience), they may be less effective.

– It is assumed that students can learn more effectively if they engage in tasks that require creativity and problem-solving skills, where they can talk about themselves or learn about their colleagues. Overall, students should be able to see the purpose and practicality of an activity, other than practising and improving their language skills.

When applied to the teaching of collocations, the main characteristic of a combined approach can be summarized as follows (some of the ideas have already been outlined throughout the book):

– Making the acquisition of collocations content-related and task-based. This implies teaching collocations that are related to the topic of the lesson material and also embedding them in a particular task (the tasks themselves can be more simple or complex, carried out in different ways: individually, as pair work or group work, in the classroom or at home), and it can also involve different time frames.

– The implementation of a task should follow the steps described in the task-based approach. While some approaches consider either the pre-task or the post-task phase optional, it is believed that both of them are important in order to introduce the topic properly to students (pre-task) and also to get feedback and to clarify any doubts students may have (post-task). Depending on the difficulty of the task and students' familiarity with a particular topic, collocations can be introduced in the pre-task phase (as a possible language source for carrying out the task) or the post-task phase (as a form of reinforcement). Some tasks may even involve working directly with collocations (e.g. activities that involve the use of flashcards).

– Teachers and students are co-creators of a specific task, meaning that teachers should let students plan a task and carry it out to their own liking but should also guide them by giving them suggestions and advice throughout the entire process.

– Input is considered important for the acquisition (and revision) of collocations, and can be considered an awareness-raising element. Based on input, such as a reading or listening exercise, students can notice the occurrence of collocations in their natural contexts (or in contexts resembling everyday language use); input can also be used for revision purposes, giving students the chance to use previously acquired collocations (in this case, input can be both linguistic and non-linguistic (e.g. a picture, a short silent movie, etc.)).

– Unless tasks target the review and practice of already acquired collocations, students should be given the opportunity to notice collocations (and other language chunks) in their entirety (as such, preference should be given to tasks that present collocations as a whole coupled with activities (writing, speaking) that allow students to actively produce them (e.g. speaking and writing tasks)).

– Repeated exposure to collocations. The acquisition of collocations requires that students be exposed to collocations repeatedly (through reinforcement in the post-task phase or on some other occasions), otherwise the chances that students notice them are quite low. This is important also because a certain idea may be expressed through different collocations in different contexts.

– Language learning is considered a non-linear process, which means that besides the acquisition of collocations unfamiliar to students, the activation of previously acquired collocations (or, better said, the knowledge thereof) is also important (e.g. by providing realistic contexts that allow students to produce them). Developing students' collocational awareness (including drawing their attention to constructions where they are presumably familiar with the combining elements but not the constructions themselves) is something that teachers need to do on a regular basis.

In addition to these ideas, there are other principles and macro-strategies that a combined approach would benefit from. Developed by Kumaravadivelu (2003),[9] the principles and strategies outlined below are considered to be important guidelines when designing and implementing tasks. It can be said that planning tasks with these principles and macro-strategies in mind raises the possibility of tasks matching learning objectives in a positive learning atmosphere.

The principles suggested by Kumaravadivelu (2003) are *particularity* – the understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural, and political particularities –, *practicality* – a teacher-generated theory of practice based on teachers' understanding and identifying problems –, and *possibility* – sociopolitical consciousness that learners bring with them to the classroom and that fosters identity formation and social transformation. They are supported by the following macro-strategies:

1. *Maximizing learning opportunities* – teachers striking a balance between their role as a manager of the teaching process and as mediators of learning acts;

2. *Minimizing perceptual mismatches* – noticing the potential discrepancy between learners' and teachers' perceptions and interpretation of tasks and objectives;

3. *Facilitating negotiated interaction* – meaningful learner–learner and learner–teacher interactions, where students have the possibility to not just react and respond to the activities imposed by the teacher but also to initiate and take charge;

4. *Promoting learner autonomy* – helping learners be agents of their own learning by guiding them and giving support;

9 Kumaravadivelu (2003: 30) argues that there is no best method for teaching yet to be discovered, as each method has its own limitations and cannot sufficiently explain the complexities of language teaching. Also, teachers may not use a particular method but describe their practices as eclectic, based on ideas from various sources.

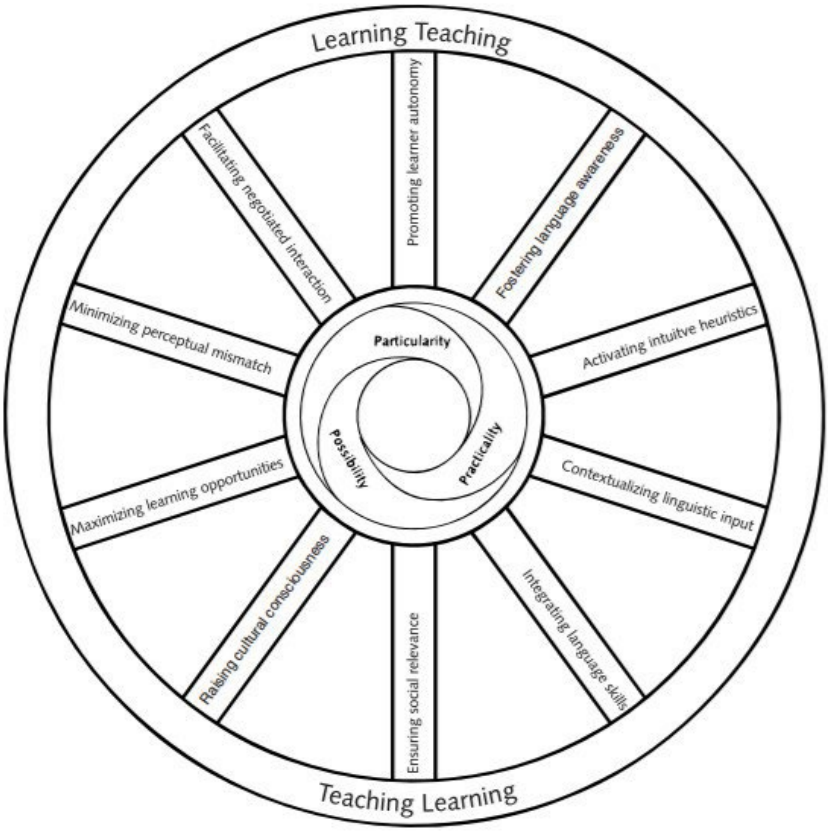
5. *Fostering language awareness* – drawing learner's attention to authentic language use, to the formal and functional properties of the language they are learning;

6. *Activating intuitive heuristics* – by providing enough input to students, their metalinguistic and metacognitive skills can be developed;

7. *Contextualizing linguistic input* – e.g. by showing linguistic items in context that would reflect authentic language use (see the section on the importance of using corpora);

8. *Integrating language skills* – teachers designing activities that would imply the integrative use of language skills;

9. *Ensuring social relevance* – teachers being sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environment in which the learning takes place;



Source: Kumaravadivelu 2003: 41

Figure 8. *The Pedagogy Wheel. Expressing the relation between teaching principles and methodology*

10. *Raising cultural awareness* – making learners aware of the cultural aspects and specificities of linguistic items.

As the pedagogical wheel (*Figure 8*) shows, the principles and macro-strategies drawn up by Kumaravadivelu are meant to be interconnected, mutually supporting each other. Their relevance in the teaching process lies in the fact that they transcend the limitations of a particular method (being developed within a post-method macro-strategy framework), representing guidelines that can be followed in all teaching practices regardless of the approach adopted by the teacher.

For the teaching of collocations, while all relevant, some of the macro-strategies, such as promoting language autonomy (macro-strategy 4), fostering language awareness (macro-strategy 5), contextualizing linguistic input (macro-strategy 7), and raising cultural awareness (macro-strategy 10), hold great significance.

3.6. The teacher's role

Generally speaking, in a TBL approach, the role of a teacher is primarily seen as that of a mediator, who is "the manager and facilitator of a communicative activity" (Swan 2005: 391). This implies quite an active role on the part of the teacher in all phases of implementing the task (determining the focus of the class, designing the activity, selecting the right materials according to students' level, age, and interests, allocating the right time phase to tasks (pre-task phase), turning the task as a work plan into a task as an interaction, monitoring students and helping them by giving additional instructions and advice (task phase), assessing students' performance and introducing additional activities (post-task phase)). During all these phases, the teacher remains a crucial interactional partner, taking on the role of motivator, organizer, conversational partner, and supporter, who can support the language learning process of students in a variety of ways (Van den Branden 2009). Van den Branden (2016) points out that the role of teachers in a task-based approach is not just that of a mediator of language learning, but they can also be change agents (modifying and adapting TBLT-related pedagogic recommendations to their students' needs) and function as researchers (they can gather data on the effectiveness of tasks, analyse and compare them with other data, be in touch with the latest findings, share their experience with other teachers, etc.).

With all this taken into account, however, it can be said that a task-based approached does not ascribe a central role to the teacher in activities carried out in the classroom (Swan 2005). Rather, it is the learners that get a more active role, becoming in charge of not only carrying out a task but also of the entire process of the task, including the outcome itself.

In the combined approach, the role of the teacher is seen to be a complex one that encompasses the roles as described in the task-based approach (the teacher as a mediator and facilitator of the learning process) and the lexical approach (the teacher as an active participant in the learning process). In order to be able to take on these roles, the teacher needs to possess the know-how of a variety of teaching practices and of ways to implement them in the classroom. An important prerequisite of successful teaching in the combined approach is that teachers become co-creators of tasks by acting out their roles in a balanced way (alternating between active and more passive (receptive) roles). Learning how control can and should be asserted over the learning process is an essential skill that teachers need to possess – too much control that always puts teachers in the central position and in charge of the entire learning process can be as ineffective as exercising very little control over the entire learning activity, where no clear learning outcomes are defined.

Holló et al. (1996) give some useful advice on what teachers should avoid doing, some of which have to do with how much control they assert in the classroom. A common tendency of teachers is to speak too much and not give enough opportunities for students to express themselves. According to Holló et al., teachers should try to reduce speaking time overall. Some strategies that can be helpful in this regard (also when teaching collocations) are: refraining from giving instructions that are too long and often unnecessary, avoiding repeating their own instructions and the answers given by the students, occasionally signalling non-verbally when something is right or wrong, not giving the right answer automatically, and correcting students' writings selectively.

Related to the matter of how much control a teacher should take over the learning process is also the question of when. In a combined approach, the teacher's role should vary between a more central and a less central one in order to make sure that a task is well designed (with all the necessary follow-up phases included) and instructions are clear, but also that students have the possibility to carry out the task to their own liking. Knowing when to exercise more control and take a more prominent role and when to stay in the background is key. Having to take a backseat all the time and not having a say in how a particular activity is carried out can be demotivating for students – in the same manner, a teaching method where the learning objects are not made clear can be confusing for students. As such, it is important that control over the learning process be established in a way that feels balanced for both parties.

A combined approach presupposes an overlapping and expansion of roles in a way that more modern roles expand and encompass more traditional ones, in a similar manner to the model described by Kumaravadivelu (2003) – shown in *Table 12* below.

In the model proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2003), the role of a teacher ranges from that of a passive technician, whose primary role is to transmit

the knowledge of experts (e.g. language book writers) to learners, reflective practitioners (teachers as critical thinkers and problem solvers), and transformative intellectuals (who reflect on ideological principles and constantly work on better ways of implementing them, also sharing their own teaching practices and experience). The roles are visualized in a hierarchical order, so there is an expansion of roles from traditional to more modern ones (the teacher as a transformative intellectual presupposes self-reflection and self-renewal), and there is also some overlap between the roles (the role of teachers as transformative intellectuals encompasses some characteristics of the role of teachers as reflective practitioners, which then include some characteristics of the passive technician). As Kumaravadivelu (2003: 17) points out, the roles should not be regarded as opposites but rather as tendencies, teachers leaning towards one or the other at different times.

Table 12. *Different teacher roles*

	Teachers as passive technicians	*Teachers as reflective practitioners*	*Teachers as transformative intellectuals*
Primary role of teacher	Conduit	Facilitator	Change agent
Primary source of knowledge	Professional knowledge + empirical research by experts	Professional knowledge + teacher's personal knowledge + guided action research by teacher's knowledge	Professional knowledge + teacher's personal knowledge + guided action research by teacher's knowledge + self-exploratory research by teachers
Primary goal of teaching	Maximizing content knowledge through prescribed activities	All the above + maximizing learning potential through problem-solving activities	All the above + maximizing sociopolitical awareness through problem-solving activities
Primary orientation to teaching	Discrete approach, anchored in the discipline	Integrated approach, anchored in the classroom	Holistic approach, anchored in the society
Primary players in the teaching process (in rank order)	Experts + teachers	Teachers + experts + learners	Teachers + learners + experts + community activists

Source: Kumaravadivelu 2003: 16

When it comes to teaching collocations, many experts believe that teachers should take on an active role in helping students acquire noticing skills. Thus,

Woolard (2000) claims that teachers should have rather a "telling" than a teaching role in this case. He believes that "collocation is mostly a matter of noticing and recording", and so the teacher's role would consist in helping students develop noticing skills and also the skills of selecting and combining chunks of language (Woolard 2000: 35). Woolard (36) also adds that monitoring students' progress in this regard (how they succeed in developing collocational competence) is important.

Conzett (2000: 84) believes that teachers should play an active role in selecting high-priority and useful collocations for students. Due to the great amount of collocations and their variety, teachers should either select a few collocations for learning or equip students with strategies to observe the language they are used in and also outside the formal teaching situation (Lewis 2000: 158). Lewis (2000: 185) believes that the teacher's role mostly consists in constantly facilitating students' observation of valuable input rather than making them repeatedly practise patterns of language. Finally, as Conzett (2000: 75) notes, it is desirable that teachers teach the word 'collocation' to students, help them get to grips with and notice this linguistic phenomenon on their own, and save time in class, whenever these constructions are introduced. Last but not least, teachers need to have good social skills and learn about what motivates students (both extrinsically and intrinsically), including the environment and conditions they like working in. As group work is a central aspect of task-based approach, it is most probable that many activities will be carried out in a group. With regard to group work, teachers should make sure that each student get a specific task within a group and feel equally in charge of carrying it out. (Students very often specify who does what within the group, and in case they do not, teachers should ask them to do so to make sure that all students know what they need to do and to feel their contribution is important).

Task-based activities often require the use of technology (smartphones, web 2.0 applications, electronic databases, the Internet) due to the great variety of possibilities it offers (source of information, different ways of creating content, the possibility to co-create and share content, etc.) and due to the fact that it represents an environment students are familiar with and can manage creatively to their own liking. Moreover, the use of technology (electronic databases, corpora, parallel texts) is more than desirable during a translation process.

