

Collocations Used in English for Business Communication

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Abstract

This article aims to illustrate and cast light on the roles, importance, and types of English collocations and to investigate the use of collocations in the business context. In this regard, collocations used in Advertisements, Business News, Statistical Graphs, Invitation Cards, Company Profiles, Business Letters, Meetings, Negotiating, and Travel Arrangements are examined. The writer discusses how English Collocations can be taught in the classroom and presents various kinds of related exercises for those interested in this topic to enhance and improve their learning and teaching skills. In addition, some practical recommendations concerning effective language pedagogy as well as further research studies are provided.

Keyword: Collocation

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มุ่งอธิบายและแสดงให้เห็นถึงบทบาท ความสำคัญ และประเภทของคำปรากฏร่วมจำเพาะในภาษาอังกฤษ และมุ่งศึกษาการใช้คำปรากฏร่วมจำเพาะในบริบททางธุรกิจ โดยมุ่งเน้นคำปรากฏร่วมจำเพาะในงานโฆษณา ข่าวธุรกิจ แผนภูมิรูปภาพทางสถิติ บัตรเชิญ การแนะนำบริษัท จดหมายธุรกิจ การประชุม การเจรจาต่อรอง และการจัดการการท่องเที่ยว ผู้เขียนบทความ

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ได้อภิปรายการสอนคำปรากฏร่วมจำเพาะในชั้นเรียน พร้อมทั้งเสนอแบบฝึกหัดรูปแบบต่างๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง สำหรับบุคคลผู้สนใจหัวข้อนี้ในการส่งเสริมและพัฒนาทักษะการเรียนรู้และการสอน นอกจากนี้ยังได้เสนอแนวทางที่เหมาะสมเพื่อการเรียนการสอนภาษาที่สัมฤทธิ์ผล รวมถึงการนำไปขยายผลในแง่ของการวิจัย

คำสำคัญ: คำปรากฏร่วมจำเพาะ

1. Introduction

One of the language features in English that learners inevitably encounter is the use of collocations. Despite the fact that English collocations are widely used in both communicative and academic context, research studies on collocations have not been conducted to a great extent by English educators, instructors, and learners in Thailand.

As a result, the author, as an English instructor, intends to present this topic based on an analysis of the roles of English collocations when used in the business context.

2. Roles of Collocations

According to Koya (2005), the importance of collocation is advocated by many linguists and researchers:

- 1) *Language knowledge is collocational knowledge.*

According to Ellis (2001), language knowledge and language use can be explained by the storage of chunks in long-term memory and the experience of how frequently chunks occur without the need to mention underlying rules. In other words, if not single words but chunks containing important words can be seen many times and they can be stored in long-term memory, language reception and language production are made more effective.

2) *All fluent and appropriate language use requires collocational knowledge.*

Pawley and Syder (1983) state that the explanation of how language users produce native-like sentences and use the language fluently can be offered by the hypothesis that they store a number of *lexicalized* or *institutionalized* sentence stems which range on a scale from completely fixed expressions through collocations producing useful basic chunks in addition to knowing the rules of the language.

3) *Many words are used in a limited set of collocations and knowing these is part of what is involved in knowing the words.*

Sinclair (1991) mentions the two models of how words occur in a text are described as *the open-choice principle* and *idiom principle*. While *the open-choice principle* is a model in which language text can be seen as a series of choices and only grammar limits choices, *the idiom principle* is a mode in which the choice of words and register are memorized as partly pre-constructed sequences. The latter is widely used as a justification for the study of chunks.

4) *Teaching phrase-patterns help learners' vocabulary expansion*

Twaddell (1973) suggests that it is important to teach phrase-patterns from early stages of L2 learning to expand learners' vocabulary. He explains that vocabulary expansion will occur from the intermediate stages of L2 learning if "the most habitual parts of language use" such as phrase-patterns and sentence patterns are "practiced and established as early as possible" (Twaddell, 1973, p. 63). In other words, new vocabulary can be adapted into the L2 patterns after the habits have been formed.

(cited in Koya, 2005, pp. 85-88)

3. Types of Collocations

There are many different types of collocations. Here are some examples.