The next section discusses the possibilities of introducing technology in the classroom and ways of using it for language learning and language use.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHING COLLOCATIONS WITH TECHNOLOGY

4.1. Technology in the classroom. The pros and cons

The idea to integrate technology in the classroom goes back to the 1960s and 70s with the birth of CAI (computer-assisted instruction), later called CALL (computer-assisted language learning). Since then, the use of technology has come a long way, from traditional drill-based exercises in the initial phase to language learning in virtual worlds, the use of corpora programs, and even mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). While CALL[10] has existed in foreign-language-teaching practices since the 1960s, their implementation has varied over the years. As *Table 13* shows, CALL has progressed from structural perspective (drill-like methods) to communicative methods (with focus on communicative aspects) and then to integrative CALL. Integrative CALL reflects a socio-cognitive approach to language learning, which takes into consideration the purpose of the communicative act (e.g. types of discourses), adding a new dimension to the cognitive approach.

Table 13. *Computer-assisted language learning*

	1970s/1980s Structural CALL	*1980/1990s Communicative CALL*	*21st century Integrative CALL*
Technology	Mainframe	PCs	Multimedia and Internet
English-Teaching Paradigm	Grammar translation & audio-lingual	Communicate language teaching	Content-based ESP/EAP
View of Language	Structural (a formal structural system)	Cognitive (a mentally constructed system)	Socio-cognitive (developed in social interaction)
Principal use of Computer	Drill and practice	Communicative exercises	Authentic discourse
Principal objective	Accuracy	And fluency	And agency

Source: Warschauer 2000: 64

10 Other names used for computer-assisted learning were CALI (computer-assisted language instruction) or CAI (computer-assisted instruction); the terms were replaced by CALL in the 1980s.

The objective of CALL today is more complex, so in addition to accuracy and fluency, agency (students having the chance to create something useful with an immediate result that the others also need to acknowledge) (Warschauer 2000: 65) also plays an important role.

When it comes to teaching with technology, no general consensus has been reached as of yet over how technology impacts language learning and whether teaching methods based on such technologies are more effective than traditional ones. Several studies (Agarwal 2010, Celik and Aytin 2014, Lynch and Campos 2014) focus on the use of information technology in the classroom, outlining its possible advantages and disadvantages. One advantage of technology-mediated tasks often mentioned in these studies is that they improve the performance of students, especially of shy language learners, who may feel inhibited in the traditional classroom setting. By offering learning conditions that students are familiar with (being digital natives), digital technology can give learners a higher degree of control over the way activities are carried out and can make them feel more in charge of the learning process. Generally speaking, students are expected to find their way around technology easily and to be interested in carrying out tasks involving the use of various software programs.

Other advantages of using technology in the classroom include the possibility for individualized learning along with immediate feedback, the excitement and newness of tasks on screen (Ravichandran 2000), an increase in students' motivation due to the fact that it offers a learning environment where they can be in charge, more interaction in the classroom, control over the activities and practices (Bani Hani 2014: 1610), moving from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred ones (Ahmadi 2018: 119), increased engagement and collaboration, increased hands-on learning opportunities, the possibility of learning at all levels, increased confidence of students, improved technological skills (Costley 2014. 9), access to authentic materials, and the easiness to alter and share content. Last but not least, technology-based learning offers flexibility with regard to how and when it can be used and also fosters individual language learning by allowing learners to do the tasks at their own pace and time. An important advantage of language-learning websites is the fact that students can retry a certain activity without feeling pressured or embarrassed by their teacher or colleagues.

Partly due to the advantages it offers, but also because it has become part of our daily lives, the introduction of technology can be regarded as a necessity these days. Today, the requirements for becoming a teacher include the knowledge of common digital tools. Being a good educator and an expert in the field are not enough anymore, as teachers are expected to possess the ability to design interactive classes (which often presuppose the use of digital tools) and to adopt teaching methods that engage students in a creative way. Teachers today need to know their way around technology and possess the know-how of implementing it in a way that fosters language learning.

This is the case also because students' expectations with regard to the lesson material and how it should be delivered have changed considerably over the years. Having grown up with smartphones, tablets, and applications that require constant reaction on their part has changed students' expectations of the teaching and learning processes: more than before, language learners want to be active participants in the classroom or at least expect creative and interactive teaching methods that manage to catch and keep their attention. They expect a learning environment that mirrors the way in which they engage in the world (Christen 2009). Language learners often find teacher-centred traditional teaching methods boring, as they cannot satisfy their expectation for new impulses. In lack of such impulses, students' attention span tends to be shorter than expected, and their motivation (especially intrinsic motivation) can also decline sooner.

Analysing the relation between the use of technology and students' motivation, Warschauer (1996) (as cited by Warschauer et al. 2000) investigated students' attitude towards the use of the Internet in the classroom. In particular, Warschauer (1996) was interested to find out whether the Internet increased students' motivation and how the use of the Internet and the types of technology-based activities affected students' attitude towards tasks. The study, having the target group of L2 students and carried out in 12 university courses in three countries, showed three main factors to be important in this regard: 1) students' interest in authentic communication, 2) the personal power and control students felt while carrying out an activity, 3) the perceived positive impact of computer mastery on the learning process and outcome by the learners. Warschauer (1996) found that the use of computers and the Internet was met with great interest in all courses, especially when they were included in the curriculum and not just used occasionally.

While the pros overweight the cons when it comes to using technology for EFL purposes, there are also some challenges that may impede the introduction of technology in the classroom, as well as downsides to using it, especially if their implementation has not been carefully planned beforehand.

The barriers that hinder the implementation of technology can be both intrinsic and extrinsic (Celik and Aytin 2014). Firstly, teachers may refrain themselves from using technology due to a deficiency in digital literacy or their lack of know-how when it comes to teaching with technology in a proper way. In addition, teachers' view on the usefulness of digital learning and their appreciation of technology as an instructional tool may also vary. Russell et al's (2003) study of teachers' use of and attitude towards technology points out a rather infrequent use of technology in classes (teachers tended to use technology mostly for preparation) and also different behavioural patterns between novice (or less experienced) and more experienced teachers. According to his observations (Russell et al. 2003: 305), more experienced teachers show greater

willingness for using technology in the classroom than their younger, less experienced colleagues, who are more ready to pinpoint its negative effects on education. A more recent study (Madsen et al. 2018) comparing technology use in education in Norway and New Zeeland points out a considerable difference in teachers' attitude towards using technology in education. According to the data, teachers in New Zeeland considered it important to use digital tools in classes, whereas the majority of Norwegian teachers did not find digital tools as a requisite for good teaching, nor did they think that the use of technology would be necessarily productive in classes.

Besides intrinsic barriers, there are also extrinsic obstacles to implementing technology in the classroom. Such obstacles can be the lack of a computer lab, poor Internet connection, computers breaking down, etc. In addition, teachers may not have enough time or financial means to successfully integrate technology into the curriculum. Teaching with technology also requires extra effort from teachers who may be more comfortable with traditional textbooks (Ravichandran 2000).

In addition to possible extrinsic and intrinsic barriers, if technology-based activities are not planned carefully with respect to their usefulness for the task at hand, the age and the level of the group, including possible distracting factors, their implementation in the classroom may not be effective. There may be a mismatch between what teachers and students find interesting and between the expectations they have from a task. It is therefore important that teachers come up with alternative plans in case something goes wrong or does not turn out the way they expected (students not enjoying the activity, low Internet connection, or computers breaking down). For example, some websites can be accompanied by special visual (also pop-up windows) and sound effects that students may find distracting, and this may lead to students not enjoying the activity at all.

Finally, it is important to note that implementing digital tools in the classroom does not necessarily make the lesson more interesting, nor the learning process more successful. It is therefore advisable that teachers assess the usefulness and usability of technology-mediated activities both in the planning phase and as a follow-up (by also getting feedback from students) and take into consideration all facets of technology use (e.g. carrying out a technology-mediated task may require a different time frame and form of communication than a traditional setting). In order to be effective, technology-mediated tasks need to be goal-oriented, communicative, and, if possible, related to the lesson at hand.

Apart from situations that make face-to-face teaching impossible (like the COVID outbreak that has transferred teaching to online classrooms), teachers have the freedom to decide whether to introduce technology in the classroom and to what extent. Technology can lead to a positive language-learning experience provided that technology-mediated tasks are applied appropriately

in terms of several aspects, such as timing (when and for how long it is used), content-relatedness (related to the lesson material), the dynamic of the classroom (generally speaking, a group of learners tend to have their own dynamics, e.g. being open or not to certain activities), and matching students' levels and interests.

It is believed that technology can foster collocational processing and acquisition by considering the following:

– Providing natural language use (a great amount of data found on the Internet) through interactive web 2.0 technologies, electronic databases, electronic corpora, etc. By doing so, it gives language learners the possibility to notice linguistic constructions in their larger, natural context.

– Performing a task can be done in many different ways possible and by using a variety of tools.

– Technology provides various possibilities for language practice (ranging from more "focused" activities – websites designed for language practice, also enabling language learners to test themselves on the use of particular constructions (e.g. on the website www.wordwall.net, teachers can create games around a specific topic, an example of which could be hangman, a game generally well-liked by all age-groups, focusing on work-related collocations) – to language practice in an "unfocused" way (reading and listening sources)).

– Offering language teachers varied materials and tools to choose from (websites for creating flashcards, quizzes, polls) and that are suitable for the practice (also introduction and reinforcement) of particular linguistic constructions.

Whether the teacher chooses to use technology in the classroom, e.g. for implementing a task, depends on a variety of factors such as: the necessity of using technology (can the task be implemented without it equally well?), the added value technology brings to the task, how much time it takes to implement it, the available infrastructure, etc.

According to Caruso and Hoffmann (2018: 70), before introducing technology in the classroom, teachers should ask themselves the following questions and then act accordingly:

– Where can I embed digital media successfully in the classroom?

– Where do they provide a surplus value?

– Which competencies do they foster that cannot be addressed with other materials such as worksheets or school books?

– Which learning arrangements and environments need to be created for a meaningful integration of digital media?

4.2. Ways of using technology

Information technology (the Internet, web 2.0 technology, computer technology, smartphones) can be used for language learning in a variety of ways. It can be implemented in the classroom during the lesson as part of an activity, can be project-based (which can include technology-based task both inside and outside the classroom), and can target individual practice (e.g. as part of a homework assignment).

Below, some ideas are listed of how the Internet, in particular web 2.0 technology, can be used for teaching collocations in the classroom. As good language skills are often a prerequisite for a certain task to be carried out successfully, some tasks that involve the use of such technologies can be more appropriate for advanced learners; nevertheless, many tasks can also be adapted to lower-level classes.

Examples of task-based activities that include the use of technology are:

– Watching a video (e.g. a TED video) on a specific topic and discuss it in pairs or small groups (3 to 4 students) while focusing on some discussion points (the task will be introduced in the pre-task phase (e.g. brainstorming on the topic), in which the teacher may choose to include some collocations that are useful for the task). It is advisable that the videos used in class not exceed 5 minutes, otherwise students may lose interest or not be able to recall the relevant points mentioned (for advanced learners).

– Watching a short movie with subtitles in class and then having students reconstruct the storyline in small groups. Giving a handful of collocations that students can choose from to complete the task can be useful in this case. Alternatively, the teacher can give students the summary of the story with some inconsistencies that students need to correct or can ask them to put the lines of a story in a chronological order (consider *Exercise 17* below), watching a short story without the ending and then asking students to finish it (from pre-intermediate level upwards). In the latter case, while students are asked to complete the story in their own words, the teacher writes on the whiteboard a few collocations that may be useful in this regard.

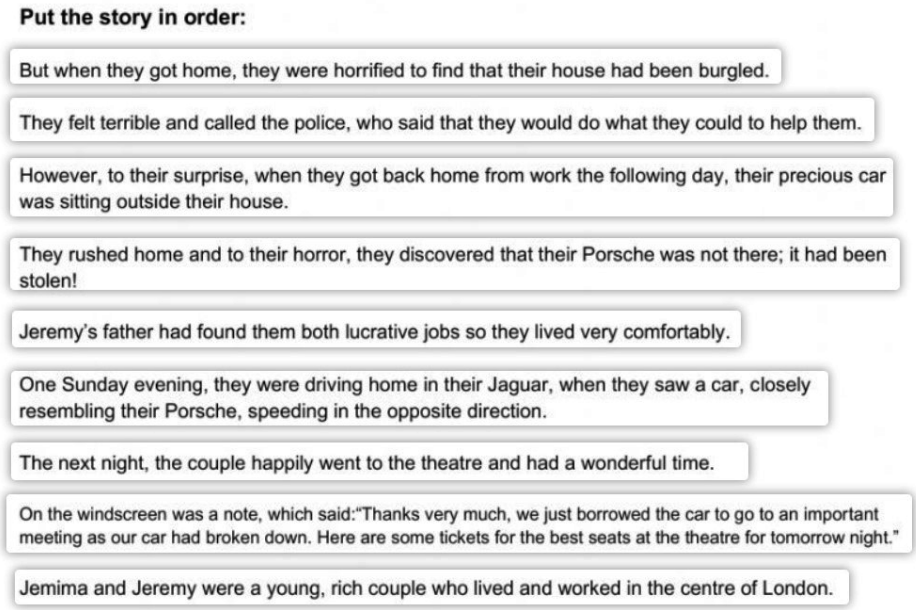
– Particularly useful for the targeted practice of collocations could be creating mind maps (using websites like *inspiration-at.com* or *gitmind.com*, the latter being a free app) and sharing them with others, and also using digital flashcards (that can be created, for example, on *quizlet.com*) for introducing/revising a certain topic (or just talking about it) (suitable for all levels). They can be used to draw students' attention to collocations and for revising previously acquired ones in an effective way (possible tasks could include asking students to write the definitions for specific word combinations, to create flashcards on the topic discussed, etc.).

– Quizzes, games, and interactive activities (websites like *kahoot.com*, *quizizz.com*, *or mentimeter.com*), as students usually find them particularly enjoyable (suitable for all levels) and can also be planned in a way that fosters the acquisition or practice of new words (and word combinations).

All these activities are best done in small groups, as the time allocated to a task depends on students' level, their interest in the task, and task complexity. For reinforcement purposes, it is desirable that teachers get feedback from students after the activities are carried out in order to see whether students have found the activity useful and to make sure that all possible doubts regarding the use of linguistic constructions are clarified.

Some other input-based interactive activities that can be found on the Internet are reading exercises with comprehension check that could involve answering questions, deciding whether the answers are *true* or *false*, putting the lines of a story in a correct order, etc. An example of such an exercise is the one below, containing a scrambled story where students need to reorder lines in a logical sequence. It is suitable for pair work in the classroom or as an individual practice (e.g. as a homework assignment) for intermediate level and above, as the text also contains more complex grammatical constructions (past perfect and the passive) that students need to be familiar with. The task can target the use of past perfect constructions linked to past experiences, together with some collocations such as *be horrified/excited/happy to find that…*, *to someone's surprise*, *to someone's horror*, *lucrative job*, *closely resembling*, etc. In case the first attempt at solving the exercise is unsuccessful, the learners can redo the exercise until they get the story right.

Exercise. Put the story in the right order:



Source: https://www.liveworksheets.com/worksheets/en/English_as_a_Second_Language_(ESL)/Narrative_tenses/Put_the_story_in_order_di707389rd

Figure 9. *Collocation exercise. Sentence ordering*

The use of technology can also be project-based and can include tasks with different time frames, e.g. shorter, which take the form of a mini-project, or larger projects, which would need more time to accomplish. Examples of such tasks could include taking photos on a specific topic and then presenting it to class along with a few ideas that grab the essence of the pictures (all levels), showing students a silent short movie and asking them to write the script for it (intermediate level and up), creating a poster on a given topic (pre-intermediate level and up), or researching a certain topic on the Internet and analysing data (e.g. comparing the design of specific websites in business classes) (suitable only for advanced learners). Warschauer et al. (2000) make a distinction between research projects that are topic-based (using the Web to gather information on a particular topic) and task-oriented (browsing the Internet in order to solve a specific task). In the case of collocations, activities are often both topic-based and task-oriented and can range from simple (looking up a specific word combination in an electronic corpus) to more complex tasks (reading about a certain topic on the Internet, analysing the data found, using it for solving a specific task, etc.).

Talking about interclass projects, Warschauer et al. (2000: 42) note the importance of integrating them into the course, so students can see their relevance and be more willing to take part. In line with this observation, it is believed that in all cases (regardless of the nature of the project) the activity planned should be related to the topic of a lesson, thus becoming an integral part of what has been discussed in class.

As students use the Internet for various purposes and often on a daily basis, a project-based task could consist of a webquest activity where students need to look for information on the web. An example of such an activity is the task presented below related to the topic of international folk festivals (suitable for upper-intermediate level). Taken from an e-learning website (www.e-culture.eu) especially designed for EFL learning in a cultural context, the task is part of a series of exercises and activities related to the topic of dances in Romania. In addition to the task below, the learning module contains a project work that focuses on the description of Romanian folk dances in particular regions.

The description of the task contains clear instructions (a prerequisite for implementing tasks), and there are various links added in the end, which have been discarded here. As the task requires research work, it is best carried out as a homework assignment (eventually students can concentrate only on specific regions, e.g. Transylvania, or certain counties, instead of the entire country); in case the task is implemented on its own (without the preceding activities), it is expected that it should be connected to the topic of a particular lesson (tradition and festivals).

The task, while based on the activity found on www.e-culture.eu, has been modified in order to integrate *focus on form* within the task itself and thereby to help students become aware of the grammatical form of language features (language chunks and collocations).

Pre-task phase

Students work in small groups of three and engage in the planning phase of the task. After getting acquainted with the requirements of the task, which is to prepare a 10-minute presentation on traditional festivals in Romania, they discuss ways of carrying out the task (what region they will present, what aspect of the festival they will focus on, how they are going to present it, who will be in charge of what, etc.).

The teacher gives a few ideas to students to choose from:

– Giving a short overview of a tradition / an event;
– Information related to the event (location, time, programme, fees);
– Some interesting facts that they would like to present.

Source: http://e-culture.eu/platform/course/view.php?id=22

The teacher gives each group a card summarizing the task that needs to be accomplished.

Task

Step 1. Prepare a 10-minute presentation of a traditional festival in Romania. Try to make your presentation informative and inviting for the target audience (anyone interested in traditional festivals).

Step 2. Highlight the keywords and expressions in your presentation.

Post-task phase:

Step 1: Giving feedback and asking questions at the end of the presentations (the teacher and the students alike).

Step 2: The teacher asks the students to imagine that the presentation serves advertising purposes for young adults and older generations. Which keyword/ expression would they keep for which target group? (around 5 minutes).

In addition, there are several apps on the web that offer countless possibilities for project-based group work and that allow students to use their creativity (it should be noted, however, that the efficiency of implementing them would depend on a variety of factors such as the age-group of students, their interest in and openness to the task itself). Two such websites are, for example, *explaineverything.com*, a complex and versatile app that allows creating and sharing short video clips on a specific topic, also with the possibility of sound recording, and *bookcreator.com*, which allows creating short stories and e-books with a variety of tools, such as pictures (also clip art), drawing, image processing, and many others. A great advantage of these websites is that students can work together on them by co-creating, altering, sharing, adding content and also that it can be used for a variety of activities at all levels (the apps allow the creation of tasks ranging from very basic – using only a few linguistic constructions – to more complicated ones such as presenting aspects of a topic) and in different settings (besides group or pair work, they can also be used for individual work).

Caruso and Hofmann (2018: 74) claim that introducing such apps in the classroom is best done through task-based learning, as these apps are suitable for authentic, problem- and project-based tasks. According to them, applying such apps is especially useful for heterogeneous learners, who can adapt the app to their own levels and language skills; similarly, the outcome of the task and the variety of the tools used will be decided by the learners themselves. While Caruso and Hoffman (2018) contemplate the use of such apps (and also tablets) in the classroom, I believe that due to several impediments (infrastructure, time and curriculum constraints, both students and teachers may need some time to figure out and get used to how these apps work) and considering the time needed to plan the various subphases of the task as well as its objectives, such apps are more suitable as a homework assignment.

Technology can also be used for individual language practice. There are various websites that test students' language skills, focusing on the use of grammar constructions such as the difference in use between the various tense forms. In addition, many Internet websites offer free input-based (listening and reading) exercises at various levels, such as *linguapress.com*, *learnenglish.britishcouncil.org*, *tweentribute.com*, channels on YouTube created for language learning, e.g. *learnenglishthroughhistory* with hundreds of recordings on a variety of topics or *Learn English with TV Series* that students can try at home.

Finally, using the Internet can be very beneficial in ESP classes (such as business English, technical English, English for tourism, etc.) too, as they contain authentic language material used in a variety of life situations. Online sources can help students to learn not only about the structure of documents (e.g. the structure of a report, product description, or technical data sheet) but also about the specifics of the vocabulary (collocations, expressions) found in them. In addition, they often contain non-verbal representations, such as pictures and diagrams, which serve as a visual aid in the learning process.

For example, tasks that would benefit from the use of the Internet in business English classes could include asking students to write a product description of an imaginary/innovative product (after having studied the description of similar products), acting out a business negotiation (after having watched a video about it and eventually having read about useful tips related to it), placing an order (after looking at samples), etc. As Sökmen (1997: 244) notes, making materials resemble real-life situations through personal examples, relating words to current events, and involving students in creative tasks that require authentic language use can improve learning outcomes considerably. Not to mention that students will also create something that requires a careful examination (and also noticing) of specific structures, which is thought to be essential for the acquisition (and retention) of useful vocabulary.

In conclusion, it can be said that there are a variety of resources that the Internet and particularly web 2.0 technologies offer for language practice, both inside and outside the classroom. While some of these resources can be used without a particular task in mind (besides the sole purpose of language practice), connecting them to a specific topic and a task is expected to be more effective with regard to noticing collocations and retaining them in memory. In the same manner, implementing a combined approach that complements a task with a focused practice of linguistic constructions (e.g. in the pre- and/or post-task phase) is believed to be more effective than doing without it – as far as the acquisition of new material is concerned.

4.3. Using electronic corpora

Over the past decades, the importance of electronic corpora has been realized, and corpora and corpus-based data have been used not only for research purposes but also for foreign language teaching (Römer 2018: 112). Corpora – large amounts of electronic texts whose features can be analysed based on linguistic tagging – can be of different types: spoken (e.g. the *Lancaster/IBM Spoken English Corpus*), written (e.g. the *Brown Corpus*), of a mixed type (such as the BNC – *British National Corpus*, with 90% written and 10% spoken texts, or COCA – the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*, also with 90% written and around 10% spoken material), monolingual, multilingual, and also synchronic and diachronic corpora (examples of diachronic corpora are the *Helsinki Corpus of the English Text* or *The Corpus of Historical American English*), and of different sizes (one of the largest, freely available corpora online, the BNC, contains 100 million words). In addition to being freely available, BNC and COCA are balanced with respect to genre; they contain a large number of published and unpublished texts from newspapers, research journals, periodicals from various academic fields, fictions books, blogs, TV/Movies, and various recordings of spontaneous conversations and other recorded events.

When talking about using corpora for language teaching purposes, the importance of corpus tools (software packages for corpus access, the concordance programs that enable the query for affixes, words, and word combinations) and of corpus methods (quantitative and qualitative analyses of data) needs to be mentioned (Römer 2018). Leech (1997) makes a distinction between direct and indirect applications of corpora for language learning: direct application means using corpora directly for a specific task (e.g. making queries to see whether a specific construction is correct and commonly used) leading to data-driven learning, where students observe data and draw conclusions based on their findings. The direct application of corpora means providing students with "hands-on know-how" in order to improve their use of English in specific contexts (McEnery and Xiao 2010: 370).

On the other hand, indirect application refers to using corpora for the observation and description of language phenomena, for curriculum design, and for the compilation of dictionaries and course books. A separate category includes teaching-oriented corpus developments, which can reflect language use in specific contexts such as learner corpora or corpora for specific purposes (specialized corpora) (Leech 1997).

When learning a foreign language, it is also important to consider the characteristics of a specialized text, and electronic corpora are suitable for this purpose. Based on a corpus analysis of tourism texts (TITC), Lam (2007) notes that there is a distinctive phraseology and colligation pattern of such texts. An example that Lam (2007: 86) gives is *wet season*, which would be an intuitive

antonym of *dry season*; however, corpus findings (TITC – an English tourism industry text corpus) show less common appearance for *wet season* (75 instances) and more for *rainy season* (95 instances). Similarly, as we have *sunny day* or *fine day* as opposites of *rainy day*, it would be logical to assume we have *sunny season* or *fine season* as the opposite of *rainy season*; nevertheless, no returns were found for these expressions in TITC (and only very few in BNC), which shows that these constructions may have been used metaphorically. This made Lam (2007) conclude that tourism industry texts (just like any other specialized texts) have a unique lexicon characteristic of the field. Based on his findings, Lam (2007) suggests compiling a corpus-driven specialized dictionary (or a tourism industry glossary with collocates of keywords along with their meanings and context).

With regard to the effects of the direct application of corpora on language learning, positive correlations have been found between the use of corpus data and writing skills in particular. Several studies (e.g. Weber 2001, Gilmore 2009, Yoon and Hirvela 2004) point out improved writing skills of students after consulting corpora findings. Using the *British National Corpus* and the *COBUILD Corpus and Collocation Sampler* in Japanese writing classes, Gilmore (2009) noted that they helped students in making their writing sound more accurate and natural. Similarly, Yoon and Hirvela (2004) report on students finding corpora useful for their writing skills and becoming more confident towards L2 writing after being trained to consult corpus data for their writing. Weber (2001) analyses a collection of corpus samples of "model" legal essays written by students at the University of London and reports similar results. He points out that after carrying out the task, which was to observe the generic and structural features of legal essays, learners managed to pinpoint the lexico-structural regularities of legal texts (e.g. the use of *with regard to* and *the issue here is whether* at the beginning of such texts) and figure out the reason for the different occurrences of constructions (the difference in use between *liable to* and *liable for*) along with their frequency (e.g. the passive).

On a final note, it can be said that corpora and corpus linguistic methods are usually suitable for more advanced learners who have a good command of English and can easily understand subtle or even more profound differences between linguistic constructions (e.g. synonyms, false friends). Lower-level students may find this method confusing and overwhelming at the same time due to the fact that they lack sufficient language skills.

4.3.1. Corpora in EFL classes

Introducing corpora in more advanced EFL classes can be advantageous for developing language learners' metalinguistic skills. Woolard (2000) gives examples of how concordance programs can be used to improve students' collocational awareness and stresses the importance of teachers having the

know-how of implementing corpora successfully into the learning process. In particular, as Woolard argues, teachers need to be able to select relevant examples of collocations and avoid trying to teach everything to students. Even if all examples taken from corpora show authentic language use, some examples can be confusing for students, especially if they are not already aware of the subtle differences of word meaning. According to Woolard (2000), this is especially true for intermediate learners, who may not possess enough metalinguistic skills.

When using concordance lines for language learning, it is therefore important that the examples be well selected beforehand, taking also into consideration the level of the students participating in the task. In order to illustrate this point, Woolard (2000) gives examples of a task based on concordance lines that, although selected beforehand, do not contain the best examples for intermediate students. The task involves trying to guess the difference between the uses of the words 'treat' and 'repair' by comparing concordance lines in which they can be found:

Task: Do you think you can explain the difference between the word *treat* and *repair*?

– One child was able to *repair engines* without being instructed.
– He has had to work hard to *repair his damaged reputation*.
– The natural tendency of the *body* is to *repair itself* given the opportunity.
– It will take years to *repair the economic damage* caused by this policy.
– Some dentists claim it is uneconomic to *treat NHS patients*.
– In my profession, you learn how to *treat your own wounds*.
– It is one of the few drugs approved to *treat Alzheimer's disease*.
– Can you advise me on how *to treat the problem*?
– You can *treat tired*, *lifeless hair* with this new shampoo.
– They have a tendency to *treat* small *customers with contempt*.
– It was no way to *treat a dog*.
– We took *the dog* to the vet, but he said it was too late to *treat her*.

Source Woolard 2000: 34

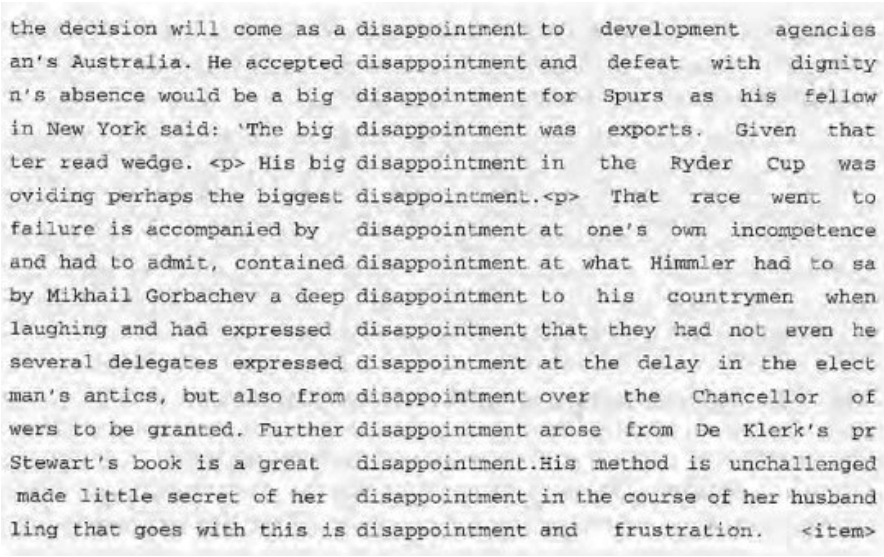
While these lines contain authentic uses of 'treat' and 'repair', Woolard (2010) notes that especially two examples – *treat customers with contempt*, *no way to treat a dog* – can be problematic to students as they contain 'treat' with different meanings. Similarly, the line *the body to repair itself* seems to contradict the "treat people, repair machines" rule. Yoshimura 2004 (as cited by Allal-Sumoto 2018) also underlines the importance of selecting concordance lines carefully for students and giving them handouts, as it may be difficult for them to use a corpus for this purpose. Yoshimura even suggests that two or

more teachers select the data, as teachers can be biased in their selection, and that issues related to policies and ethics defined by the Ministry of Education should be respected.

Examples of suitable exercises for teaching collocation are gap-fill exercises based on concordance lines, Woolard (2000) believes. The example given by him consists of two steps: presenting the corpora findings with a specific word to students (in this case the word *disappointment* (illustrated below)), which allows students to observe the uses of these words, and then giving them a text with missing information that they need to fill in.

Task: Study the concordance lines containing the word 'disappointment' and then complete the sentence with a suitable word:

I got grade E for Mathematics. The result was a ..... disappointment.



the decision will come as a	disappointment	to	development agencies
an's Australia. He accepted	disappointment	and	defeat with dignity
n's absence would be a big	disappointment	for	Spurs as his fellow
in New York said: 'The big	disappointment	was	exports. Given that
ter read wedge. <p> His big	disappointment	in	the Ryder Cup was
oviding perhaps the biggest	disappointment.	<p>	That race went to
failure is accompanied by	disappointment	at	one's own incompetence
and had to admit, contained	disappointment	at	what Himmler had to sa
by Mikhail Gorbachev a deep	disappointment	to	his countrymen when
laughing and had expressed	disappointment	that	they had not even he
several delegates expressed	disappointment	at	the delay in the elect
man's antics, but also from	disappointment	over	the Chancellor of
wers to be granted. Further	disappointment	arose	from De Klerk's pr
Stewart's book is a great	disappointment.	His	method is unchallenged
made little secret of her	disappointment	in	the course of her husband
ling that goes with this is	disappointment	and	frustration. <item>

Source: Woolard 2000: 40

Figure 10. *Concordance lines for the word 'disappointment'*

Woolard (2000) also gives examples of students using a corpus concordancer by themselves in order to clear up possible doubts with respect to the use of a specific construction. He recalls one of his students writing *big possibility* and then getting insecure about whether 'possibility' collocates with 'big' in *I think there is a big possibility for rain today*. After a corpora search, with no returns for big possibility found in the corpus, he changed the construction into *strong possibility* – a construction with large number of occurrences.

Regarding the efficiency of teaching collocations with the help of a concordancer, Sun and Wang (2003) investigate whether inductive (discovery methods, students discovering the rules by themselves), or deductive (rules being explained first to students and then illustrated by examples) methods are more suitable for this purpose. They carried out an experiment with 81 Taiwanese students, dividing the participants randomly into two groups: one group were instructed with inductive and the other group with deductive methods. (There were two tests implemented based on error correction, and they included two pairs of easy and difficult collocation patterns (easy – *distinguish between A and B*, *distinguish A from B*, *in excess of*; difficult – *indignant with*, *indignant at*, *the gulf between A and B*). The results showed that, overall, the group with inductive methods scored better than the other group, except for the more difficult items, where no considerable differences could be detected between the two groups. This made Sun and Wang (2003) conclude that although teachers in Taiwan usually favour a deductive approach as they consider inductive methods too time-consuming, inductive methods should be encouraged in order to create effective discovery learning possibilities for students.

4.3.2. Corpora (and other electronic databases) in translation practices

Besides their applications in more advanced EFL classes, corpora can be introduced in translation practice classes. Similar to EFL learners, students who study translation, while they may be aware of the presence of collocations, word combinations, and chunks, they do not often realize how important it is to learn and use them correctly. Influenced by language transfer from their L1 or even L2, they may use the wrong collocation and create constructions that sound unnatural. While inside the European Union translations are usually carried out to one's mother tongue or first language, when unofficial translations are required, it can often happen that translators do not only translate into the mother tongue but into their L2 or even L3 language. In such cases, it is paramount that translators know about the importance of collocations and learn to produce them correctly. In case they carry out specialized translations, they should make themselves familiar not only with the characteristics of the text type that the specific text belongs to (the categorization of texts into expressive, informative, operative, and audio-medial texts by Katherina Reiss (1977)) but also with the collocations used in that specific domain.

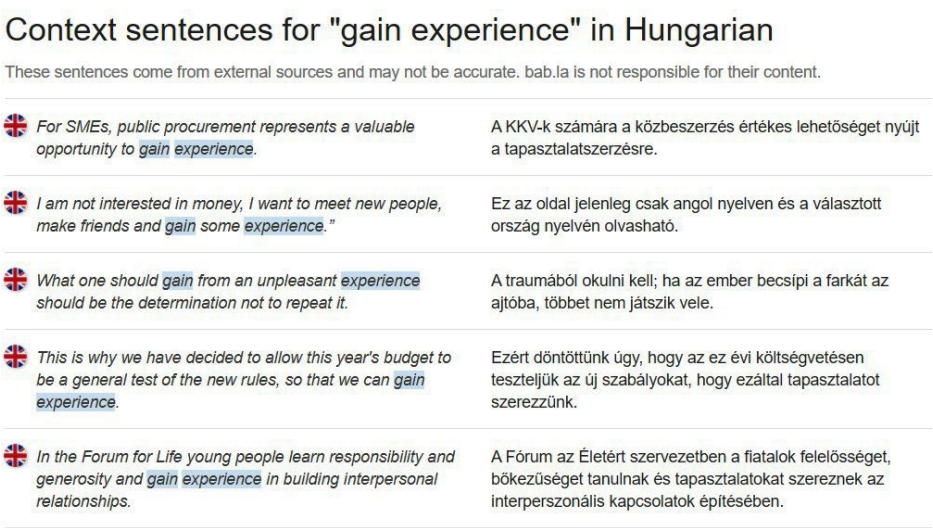
Tasks in translation classes usually consist in students having to translate a text (or part of it) after searching for parallel texts and also looking up unknown words and other information found in the text. Consulting parallel texts in the pre-task phase is especially important as, by doing so, students gain an insight into the specifics of the target text in terms of style, register, cultural

and domain-specific elements (e.g. contracts have a specific structure and register that make them different from other legal documents). In order to draw students' attention to collocations and word combinations characteristic of the text at hand, the teacher can also give students a parallel text and ask them to make a quick analysis of it in pairs or small groups. In this case, the teacher may wish to guide students with some questions and instructions (e.g. What parts of the text can you identify? Can you see any words or word combinations as key expressions in the text? Make a list of expressions that you think will be useful in your translations.) This can help students realize the importance of searching for parallel texts before beginning the actual translation itself.

During the pre-task but also the translation phase, students are advised to consult, besides dictionaries and thesauruses, collocation dictionaries that can be found on the Internet and also electronic databases and electronic corpora. After having set the translation aside for a little while, students will revise their translations (post-task phase). Alternatively, this final phase can also be carried out in pairs or small groups, students comparing their translations with those of their colleagues to see whether they faced the same difficulties during the translation process and to find an answer to possible translation problems together. As a last step, students can get feedback from the teacher with regard to their translations (e.g. by taking turns in reading them out aloud).

Besides translating shorter or longer passages of texts, there are also other tasks that teachers can use to raise students' awareness of collocations. Such exercises can include summarizing a text by using some of the target collocations given by the teacher, highlighting specific constructions in the text, and asking students to look for synonyms or, on the contrary, giving the definition of a specific construction and then having students think of a corresponding word combination, asking them to make a list of possible word combinations they can think of related to a topic, etc. (also consider the exercises in the *Appendix*). Since consulting electronic dictionaries and databases plays an important role in translation practices, it is essential to make students familiar with some useful resources. A short summary of such resources (dictionaries, electronic corpora, and other electronic databases) will be given in the section below:

Online dictionaries and concordances: some language portals and dictionary apps, such as *bab.la* or *linguee.com*, provide various examples for word combinations in their larger context, together with the corresponding terms in the target language. *Figure 11* shows example sentences for the *gain experience* collocation in *bab.la*; similarly, *linguee.com* also gives several examples of this construction in context. While the content is not verified in either of these databases, *linguee.com* takes many examples from the EUR-Lex corpus (*https://eur-lex.europa.eu/*), a multilingual corpus based on European Union texts and their translations.



Source: https://en.bab.la/dictionary/english-hungarian/gain-experience

Figure 11. *Example sentences for the collocation gain experience*

Despite being useful resources (they provide a variety of examples of constructions in context), neither *bab.la* nor *linguee.com* give users the possibility to search for the collocates of a specific word, and while one can check the uses of both the collocator and the collocate in the example sentences, this can be tiresome work. As such, consulting electronic dictionaries that include the option of searching for not only words but also collocations is desirable. A valuable source in this sense is *Collins COBUILD Dictionary* (https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary), which offers example sentences for a particular construction (most of the examples coming from newspapers and novels) and specifies its frequency and linguistic varieties as well (British or American).

Figure 12 shows some of the collocates of 'experience' (in V + N, Adj. + N, and N + N constructions) as well as related terms.

Other useful sources include the online collocation dictionary pertaining to the PROWRITINGAID grammar checker, style editor, and editing tool (accessible at: https://prowritingaid.com/en/Collocation/Home) or *Ozdic Online Collocation Dictionary*, which is based on the *British National Corpus* and includes over 150 000 collocations.

Both databases have their own advantages: the Ozdic dictionary separates the various uses of linguistic constructions based on their meaning and shows the collocates with respect to the part of speech they belong to (see *Figure 13*) for the collocates of 'experience' as a noun, having the meaning of *knowledge/skill from seeing/doing sg*). In comparison, the dictionary of *Prowritingaid* is more suitable for advanced users, who quickly want to check what collocates

a certain word appears with – the dictionary does not give any explanation with regard to the meaning or frequency of collocations; nevertheless, it lists the most common collocates a word appears in and the part of speech they belong to: (e.g. the most common verb collocations for 'experience' that are listed in the dictionary are (https://prowritingaid.com/en/Collocation/Dictionary/?word=experience): *be*, *have*, *do*, *can*, *will*, *gain*, *learn*, *show*, *draw*, *teach*, *know*, *bare*, *share*, *must*, *may*, *speak*, *come*, *find*, go, *'s*, *should*, *read*, *confirm*, *work*, *take*, *grow*, *get*, *lack*, *may*, *suggest*).

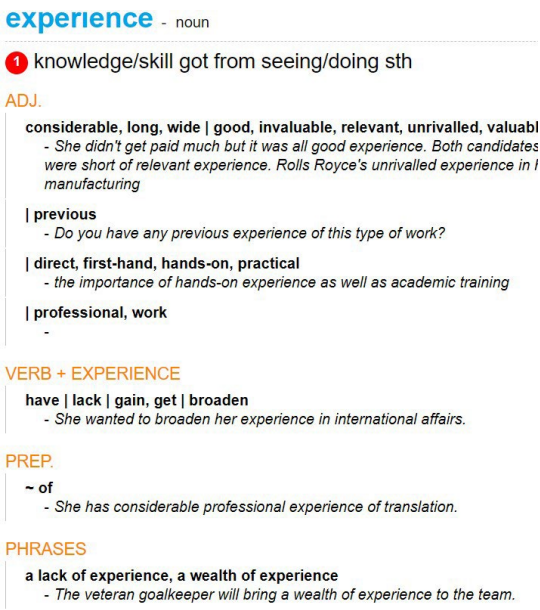
Source: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/experience

Figure 12. *Collocates of the word 'experience' and related terms*

Electronic corpora: consulting an electronic corpus can significantly improve the quality of a translation, so teachers should consider teaching students how to use them in all phases of the translation process (for preparation, translating, and proofreading). It fosters a *focus on form* way of learning, where students check and are made aware of the grammatical form of language features in their attempt to render the source text into the target language. A good option is using the BNC – it is large enough to show the uses of certain words or word phrases and their frequency in a specific field and in different genres. Moreover, it is free to use after registration (for a limited number of queries per day).

Corpus findings offer several options for query: the user can search for words and lemmas, particular affixes (-*ing*) or the combination of words and affixes, also specifying the part of speech of a specific word (e.g. VERB *ing would give all the verbs ending in -*ing*), and even collocates (*Table 14* shows

the collocates preceding the word 'experience'). When displaying the findings, the frequency of a construction is also given (they can be displayed in KWIC – *keyword in context* format, with the constructions highlighted and appearing in the middle) – clicking on it makes the larger context visible.



Source: www.ozdic.com

Figure 13. *Collocates of the noun 'experience'*

By using the option *see frequency by section*, the corpus displays the occurrences of that construction in the spoken vs. written corpus and in different genres (the collocation 'gain experience' returned 52 hits in the BNC, the highest number (24) being in the miscellaneous category and the lowest in magazine and fiction (1 each); 'gains experience' returned 3 hits, 'gained experience' 19 hits, and 'gaining experience' 20 hits). *Table 15* shows the hits for 'gain experience' in the NEWS category.

Table 14. *Collocates of 'experience' in the BNC corpus*

British National Corpus (BNC)

SEARCH | FREQUENCY | CONTEXT

ON CLICK: CONTEXT TRANSLATE (??) GOOGLE IMAGE PRON/VIDEO BOOK (HELP)

HELP		ALL FORMS (SAMPLE): 100 200 500	FREQ	TOTAL 486 | UNIQUE 191
1	☐	WORK EXPERIENCE	62	
2	☐	GAIN EXPERIENCE	51	
3	☐	GAINING EXPERIENCE	20	
4	☐	GAINED EXPERIENCE	19	
5	☐	LIVED EXPERIENCE	17	
6	☐	LACKED EXPERIENCE	12	
7	☐	TEACHING EXPERIENCE	12	
8	☐	GET EXPERIENCE	10	
9	☐	GOT EXPERIENCE	10	
10	☐	GIVE EXPERIENCE	6	
11	☐	PROVIDE EXPERIENCE	6	
12	☐	LACKING EXPERIENCE	5	
13	☐	NEED EXPERIENCE	5	
14	☐	SHARE EXPERIENCE	5	
15	☐	INTERPRETING EXPERIENCE	4	
16	☐	GETTING EXPERIENCE	4	
17	☐	LACK EXPERIENCE	4	
18	☐	LEARNING EXPERIENCE	4	
19	☐	ORDERING EXPERIENCE	4	
20	☐	PROVIDING EXPERIENCE	4	

Source: https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/

Table 15. *The collocation 'gain experience' in the news category (BNC)*

British National Corpus (BNC)

SEARCH | CHART | CONTEXT

SECTION: NEWSPAPER (6)
(SHUFFLE)

+CONTEXT EXPLORE NEW FEATURES

1	and had spent the previous year working in France to **gain experience**. There was no hint of any academic problem. Female speaker She
2	teams have been taking part in a hazardous exercise to **gain experience** of an emergency underground. Their task was to rescue a seriously injured
3	. This examines hacking and computer crime cases simply to **gain experience** and hopefully prevent future violations. But it is commonly agreed among those
4	Charter, first fought it in 1983, mainly to **gain experience**. But he won and has held on. This time he is
5	even within Russia but the people are very keen to **gain experience** of the outside world and meet people from the West,' said
6	There are many driving skills still to learn as you **gain experience**,' agrees Keith Cameron, Chief Driving Examiner,' but passing

Source: https://www.english-corpora.org/bnc/

Electronic databases and corpora can also be useful for the correction of errors. A possible task can include students proofreading each other's writings and making a list of possible mistakes by consulting corpora findings and getting feedback from the teacher.

Correcting and evaluating translations can be challenging for students, reason for which the teacher should always give feedback and discuss with students what has been corrected and how. In order for a translation to be acceptable, it should not only be free of mistakes (lexical, grammatical, syntactical) but also easy to follow (be coherent and show devices of cohesion), match the style and register of a specific text type, and, last but not least, also be culturally sensitive. Regarding cohesion, Halliday as Hassan (1976) believe that collocations also contribute to text cohesion and can be regarded as a cohesion device. Making a distinction between grammatical (conjunctions, reference items, substitute items) and lexical cohesion (expressed by synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and collocations), Halliday and Hassan (1976) define collocations as associations between co-occurring lexical items that also contribute to the cohesion of the text as a whole.

Klaudy (2005) classifies translation mistakes according to four criteria: the reason for mistakes (not understanding the source text, not being able to express oneself properly or to apply translation methods and strategies, not paying enough attention), transfer of information (the target text is different from the source text, expresses more/less than the source text), linguistic criteria (lexical, e.g. wrong word; grammatical, e.g. wrong ending; syntactical, e.g. wrong word order), and, finally, the level of mistakes (word/sentence/text level, mismatch in style and pragmatic errors). She notes that teachers often refrain from correcting each and every mistake that students make (especially in post-graduate specializations, where teachers train future translators); nevertheless, it is important that students be made aware of the requirements for acceptable translations, as well as how translations can be graded. Among the more serious discrepancies, Klaudy mentions: misunderstandings (and resulting mistranslations), word-for-word translation, violating text cohesion and coherence, insecurity (e.g. giving several variants of a word), basic grammatical mistakes, lack of necessary terminology, repetitive and striking misspellings, sloppy language use, illegibility. Although Klaudy (2005) does not touch upon collocations in this regard, it goes without saying that the lack of collocational competence impairs translation accuracy and decreases the quality of translations to a great extent.

Other electronic databases: Especially in case of specialized translations, consulting the European Union terminology database called IATE (https://iate.europa.eu/home) can be very useful. After specifying the source and target languages (it is possible to select for several target languages), queries can be run based on words and collocations. IATE gives detailed information on a specific term, including its definition, the domains in which it is used, the context in

which it is found in, its reliability (ranging from reliability not verified to very reliable), and an evaluation of its usability (from preferred usage to obsolete). Containing sources from all languages of the European Union, the database is a useful resource for (future) translators and is continuously expanding.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of students' collocational awareness in translation practices, an analysis has been performed of students' translations, two excerpts of which are included in the present work. The translations have been carried out by students (12 in total) studying for their master's degree (specialization: Translation and Interpretation) at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania. The language combinations in this specialization include Hungarian (L1) – Romanian (L2) – English (L3), and students work both from and into their mother tongue (Hungarian to Romanian, Hungarian to English and vice versa).

Translating the texts was part of a translation practice, this being an obligatory module in the curriculum. The translation practice consisted of three steps. As a first step, students had to translate a text of around 3 000 characters without spaces (around two pages); the texts were mostly informative, and students could often choose their source and target languages.

As a next step, students had to peer-review each other's translation, in a way that each student reviewed the paper of another colleague. By using the *track changes* option, students corrected the mistakes they could find in the text and made suggestions with respect to how a particular passage could be reformulated or paraphrased. They also remarked if they found the translation (of a construction/sentence/paragraph) was carried out particularly well. As a final step, after getting back their peer-reviewed texts, students accepted or declined the suggestions, adding additional comments. The documents students were working on were shared with the teacher, who also commented on the translations and the suggestions made.

In all stages of the process (preparing their own translation, reviewing that of their colleague as well as revising their own peer-reviewed translations), students were encouraged to use electronic databases and corpora, along with dictionaries and thesauruses in a printed form. Nevertheless, as students worked from home, it is uncertain whether they had looked for parallel texts before they started translating or what resources they consulted during the translation and the reviewing processes.

In the examples below, we can see fragments of the source texts and their original translations – in the case of *Example 2*, the revised translation is also included. Both texts are of the informative text type, so that the primary focus was on rendering the information found in the source text into the target text accurately. The first text is semi-specialized and is the description of a project called *InSPIRES Project* that Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania has been part of. The second text contains fragments of a cooperation agreement,

having the specific vocabulary of a contract. Both texts pose challenges for the translator with regard to vocabulary and register – looking for parallel texts (easier in the case of a contract) can significantly help students with the translations. On the same note, consulting an electronic corpus (e.g. BNC – in the first case –, CoRoLa (a Romanian corpus), or other electronic databases (besides the above mentioned, a useful resource can be *reverso.net*, both for English and Romanian)) is more than desirable.

The analysis of the translations concentrated on two major aspects of collocational awareness: Did students manage to translate collocations accurately? Did students detect collocational errors while reviewing their colleague's translations?

Example 1. Translation from Hungarian into English

Source Text:
Az InSPIRES projekt
Finanszírozó: Európai Bizottság – Horizon 2020
Koordinátor: Barcelona Institute for Global Health, ISGlobal
https://inspiresproject.com/
Célok:
Az InSPIRES projekt az európai és Európán kívüli civil és akadémiai szféra, valamint más érdekcsoportok *képviselőit kapcsolja össze* innovatív Science Shop típusú *hálózatok megtervezése és megvalósítása céljából*. A Science Shop *az egyetemi oktatást, tudományos életet és a civil társadalom ügyeit közösségi kutatásokban foglalja össze*, amelyek az érintettek *aktív részvételére alapozva* megpróbálnak *hidat képezni* a társadalom és a tudomány képviselői között.

A projekt kutatási-fejlesztési *elképzeléseket támogat* az egészségügy és környezetvédelem témaköreiben, különös *tekintettel* a nemek közötti egyenlőségre és a hátrányos helyzetű társadalmi csoportok *bevonására* (nők, idősek, fiatalkorúak és menekültek). Az InSPIRES a Science Café típusú és más közösségi *kezdeményezéseket hozza össze* a releváns, a helyi adottságokhoz és kultúrához illeszkedő és *közösségi részvételen alapuló* kutatás-fejlesztés megvalósításához.

Translation
The InSPIRES project
Financed by: The European Commission – Horizon 2020
Coordinator: Barcelona Institute for Global Health, ISGlobal
https://inspiresproject.com/
Objectives:
The InSPIRES *project brings together representatives of civil and academic spheres* as well as interest groups from and outside of Europe, with the *purpose*

of developing and implementing innovative Science Shop networks. Science Shop *creates synergies between social issues and scientific development through community research, building upon* the active involvement of stakeholders to *form a bridge between* society and the scientific community.

The project *supports visions of research and development* within the areas of healthcare and environmental protection, with *a special emphasis on* gender equality and the involvement of underprivileged groups (women, the elderly, minors and refugees). InSPIRES *facilitates S*cience Café and other *social initiatives* in order to *bring about relevant research-development* that makes use of locally available resources and cultural elements and is *based on social involvement*.

(*Source: http://csik.sapientia.ro/hu/inspires-projekt*)

Based on the evaluation of the target text, we can say that the collocations have been rendered quite successfully into the target text, including the cases where the source text sounds slightly unnatural (képviselőt *kapcsol össze* (a more natural phrase would be *kapcsolatot teremt* a képviselők között 'connects/ brings together representatives', kezdeményezéseket *hoz létre* (*kezdeményezést indítványoz*) 'facilitates social initiatives'. Examples of good translations are: 'with the purpose of developing' *megtervezése és megvalósítása céljából*, 'with a special emphasis on' *különös tekintettel a*, 'create synergy through community research' *közösségi kutatásokban foglalja össze*, etc.

There are only few constructions that, although acceptable, are not equivalent with the source text or are not that commonly used. Such an expression is 'form a bridge' (a word-for-word rendition of the collocation in Hungarian (*hidat képez*). In this case, the corresponding expression would be *build a bridge between* – besides being a commonly used expression, it also conveys the agency and volition implied by this construction more efficiently. The other collocation that sounds a bit unnatural and fails to give back the exact meaning implied by the construction is 'supports visions of research and development' *elképzelést támogat*, which should be rather 'supports the realization/implementation of research and development projects'.

Example 2. Translation from Hungarian into Romanian

Source Text
Együttműködési Szerződés
Negyedik cikkely: az együttműködés formái
4.1. A Felek jelen megállapodás időtartama alatt *törekedni fognak* a dokumentációk, a tudományos anyagok, az oktatási-képzési tapasztalatok rendszeres *cseréjére* és a közös kutatásfejlesztési valamint tantervfejlesztési *programok kialakítására*.

4.2. A Felek *támogatják* a Sapientia EMTE illetve a Megyei Kórház kutatói, oktatói, valamint hallgatói részvétellel zajló *közös kutatómunkákat*, ezek eredményeit közös dolgozatokban közlik.

4.3. A Felek elősegíthetik az általuk kiadott könyvek és minden más kiadvány cseréjét.

4.4. A Felek elvi *támogatásukat fejezik ki* közös képzések – *egyetemi asszisztensképzés*, laborasszisztensképzés stb. – *létrehozására*. Bármely közös képzési *együttműködés létrehozásáról* külön szerződésben *rendelkeznek*.

4.6. A Felek *anyagi lehetőségeikhez mérten lehetőséget biztosítanak kutatóik, orvosaik és oktatóik cseréjére*, azzal a céllal, hogy *gyakorlatokat tartsanak*.

Original translation:

Acord-Cadru de Operare

[…]

Art. 4. Formele colaborării

4.1. În perioada de valabilitate a prezentului acord părțile *vor încerca pentru a schimba* documentele, materiale ştiințifice, experiențe educaționale şi de formare în mod regulat şi pentru *a stabili programe comune de cercetare şi dezvoltare*.

4.2. Părțile *susțin lucrul comun de cercetare* cu cercetătorii, lectorii şi studenții din Sapientia şi Spitalul Județean, ale căror rezultate vor fi publicate în disertații comune.

4.3. Părțile pot facilita schimbul de cărți şi orice alte publicații pe care le publică.

4.4. Părțile îşi *exprimă ajutoarele* în principiu *pentru formarea comună asistenților universitari,* formarea asistenților de laborator etc. Acestea *prevăd stabilirea oricărei cooperări* comune de formare într-un contract separat. [...]

4.6. *În măsura posibilului financiare*, părțile vor oferi să *ofere oportunități pentru schimbul de cercetători, medici şi lectori în vederea organizării de exerciții*.

Revised translation:

[Acord-Cadru de Operare]

Art. 4. Formele colaborării

4.1. În perioada de valabilitate a prezentului acord părțile *se străduiesc pentru schimb de documente*, materiale ştiințifice, experiențe educaționale şi de formare în mod regulat şi *în vederea stabilirii programelor* comune de cercetare şi dezvoltare.

4.2. *Părțile sprijină reciproc activitatea de cercetare* dintre cercetătorii, lectorii şi studenții ai Universității Sapientia şi Spitalul Județean, iar rezultatele obținute vor fi publicate în disertații şi lucrări ştiințifice comune.

4.3. Părțile pot facilita schimbul de cărți şi orice alte publicații pe care le lansează.

4.4. Părțile *îşi exprimă sprijinul pentru formarea comună a asistenților universitari*, asistenților de laborator etc. *Stabilirea oricărei cooperări comune* de formare *va fi prevăzută* într-un contract separat. […]

4.6. *În funcție de nivelul resurselor financiare*, părțile oferă *oportunități pentru schimbul de cercetători, medici şi lectori în vederea organizării activităților de practică*.

In the case of text 2, the revised translation differs significantly from the original one. Some of the collocations are already translated well in the initial translation (*programok kialakítása* [*a stabili programe*], *együttműködés létrehozásáról rendelkeznek* [*prevăd stabilirea cooperărilor commune*], *egyetemi asszisztensképzés* [*formarea asistenților medicali*]), while others are corrected in the revised version (**lucrul comun de cercetare – activitatea de cercetare, *îsi exprimă ajutorul – îşi exprimă sprijinul, *în măsura posibilului financiar – în funcție de nivelul resurselor financiare*). A possible reason for the ill-formedness of the collocations lies in the fact that the collocates have a more restricted/larger use in one of the languages, e.g. *munka* in Hungarian can be translated either as *muncă*, *lucru*, *activitate*, or *slujbă* in Romanian, depending on the context the construction is part of (also: *kutatómunka* can be translated either as *muncă de cercetare* or as *activitate de cercetare*). The collocates are often near synonyms that have the same denotation (e.g. *ajutor* and *sprijin* in Romanian both mean 'helping someone'); their connotation is, however, different, wherefore they cannot be used interchangeably in all contexts.

Concerning the second question as to whether students managed to detect collocational errors, it can be said that, generally speaking, students are not sensitized enough to the use of collocations, so more often than not they have overlooked miscollocations and failed to correct them. While they managed to spot grammatical errors and some other discrepancies, such as wrong word order and misspellings, it was mostly the teacher who drew students' attention to collocation mismatches. Although a more thorough analysis and further testing would be necessary in order to draw definite conclusions in this respect, the following tendencies could be observed. First, students tend to combine individual words into word combinations rather than regard collocations in their entirety (which in case of wrong language transfer has resulted in a collocational error) and, second, they do not pay particular attention to word combinations. In order to remedy this situation, the teacher should not only put more emphasis on collocations in translation classes but also teach students to use electronic databases and other resources efficiently, in a way that allows them to notice collocations in different contexts. Doing so improves students' metalinguistic and collocational awareness and leads to higher-quality and more natural-sounding translations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

There is a vast amount of literature on collocations, including pedagogical considerations such as possible ways of teaching collocations, analysis of collocation use by learners, error analysis of students' writings and implications for teaching, etc. Partly due to the large number of collocations and their great variety, but also other reasons (e.g. not enough attention paid to collocations in the classroom, types of exercises found in language course books, and language learners' learning habits), choosing a teaching method that would be adequate for the acquisition of collocations can be a real challenge for teachers. This book has adopted an approach that combines elements of a task-based approach with the theoretical considerations of the lexical approach (together with some principles and macro-strategies). It is believed that a task-based approach, due to the learning conditions it offers to students (allowing them to organize and complete tasks to their own liking) combined with the mindset of the lexical approach (the importance of input and noticing, focus on word combinations and language chunks), can foster collocational processing and acquisition. The advantage of such an approach is that it creates a balance between carrying out a task creatively without too much concern for the language used and that adopts focused learning that allows learners to actively use targeted linguistic constructions. Depending on the task at hand, collocations can be introduced in either phase of an activity, some activities even involving the practice of some targeted collocations during the task phase.

As carrying out a task may be more interesting, and in some cases even more efficiently carried out, if technology-based (including web 2.0 technology, electronic corpora but also smartphones, cameras, etc.), the book suggested ways of using technology both inside and outside the classroom. The use of technology in the classroom requires extra preparation, know-how, and additional roles on the part of the teacher; nevertheless, it can lead to better learning results (especially in the case of translation classes) provided the chosen interface is appropriate for the task at hand and the activities match students' level and interest.

As among traditional approaches (using the 3p method) we can also find activities similar to tasks, the question may arise as to how the approach taken here differs from tasks in a traditional sense. I believe in two major ways: first, the present approach is based on the idea that activities should help students notice collocations (some tasks may even require the targeted use of

collocations) both incidentally and being guided by the teacher. The ultimate goal is to raise students' collocational awareness (so they would eventually notice collocations on their own) by providing situations they can relate to and that allow them to use collocations in different contexts. Taking a combined approach to teaching collocations can be adequate for this purpose, as it allows students to notice collocations during the "focused" and "unfocused" phases alike, thereby making both implicit and explicit learning possible.

The other factor that makes this approach different from traditional ones is the way input is laid out to students. While in traditional approaches the teacher presents (and explains) the input, in the approach taken here students are expected for the most part to notice linguistic constructions by themselves (being partly guided by the teacher) and work out the possible regularities or predictability behind them. In a similar vein, it is considered important (whenever possible) to give enough input to students and thereby to enable them to observe the occurrence and characteristics of linguistic constructions (this idea can differentiate this approach from other communicative approaches where the importance of speaking is stressed, often without students being properly introduced to a topic).

In conclusion, it can be said that teaching collocations remains a challenging task, and while there are no perfect techniques for teaching them, some methods may be more adequate than others. It is expected that the combined teaching method proposed in this book (along with the principles and macro-strategies) can give additional ideas for teaching collocations and lead to a better understanding and acquisition of these constructions.

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APPENDIX

Exercises for teaching collocations

Exercises for elementary level. Topic: jobs (supplement material to the exercises found in the *New English File Elementary Student's Book* (Unit 2 D, family)). Since elementary groups are often heterogeneous, the teacher can choose to make the task easier (e.g. introducing some of the collocations beforehand) or more difficult (e.g. by adding DS – *doesn't say* – to the true or false sentences, including more sentences, etc.).

(Targeted collocations: *work on Saturdays, find a job, meeting people, hard work, go on holiday, visit different places, work at night*.)

Pre-task activity:

Step 1: The teacher asks students to make a list of things they would prefer in a future job (e.g. friendly colleagues, good boss) and things that they wouldn't like (e.g. working alone, earning little money) (small group activity of three to four students – time allocated: around 10 minutes). The teacher gets feedback from students and writes the ideas on the whiteboard, including the targeted collocations (around 5 minutes).

Step 2: The teacher introduces the task to students. Five people are going to talk about their job experiences.

Task:

Students listen to the recording (2:27 min.) and mark the answers as *true* or *false* (individual activity). The teacher gets feedback from the students (overall activity: between 5 and 10 minutes):

Are the sentences true or false?

a. Speaker A always works on Saturdays.

b. Speaker B meets many people during the summer.

c. Speaker C is happy to help people.

d. Speaker D travels to many countries.

e. Speaker E doesn't like his job.

Follow-up activity:

The teacher asks students (working in small groups) to discuss the questions below (the teacher gives each group a copy of these questions).

Questions:

– Is it a good idea to work during the summer break? How about the weekend?

– How often should you have a break from work and why?
– What is best about going on holiday?

(Around 10 minutes. The teacher walks around the class and helps students when necessary).

[Listening exercise: tapescript]

A

I work on Saturdays and in the school holidays. Saturdays are busy because that's when everyone goes shopping. Our shop sells clothes and accessories for men, women and children. I work in the children's department. It can be crazy sometimes, but it's fun.

B

I work during my summer holidays when I'm not at university. Oxford has thousands of tourists in the summer, so it's easy **to find a job as a** tour guide. I take tourists to visit the university colleges, and then we go down to the river. We go along the river on a boat. The tourists love the boat trip, but last summer one tourist fell in the river! **I love meeting people** from all over the world.

C

I like my job, but lots of people don't like coming to see me because they hate dentists. Sometimes it's very **hard work**, but it's great to help people when they have a problem. It's so important to look after your teeth.

D

My job is very difficult, but I like it because I love flying. I fly planes that take people to different places **on holiday**. Most of the time I fly in Europe to places like Spain, Greece and Italy. The most difficult thing about my job is when the weather is bad. Snow and thunderstorms are the worst. The best thing is **visiting different places**.

E

I work in a hospital in the city centre. It's a very big hospital. I help the doctors with the patients. I give them their medicine and look after them when they feel ill. I love my job but I don't like the uniform and sometimes I have to **work at night**.

Source: https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/elementary-a2-listening/work

Exercises for pre-intermediate level (activity that completes a lesson on holidays; for example, New English File, Pre-intermediate Level, page 17, as an alternative to *Exercise 6*: Your last holiday).[11]

(Targeted collocations: *go on holiday, stay in a hotel, start talking to someone, after a while, go for a ride, go out with someone, boat trip, at the end of the holiday, ask for a job, be in love with someone*)

Pre-task:

Step 1. The teacher tells students that they are going to read about Shirley's (a young English woman) holiday in Greece. How do they think Shirley prepares for her trip?

Brainstorming: The teacher asks students to make a list of things that need to be done weeks prior to the trip and of the things that can be done a few days before or even last-minute (work carried out in small groups, allocated time: 5 to 10 minutes).

Things to do weeks before travelling *Things to do over the last few days*

The teacher gets feedback from the students (5 minutes).

Task:

Step 1: Each group gets a pile of mixed cut-up cards. The students need to put the cards in the right order to learn about Shirley's holiday (around 10 minutes). While the students are working, the teacher writes some of the collocations that can be found in the story on the whiteboard.

Step 2: When the students have finished completing the task, the teacher checks the answers of each group and then asks students to turn over the cards and, by using the collocations on the whiteboard, to reconstruct the story in their own words (between 5 and 10 minutes).

Post-task activity:

The teacher takes away the last 6 cards and asks students (still working in groups) to give an alternative ending to the story. To make it more challenging, s/he can ask students to set a particular tone for the ending (optimistic, funny, unexpected, sad, etc.). As a last step, students read the ending they have given to the story and vote for the one that they like the most (between 10 and 15 minutes).

11 Activity based on the worksheet found in Reward Pre-intermediate Resource book.

Source: Reward Pre-intermediate Resource Pack, 6B

Figure 14. *Collocation exercise. Storytelling*

Exercises for (lower-)intermediate level; topic: travelling. The exercises can be used as an alternative to the previous worksheet, completing the lesson Unit 2A on holidays (pre-intermediate, page 17).

(Targeted collocations*: take with you, prefer doing something, reminds me of something, places I have been to, Internet access, make a journey, communicate with people, try delicious food*.)

Pre-task activity:

The exercise can be done after holiday-related expressions have been revised. The teacher gives each student a copy of the text below containing questions together with the answers (the targeted collocations are highlighted; in addition, the teacher should help students with the unknown words or expressions they are unfamiliar with) and asks students to read them and also think about the answer they would give to these questions – (individual activity, around 15 minutes).

Emily: What do you **take with you** when you go travelling?

Irene: I always take my camera as well as well as make-up and clothes. I love taking photos when I travel. As far as shopping, I prefer paying by card. I know that some people prefer changing money before visiting another country, which is quite a good idea. I like buying local **souvenirs** because they **remind me of the places I've been to**. Having a guidebook is also essential for me. It helps me during my trip, and I make sure I don't miss anything. Sometimes I bring my laptop with me because I can find information online, and **Internet access** is really important when travelling. You can check hotels and book tickets as well. Electronic devices are definitely a must.

Emily: Do you usually travel with your family or your friends?

Irene: Most of the time I travel with my family, but sometimes I travel with friends.

Emily: What is the largest **journey you've ever made**?

Irene: I usually travel for about two weeks, sometimes even one. I've been to Canada, France and Spain, and I spent two weeks in each country.

Emily: What is the best place you've been to?

Irene: Definitely Europe. I love France and Spain. I hope to have the opportunity to visit other European countries in the future.

[..]

Emily: When you travel, how do you spend your time?

Irene: My husband and I have different interests. I **prefer going** to cities with long history, magnificent architecture, and I also enjoy visiting museums, whereas my husband and my son prefer places with natural beauty. Or they go to beaches with beautiful sea views. They can lie on the beach all day long. They never go anywhere else. Sometimes we go to beaches in Thailand. For

me, it's a terrible thing. Why would someone stay at the seaside all day long? It's so boring. You can go to other places, **communicate with local people** and **try delicious food**. I like to explore the city I go to, whereas my husband and my son only want to relax. They like sunbathing and sitting around doing nothing.

(Source: https://www.yourenglishsuccesstoday.com/english-language-blog/archives/08-2017)

Task:

Students work in small groups (3 to 4 students) and compare the answers they have given (e.g.: Would they take the same things with them? Do they always buy souvenirs? The longest journey they have made, what they prefer doing when on holiday, etc.) – around 10 minutes.

Post-task activity (optional):

The students give feedback to the teacher about the similarities and differences they have found in the group with regard to the answers (between 5 and 10 minutes).

Exercises for intermediate level; topic: money (based on the lesson found in Unit 2A, *New English File, Intermediate*, page 22)

(Targeted collocations: *give up your job, set up a (swapping) circle, give away (your money/your clothes), throw away a card, in return for doing something, give something in return, apart from something*.)

Pre-task activity:

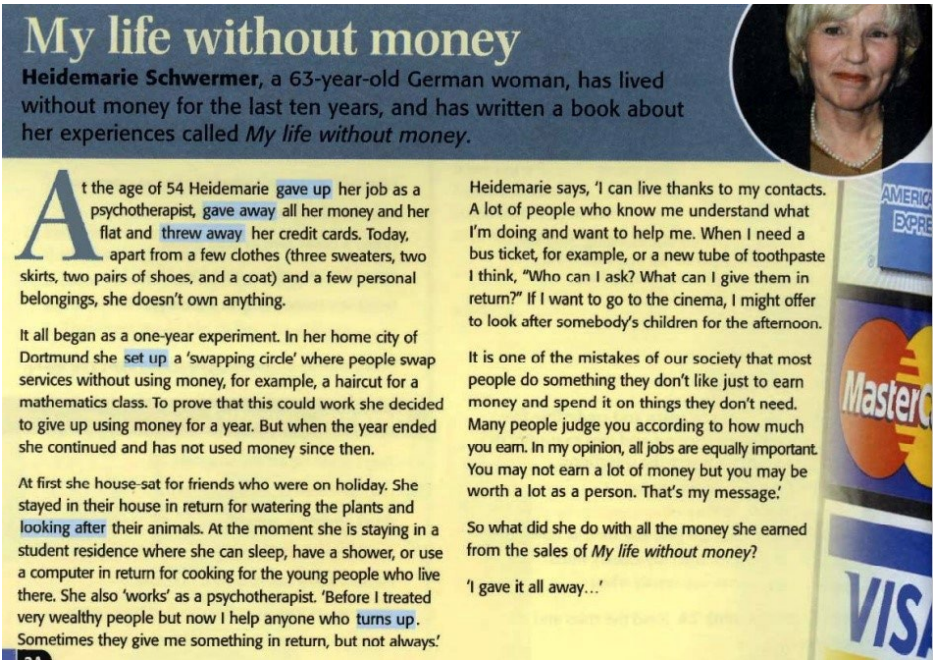
The pre-task activity is based on *Exercise 4* found in the book (page 22), which contains statements about possible attitudes to money and also introduces a text on living without money.

Step 1: Students put these statements in order of importance (on a scale from 1 to 3, where 1 – not important, 2 – somewhat important, 3 – very important) and briefly motivate their choice (the statements are: *All I want is enough money to enjoy life. / Money is very important to me. I would like to earn as much as possible. / I would be happy to live with less money and fewer possessions*.). The teacher then gets feedback from students (individual activity followed by a whole-class activity; allocated time: 5 to 10 minutes).

Step 2: The teacher asks students to look at the title of the text (*My life without money*) and the short introduction to the text (*Heidemarie Schwarmer, a 63-year-old woman, has lived without money for the last ten years, and has written a book about her experiences called* My life without money) and then try to guess how the woman in question could have managed to survive without money. What possible ways of getting by without money can they think of (if any)? (pair work, around 10 minutes).

Task

Step 1: Students read the text. Did they guess how Heidemarie got by without money? (5 minutes).



My life without money

Heidemarie Schwermer, a 63-year-old German woman, has lived without money for the last ten years, and has written a book about her experiences called *My life without money*.

At the age of 54 Heidemarie gave up her job as a psychotherapist, gave away all her money and her flat and threw away her credit cards. Today, apart from a few clothes (three sweaters, two skirts, two pairs of shoes, and a coat) and a few personal belongings, she doesn't own anything.

It all began as a one-year experiment. In her home city of Dortmund she set up a 'swapping circle' where people swap services without using money, for example, a haircut for a mathematics class. To prove that this could work she decided to give up using money for a year. But when the year ended she continued and has not used money since then.

At first she house-sat for friends who were on holiday. She stayed in their house in return for watering the plants and looking after their animals. At the moment she is staying in a student residence where she can sleep, have a shower, or use a computer in return for cooking for the young people who live there. She also 'works' as a psychotherapist. 'Before I treated very wealthy people but now I help anyone who turns up. Sometimes they give me something in return, but not always.'

Heidemarie says, 'I can live thanks to my contacts. A lot of people who know me understand what I'm doing and want to help me. When I need a bus ticket, for example, or a new tube of toothpaste I think, "Who can I ask? What can I give them in return?" If I want to go to the cinema, I might offer to look after somebody's children for the afternoon.

It is one of the mistakes of our society that most people do something they don't like just to earn money and spend it on things they don't need. Many people judge you according to how much you earn. In my opinion, all jobs are equally important. You may not earn a lot of money but you may be worth a lot as a person. That's my message.'

So what did she do with all the money she earned from the sales of *My life without money*?

'I gave it all away…'

Source: New English File, Intermediate, p. 22

Figure 15. *Collocation exercise based on a text*

Step 2: After having read the text, the students do the matching activity found in the book (matching the highlighted phrasal verbs with their definitions). It must be noted at this point that although the text is an interesting read, it is rather unfortunate that the authors decided to highlight only the phrasal verbs without their context. The students will have no problem matching them with the definitions; nevertheless, they might have a hard time remembering the expressions due to the mere focus on the phrasal verbs. Therefore, in this case, it would be advisable that the teacher write the entire constructions on the whiteboard (*give up her job*, *gave away all her money*) (between 5 and 10 minutes).

Step 3: The teacher introduces some other useful collocations found in the text, such as *apart from a few clothes (something)*, *in return for*, *give something in return*, and asks students to complete them with the information found in the text. Was Heidemarie right in her actions? – whole-class activity, between 5 and 10 minutes.

Post-task:

In addition to the matching exercise, there is also a comprehension check included in the book; the teacher can choose to skip this exercise and do an alternative exercise instead: a possible activity could be having students complete the following sentences with their own ideas individually and then discuss them with their colleagues (pair work) – 10 to 15 minutes.

– I would give up my job if.……
– Throwing away a credit card is……..
– Setting up a swapping circle is a good/bad idea because……
– Giving things away is……..

Exercises for upper-intermediate level; topic: reporting verbs, *New English File Upper-Intermediate*, pages 76–77.

(Targeted collocations: *reporting verbs and their colligation patterns, e.g. agree/refuse to do something, persuade/convince someone (not) to do something, blame somebody for something, accuse somebody of something, insist on something, apologize for something*, etc.)

The exercises are based on the exercises found in Unit 5C and are completed with additional ideas.

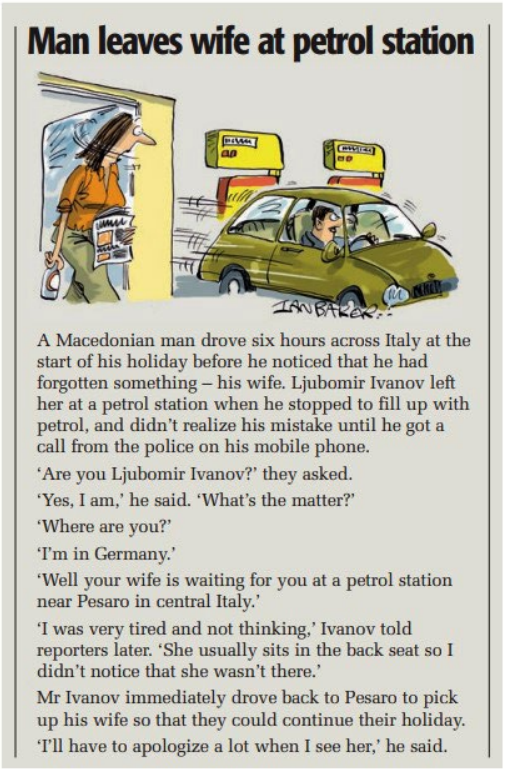
Pre-task activity:

Step 1: Students read the title of the text and make guesses about the most possible causes of this incident (e.g. the couple had a fight).

Step 2: After reading the text, students evaluate the mood the story evokes (funny, rather sad, unlikely to happen, etc.) and what it says about the relationship dynamic between the couple (whole-class activity, allocated time: 5 to 10 minutes).

Step 3: Students are asked to imagine the situation when the couple finally meet. They are given cards (previously prepared by the teacher) describing the man's and the wife's point of view of the situation. What differences can they find between the narratives, and whose viewpoint can they more relate to?

(working in pairs or, in case of uneven number, in small groups of 3) – around 10 minutes.



Man leaves wife at petrol station

A Macedonian man drove six hours across Italy at the start of his holiday before he noticed that he had forgotten something – his wife. Ljubomir Ivanov left her at a petrol station when he stopped to fill up with petrol, and didn't realize his mistake until he got a call from the police on his mobile phone.

'Are you Ljubomir Ivanov?' they asked.

'Yes, I am,' he said. 'What's the matter?'

'Where are you?'

'I'm in Germany.'

'Well your wife is waiting for you at a petrol station near Pesaro in central Italy.'

'I was very tired and not thinking,' Ivanov told reporters later. 'She usually sits in the back seat so I didn't notice that she wasn't there.'

Mr Ivanov immediately drove back to Pesaro to pick up his wife so that they could continue their holiday.

'I'll have to apologize a lot when I see her,' he said.

Source. New English File Upper-Intermediate, p. 76

Figure 16. *Collocation exercise based on a text*

The cards handed out by the teacher:

How the woman sees the situation:

When Ljubomir arrived, he started to apologize for his behaviour and said he regretted having me treated this way, but I didn't believe one word. I told him to be quiet and refused to talk to him on our way back. I mean, how can you leave your wife alone in a foreign country? This is unfathomable to me, and I really felt I was going to explode. I told him to stop acting so recklessly and threatened to divorce him, should something like this happen again.

How the man sees the situation:

My wife was a bit upset and blamed me for having left her behind. I kept asking her to calm down and not to be angry with me, but she just wouldn't listen. I tried to convince her to see things in a positive light, but she refused to talk to me and even accused me of being irresponsible. She wanted me

to promise not to do something like this again, and she even threatened to divorce me. She is right, of course, for being upset, and I admit to behaving foolishly, but if she hadn't left her phone at home, she could have called me immediately, right?

Task:

Step 1: There are four more similar stories in the book. Students read the texts and try to guess which one is an invented story and why. Then they order the stories with respect to their humorousness (1 being the funniest, 4 the least funny). The teacher gets feedback from the students (activity carried out in pairs – allocated time: 5 to 10 minutes).

Step 2: Students do *Exercise d)* (page 76) in the book. The exercise is story-related, the task being to match sentence halves (utterances) with the people who said them and then underline parts in the text where the ideas are reported (in pairs – 10 minutes).

Step 3: Students (still working in pairs) decide whether they find the behaviour of the people in the story acceptable (the football team threatening to sue the neighbour, the neighbour refusing to give the ball back, etc.), and under what circumstances their actions would be justified (if at all) – around 10 minutes.

Post-task activity:

Step 1: As a reinforcement activity, students read the summary section on reporting verbs (5C, page 140) and then do *exercises a) and b)* on page 141).

Step 2: To consolidate the knowledge of reporting verb constructions, students play the Reporting Verbs Game in small groups (around 20 minutes, as an alternative to *Exercise 2c*, page 77).

Objective of the game: Reporting the sentence found in a specific square by using structures containing a reporting verb. One of the students rolls the die and then moves the number of squares the die shows; s/he can only stay in that specific square if the sentence is properly paraphrased. Depending on how well students are acquainted with this type of exercise (paraphrasing), it is advisable that the teacher give a few examples beforehand to illustrate the idea.

REPORTING VERBS GAME

Throw the dice. Read the sentence in the square you land on and report it using a REPORTING VERB.

START	1. You did it! You took the last cookie from the cookie jar!	2. You did really well in the test. I'm proud of you, son.	3. You'd better not go there. It's dangerous.	4. I'll do it first thing tomorrow.
5. You really should see a doctor. It might be something serious.	6. GO BACK TO SQUARE 1..	7. Watch your mouth, dude. I will not be spoken to like that!.	8. Why don't we go to the movies?	9. I really must leave now.
10. I won't go in there. I hate caves.	11. You've got the wrong guy. I didn't kill her!	12. MOVE TO SQUARE 15.	13. Please, please, teacher, don't tell my mom!	14. Can't you learn anything, man? You've made a terrible mistake. Again.
15. I'm sorry, I wasn't listening.	16. Say that again and I'll shoot you!	17. Will you please, put the kettle on, hon?	18. Let me carry those bags for you, ma'am.	19. Yes, I did it. It was me who took the money.
20. Jones might be our guy. He was at the murder scene.	21. You really must read the Adrian Mole series. It's hilarious.	22. It's all your fault! *You* wanted us to go there!	23. Yeah, you are totally right. Let's stay in tonight.	24. GO BACK TO SQUARE 20.
25. What took you so long? I've been waiting for an hour!	26. MOVE TO SQUARE 30	27. Good job, son! I knew you'd pass the test this time.	28. Will you have dinner with me tonight?	29. Don't forget to feed the dog before you leave.
30. Hey, watch out! It's slippery in here. I've just mopped the floor.	31. Kate, will you marry me?	32. GO BACK TO SQUARE 17.	33. You've got goose bumps. Shall I get you a blanket?	FINISH

Source: https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/grammar/reported-speech/reporting-verbs-game/62063

Figure 17. *Collocation exercise. Board game*

Finally, the teacher gives a copy of the suggested answers to students and asks them to compare the suggestions with their own answers (5 to 10 minutes).

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

1. She accused him of taking the last cookie from the cookie jar.
2. Mom praised me for doing well in my maths test.
3. They advised/warned me not to go there.

4. He promised to do it next thing tomorrow.
5. She advised me/tried to persuade me to see a doctor.
6. ……..
7. She objected to being spoken to like that.
8. He suggested going to the movies.
9. She insisted on leaving.
10. She refused to go inside the cave.
11. He denied killing her.
12. ……..
13. The pupil begged the teacher not to tell his mom.
14. He criticized his friend for making the same mistake again.
15. He apologized for not listening to the teacher.
16. The robber threatened to shoot me.
17. I asked my husband to put the kettle on.
18. He offered to carry some heavy bags for his elderly neighbour.
19. She admitted to taking the money.
20. The detective assumed/suspected that Mr Jones was the murderer.
21. Our English teacher recommended the Adrian Mole series to us.
22. He blamed his girlfriend for the accident.
23. He agreed to stay in that night.
24. ……
25. She complained about her boyfriend arriving late.
26. ……
27. Dad congratulated me on passing my driving test.
28. He invited me to dinner tonight.
29. Mom reminded me to feed the dog.
30. She warned me about the floor being slippery.
31. Kate's boyfriend proposed to her.
32. ……..
33. He offered to get me a blanket.

Source: https://en.islcollective.com/english-esl-worksheets/grammar/reported-speech/reporting-verbs-game/62063

Worksheet for business English classes

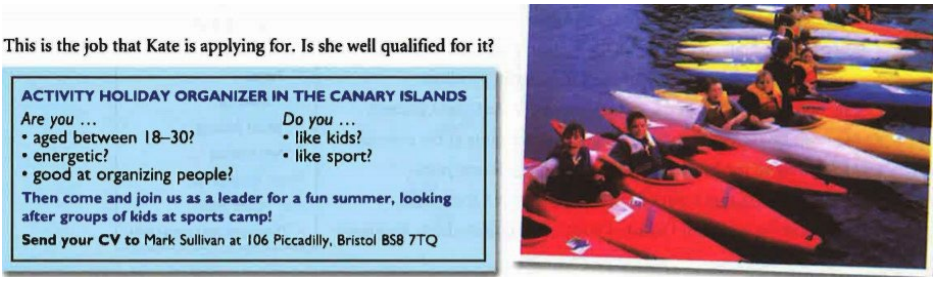
Intermediate and upper-intermediate levels

The worksheet contains an application letter and focuses on the differences between formal and informal language on the basis of an application letter (worksheet downloaded from: https://andresteaching.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/cv.pdf).

(Targeted collocations: *I find it easy to…*, *I am interested in…*, *have a certain understanding of…*, *I look forward to… + -ing, organizing a variety of activities*, *establish a working relationship, please find enclosed, yours sincerely*.)

Pre-task activity:

Students read the job description found below. Would they be interested in applying? What qualities would be important for this position? (Whole-class discussion, allocated time: between 5 and 10 minutes).



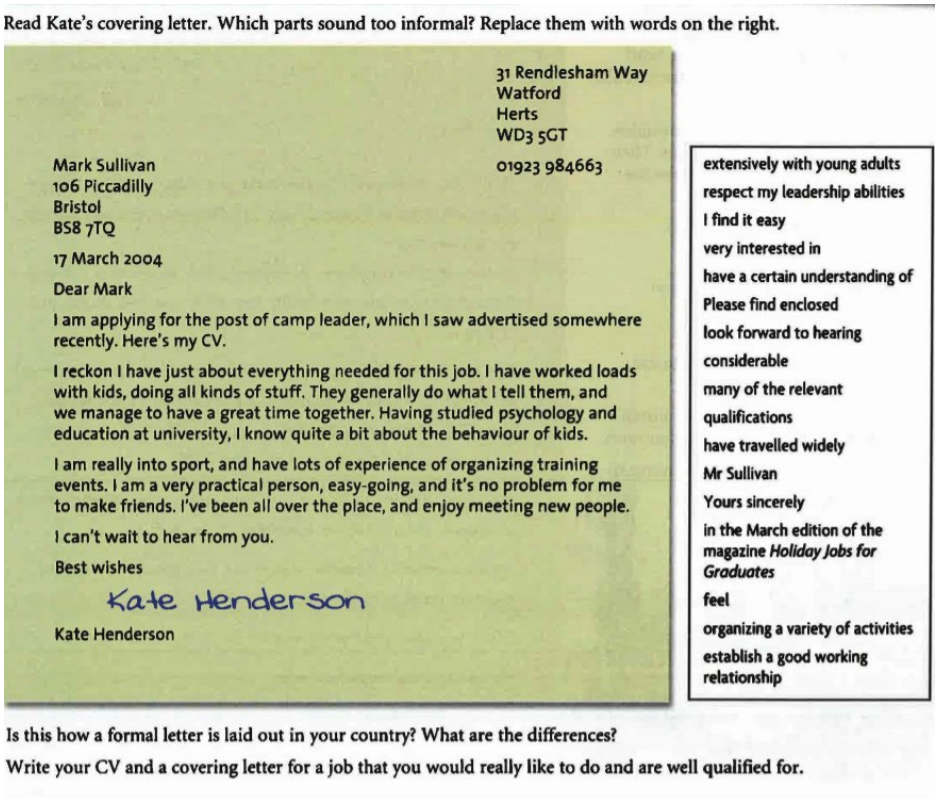
Source: https://andresteaching.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/cv.pdf

Figure 18. *Collocation exercise based on an advert*

Task:

Step 1: Students work in pairs. After reading Kate's letter, they decide whether it meets the requirements of a formal letter in terms of layout and register. After the activity, the teacher gets feedback from students. Overall activity: around 10 minutes.

Step 2: As a follow-up, students replace the expressions they consider as inadequate with the phrases given on the right-hand side – corresponding formal phrases to the informal expressions found in the letter (between 10 and 15 minutes).



Source: https://andresteaching.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/cv.pdf

Figure 19. *Collocation exercise based on a text*

Post-task activity:

Step 1: The teacher asks students to underline the expressions they would use in an application letter and then write true sentences for themselves (e.g. *I find it easy to…*, *I am interested in…*, *have a certain understanding of…*, *I look forward to…* + *-ing, organizing a variety of activities…*) (students working on their own, allocated time – around 10 minutes).

Step 2: Students work in small groups of three or four. They read their ideas to each other and react to them by saying *me, too / me, neither* and adding one additional comment (e.g. I am interested in horses. / Me, too. I believe, they are beautiful animals) (around 10 minutes).

Step 3: Students look up samples of application letters on the Internet and make a list of the most common expressions they find (for individual practice at home).

Worksheet for business English classes

Upper-intermediate level

The worksheet contains collocations that are suitable for business English classes with more advanced language skills. Based on the worksheet found in the book *Using Collocations for Natural English*, it is mostly the order of the exercises that has been changed in order to ensure that students have enough input to notice collocations in their entirety and also because starting the exercises with a topic-related discussion (based on the questionnaire below) could be more interesting for them.

(Targeted collocations: *accomplish a task, meet deadlines, land a job, achieve an ambition, produce results, clinch a deal, acquire reputation for… + -ing, earn the respect of.*)

Pre-task activity:

In order to make students more familiar with the topic, some introductory questions are necessary, e.g. Is motivation important in everyday life? Can you think of activities that get you motivated in your work? (whole-class discussion, 5–10 minutes).

Task:

Step 1: Students read the questions below and think of possible answers. (In case there are some doubts, the teacher helps students to guess the meaning of the indented constructions (e.g. by explaining, giving a synonym, or in some cases even translating them – around 10 minutes).

Exercise. Questionnaire. **How motivated are you?**

1. Do you always *accomplish a task* once you have started it?

a. Yes, of course.
b. I usually try to finish what I've started.
c. To be honest, I'm not great at finishing off things.

2. How important is it for you to *meet deadlines*?

a. Absolutely essential.
b. It is important, but you have to recognize that sometimes it just isn't possible.
c. I don't think I've met a deadline in my life.

3. To *land your dream job*, what would you do?

a. Anything. My career is everything to me.
b. Send my CV to the relevant company, speak to the right people – you know, the usual things.
c. Dream job – what are you talking about?

4. Do you have any *ambitions that you want to achieve*?

a. Too many to tell.

b. Yes, like most people, I have career ambitions.

c. I've got one. To work as little as possible.

5. If something that you are trying to achieve does not immediately *produce results*, how do you react?

a. I work on it until I get the results I want.

b. I am a bit discouraged, but I keep trying.

c. Oh, forget it – life is too short!

6. If by the end of a meeting, you had *failed to clinch a deal*, how would you feel?

a. Me, fail to 'clinch a deal'? The word 'fail' isn't in my vocabulary.

b. Pretty disappointed – I'd ask myself where I'd gone wrong.

c. Whatever! That's life, isn't it? You win some, you lose some.

7. Have you *acquired a reputation for being a hard worker*?

a. Yes, certainly.

b. Well, I hope so.

c. Me, a hard worker? Are you joking?

8. Have you personally *earned the respect* of your colleagues/classmates?

a. By working hard and producing results. It's the only way.

b. By doing my best and treating other people with respect.

c. Don't ask me!

Step 2: Students work in pairs and compare their answers. How similar/different are they? (around 10 minutes).

Step 3: Students do *Exercise 2*. They need to read the magazine article and then rearrange the paragraphs in order to make the conversations meaningful (around 5 minutes). Did the women have a hard time reaching success and could students imagine themselves doing the same things in order to become successful? (5 to 10 minutes).

THIS MONTH'S **CARLA MAGAZINE** HAS A FEATURE ON STARTING OUT IN THE WORLD OF WORK. THREE WOMEN HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF STARTING A CAREER.

1 GINNIE

a I didn't mind the hard work because at last I had **achieved** my **ambition**.

b Finally, in 2004, I **landed** a **job** as a fashion editor for a national newspaper.

c It was the job of my dreams and I worked hard, sometimes staying in the office till midnight to write a piece if I had to **meet** a **deadline**.

d I'd been trying to get into fashion journalism for a while, sending off articles to magazines and newspapers and applying for permanent positions.

2 RIFAT

a Today, thirteen years later, I have my own dental practice and I employ eight people.

b This willingness to work long hours soon **earned** me the **respect** of my colleagues and I was quickly promoted.

c I got my first job in a dental practice when I was twenty-six.

d I was the youngest person there but I quickly **acquired** a **reputation** for being hard-working, putting in a ten- or eleven-hour day if that was what was needed to **accomplish** a **task**.

3 KATE

a I would shout and bully people to get what I wanted.

b When I got my first job in a bank, it was a very male-dominated profession.

c I decided that I would be as competitive and as aggressive as my male colleagues, so I went into every meeting determined to **clinch** the **deal**.

d This sort of aggressive, typically male behaviour **produced results** and today I earn a six-figure salary.

Source: Using Collocations for Natural English, pp. 28–29

Figure 20. *Collocation exercise based on a text*

Post-task activity:

Matching sentence halves (individual work, allocated time: between 5 and 10 minutes).

Exercise. Match the sentence halves

1. After three days of negotiations, he	a. in a law company.
2. He's just **landed a top job**	b. working hard and effectively
3. She finally **achieved her ambition** to	c. the talks fail to **produce results**.
4. We will have to explore other options if	d. become a doctor.
5. She **acquired a reputation** as	e. finally **clinched the deal.**
6. He **earned his boss's respect** by	f. a very good businesswoman.
7. We have to **meet this deadline** or	g. **accomplish a task**.
8. I get a sense of satisfaction when I	h. the whole project will fail.

Worksheet for translation classes

The goal of the activity is to make students aware of the importance of collocations. As such, no specific collocations are targeted (the teacher can choose any collocation s/he wants for the activity).

Pre-task activity:

Students work in small groups (3 to 4 students) and reflect on the following:

– What are the prerequisites of a good translation, and what are the most important steps involved in the translation process (between 10 to 15 minutes)?

At the end of the activity, the teacher gets feedback from students and then hands out the following text (text A) (one for each student) containing ten tips for novice translators.

Task:

Step 1: Students read the text and compare their answers with the tips found in the text. Which steps of the translating process should a novice translator never skip and why? (individual work, around 15 minutes).

Step 2: Students work in pairs and decide on the most useful translation tips (between 5 and 10 minutes).

Step 3: The teacher gives part of the text to the students (text B), with collocations taken out (either in their entirety or the collocates). S/he asks students to look at the text and fill in the gaps with possible words or word combinations, without looking at the original text; all variants that are correct should be accepted (students working in pairs – allocated time: around 10 minutes).

Text A:

Ten Tips for Translators: Holly Mikkelson

a. Before you begin translating a text, read it all the way through, without thinking about how to translate it into the target language, and get a general sense of what it's all about, what the author's perspective is, and how best to convey that message to a readership in the target language. If the text you're going to translate is longer than 10 pages, just a quick scan will do, as long as you can determine the writing style, the topic(s) covered, and the author's point of view. This first step should be done immediately after you receive the text, because you may discover that something is missing. In that case, you need to notify the client right away.

b. Once you've determined the text type (birth certificate, business report, information brochure, advertisement, speech, short story, etc.), find parallel texts in your target language. Thus, if I'm going to translate a lease from Spanish to English, I'll find English leases on the Internet and compare the terms and phrases used. They won't all be perfect matches, of course, but after you've read

enough documents of a similar type in your language pair, you detect patterns of usage in each language.

c. Assemble the printed and online references you need for the document in question – always including a good monolingual dictionary and thesaurus in each language, a comprehensive bilingual dictionary, corpora in both languages, and usage guides in your target language – in addition to any specialized dictionaries or glossaries you own or have access to on the Internet. Begin a new glossary in a spreadsheet program such as Microsoft Excel so that you can enter new terms as you encounter them in the translation. Include the source where you found the translation of the term (dictionary, website, etc.) for future reference.

d. Begin your draft translation, without being too concerned about style at this point. Name the file according to the client's instructions, if any, or give the file a distinct name so you can find it easily later on and won't confuse the translation with the source text ("translation.docx" is not a good name to give a file!). Try to have large blocks of time available for translation so that you don't lose continuity. It's important to avoid distractions such as emails or phone calls while you're working. If you have a long translation that you must work on for several days or even weeks, before you begin each day's work, review what you've already translated so that you'll get back into the flow.

e. After you've finished your first draft, no matter how long or short the document is, set it aside for at least an hour (take a lunch break, switch to another task such as reading emails, or go for a walk). Leaving it overnight is even better. After that hiatus, read your draft again, without looking at the source text, and imagine that you are the end-user of the translation who is seeing it for the first time. Is it clearly written? Does it make sense? Does it flow smoothly (if applicable – obviously, if it's an official form like a birth certificate, the fluency of the prose will not be a consideration). Are the spelling and punctuation correct?

f. Proofread the text one more time to make sure you haven't omitted a word, misspelled something (your spell checker may not catch everything), or made some other mechanical error. Reading the text backwards is a good way to catch mechanical errors, because your brain won't fill in missing words or overlook repetitions of the same word (e.g. *the* at the end of a line, followed by another *the* at the beginning of the next line).

g. After you've made any necessary corrections to the target language text, go back to the source text and check for accuracy and completeness, sentence by sentence. This is a critical step, because you may have skipped an entire paragraph in your draft translation, or transposed some digits in a figure, or omitted a negative and turned a *no* into a *yes*.

h. If it is at all feasible, within the constraints of today's I-need-it-yesterday deadlines, set the translation aside and read it one more time before delivering

it to the client. It's surprising how often major errors jump off the page as you give a translation a final read just before turning it in.

i. After you've delivered the completed product, make up an invoice for your client. Many translators mistakenly put off invoicing because it's such a tedious task, but if you let too much time go by, you may forget important details and delay payment. Be sure to follow the client's instructions about including identification information such as purchase order or job numbers.

(*Source: https://atasavvynewcomer.org/2013/09/03/ten-tips-for-translators/*)

Text B.

Before you begin translating a text, read it _____, without thinking about how to translate it into the target language, and get _____ of what it's all about, what the author's perspective is, and how best to _____ that message to a readership in the target language. If the text you're going to translate is longer than 10 pages, just a quick scan will do, as long as you can determine the writing style, the topic(s) covered, and the author's point of view. This first step should be done immediately after you receive the text, because you may discover that something is missing. In that case, you need to notify the client right away.

b. Once you've determined the text type (birth certificate, business report, information brochure, advertisement, speech, short story, etc.), find _____ in your _____language. Thus, if I'm going to translate a lease from Spanish to English, I'll find English leases on the Internet and compare the terms and phrases used. They won't all be _____, of course, but after you've read enough documents of a similar type in your language pair, you _____ in each language.

Post-task activity:

Students think of synonyms for some given constructions (e.g. *get a general sense of something* – to find out, to discover, get an idea of how to…). The teacher encourages students to use various resources (dictionaries, electronic databases, and corpora) that they consider useful during the activity (pair work, allocated time: around 10 minutes).

Alternatively, the teacher can give the definition of a collocation and then ask students to do an active reading and try to find them in the text (also indicating in which paragraphs they can be found).

List of figures

List of tables

KIVONAT

A kollokációk tanítása. Integrált megközelítés

Ez a könyv az angol kollokációk témakörére irányul, különös tekintettel a kollokációk tanításának kérdésére. Figyelembe véve, hogy nem létezik olyan elméleti megközelítés, amely garantálná a kollokációk elsajátítását, a könyv egy olyan megközelítést kínál, amely két elméleti keret, a feladatközpontú nyelvtanítás (Ellis 2003), valamint a lexikai megközelítés (Lewis 1993) elemeit ötvözi. Támpontokat ad arra vonatkozóan, hogy tanárként mire helyezzük a hangsúlyt a szókincs és ezen belül a kollokációk tanításánál, és egyben kiemeli a technológia, valamint az internet használatának fontosságát a szókincs fejlesztésében. A kollokációk elsajátítása nemcsak az idegennyelv-órákon, hanem a fordítási gyakorlatnál is szerepet játszik, ezért a könyv hangsúlyozza a kollokációk tanításának szükségességét ezeken az órákon is, ötletekkel szolgálva a kollokációk tudatosításának fejlesztésére. A mű egyik alapgondolata, hogy a kontextus, az „input" a természetes (pl. az elektronikus korpuszok használata során) vagy a természetest imitáló nyelvi közegben nagy jelentőséggel bír a kollokációk elsajátításának folyamatában, mivel lehetőséget ad arra, hogy a nyelvtanulók és nyelvhasználók a kollokációkat tágabb nyelvi környezetben megfigyelhessék, és információkat szerezzenek a kollokációk használatáról, előfordulásuk gyakoriságáról, szemantikai tulajdonságairól (szemantikai prozódia, szemantikai preferencia). Bár a könyv elsősorban nyelvtanárokat szólít meg, a nyelvtanulók, valamint nyelvhasználók (jövendőbeli fordítók) számára is hasznos információforrás lehet.

REZUMAT

Predarea colocațiilor. O abordare integrată

Lucrarea se concentrează asupra problematicii colocațiilor, accentuând în mod special predarea lor în orele de limbi străine. Având în vedere faptul că nu există o metodologie care ar garanta însuşirea colocațiilor, cartea oferă o abordare teoretică şi practică ce îmbină elementele metodei de sarcini de lucru (Ellis 2003) cu abordarea lexicală propusă de Lewis (1993). De asemenea, oferă indicii cu privire la felul în care se pot preda colocațiile, şi în acelaşi timp subliniază importanța tehnologiei – în special a Internetului – în dezvoltarea vocabularului. Predarea colocațiilor este importantă nu numai în cadrul orelor de limbi străine dar şi în practici de traducere, motiv pentru care se recomandă abordarea colocațiilor şi în aceste cursuri, cartea oferind idei practice pentru conştientizarea colocațiilor în cadrul proceselor de traducere. Volumul porneşte de la ideea că furnizarea „inputului", a contextului mai larg al colocațiilor, joacă un rol important în procesul de însuşire a acestor unități frazeologice deoarece permite studenților să observe limba într-un context natural şi să obțină informații despre folosirea şi frecvența colocațiilor, şi nu în ultimul rând asupra proprietăților lor semantice (prozodie semantică, preferența semantică). Cartea se adresează în primul rând cadrelor didactice care predau limbi străine, dar conține şi informații care pot fi considerate utile de către studenții interesați de limbi străine şi de viitorii traducători.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Although in the last few decades emphasis has been laid on teaching vocabulary in foreign language classes, the importance of collocations often remains overlooked. Collocational awareness as a significant skill for language learners and language users (translators) alike can be acquired and developed at all levels provided enough attention is given to these linguistic constructions. While no perfect method exists that would guarantee the successful acquisition of collocations, it is believed that an integrated approach that combines various teaching methods, along with widely applicable teaching principles and strategies (Kumaravadivelu 2003), can yield satisfactory results. The theoretical considerations of the *lexical approach* (Lewis 1993, 2000) and also that of the *task-based approach* (Ellis 2003) provide useful teaching objectives, among which we can find the importance of teaching collocations and language chunks, noticing (giving students enough input so that they can observe the use of collocations in context), fostering students' problem-solving skills and at the same time actively drawing their attention to collocations, providing contexts in which students can see collocations in their entirety, etc. Following the guidelines outlined in these approaches to a certain extent, the book offers a possible alternative to teaching collocations, also including exercises that can be used in EFL, ESP (business English), and translation classes.

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