1. Adjectives and Nouns: *Unemployment is **major problem** for the government at the moment.*

2. Nouns and Verbs: *The **economy boomed** in the 1990s.*

3. Nouns and Nouns: *Every parent feel a **sense of pride** when their child dose well or wins something.*

4. Verbs and Expressions with Prepositions: *I was **filled with horror** when I read the newspaper report of the explosion.*

5. Verbs and Adverbs: *I would **strongly recommend** that you learn a foreign language.*

6. Adverbs and Adjectives: *I **am fully aware** that there are serious problems.*

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 12)

According to Koya (2005), collocations are divided into two categories: Grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. The former consists of a dominant word such as noun, adjective, and verb and a preposition or a grammatical construction. The latter, on the other hand, does not contain any preposition or grammatical construction. Each categorization has been divided into sub-categorization as follows:

1) Grammatical collocations

Combination	Example
G1 noun + preposition	<i>blockade against, apathy towards</i>
G2 noun + to infinitive	<i>It was a pleasure to do it.</i>
G3 noun + that clause	<i>He took an oath that he would do his duty.</i>
G4 preposition + noun	<i>by accident, in advance</i>
G5 adjective + preposition	<i>be angry at, be fond of</i>
G6 predicate adjective + to infinitive	<i>It was necessary to work.</i>

G7 adjective + that clause	<i>It was nice that he was able to come home for the holidays.</i>
G8 consists of 19 English verbs	<i>send</i> (the dative movement transformation verb) (cited in Koya, 2005, p. 69)

2) Lexical collocations

Combination	Example
L1 verb + noun	<i>compose music, wind a watch</i>
L2 verb + noun (eradication and/or nullification and a noun)	<i>reject an appeal, reverse a decision</i>
L3 adjective + noun	<i>strong tea, a sweeping generalization</i>
L4 noun + verb	<i>bees buzz, bombs explode</i>
L5 noun + noun	<i>a bit of advice, a pack of dogs</i>
L6 adverb + adjective	<i>deeply absorbed, strictly accurate</i>
L7 verb + adverb	<i>affect deeply, amuse thoroughly</i> (cited in Koya, 2005, p. 70)

Additionally, 19 categories of collocations are also presented by Koya (2005):

Combination	Example
1 noun phrase	<i>the big question, evening service</i>
2 nominal head + a related structure	<i>word way out, day off</i>
3 verb + object	<i>loved him, receive attention</i>
4 verb + related structure word(s)	<i>partakes of, paid for by</i>
5 verb + verb(s)	<i>will come, let go</i>
6 to + infinitive	<i>to be, to examine</i>
7 verb + its predicate	<i>was cold, made better</i>
8 adverbial + subordinating conjunction	<i>very young, extremely well</i>
9 adverb + subordinating conjunction	<i>now that, even though</i>
10 conjunction + adverb	<i>or else, and yet</i>
11 preposition + subordinating conjunction	<i>except that, in that</i>
12 adverb or preposition + preposition	<i>out from, from under</i>
13 full finite clause optionally followed by related structure word	<i>he said, when he was shot</i>
14 it- or there- construction + related structure word	<i>it is impossible to, it was obvious that</i>
15 noun-finite or verbless clause	<i>hands off, back straight</i>

16 as or like + NP or adverb	<i>as always, like myself</i>
17 interjections, exclamations, vocativistic expressions	<i>hey there, well now</i>
18 co-ordinated elements	<i>openly and honestly, actual or potential</i>
19 non-English expressions	<i>status quo, ad infinitum</i>

(cited in Koya, 2005, p. 72)

4. Previous Studies on Collocations

Kellerman (1979) and Lennon (1996) regard core meanings as important in collocation acquisition. Core meanings are the central and context free meanings. If the constituents of collocations have core meanings, learners are likely to comprehend and acquire them easily. On the contrary, if collocations involve constituents with peripheral meanings or delexical meanings, they are less likely to do so.

(cited in Koya 2005, p. 190)

Fairclough (2000) examines the use of the word 'new'. He looks at the collocates, which words commonly co-occur and what persuasive message they are signaling. He states,

'New' occurs 609 times in 53 speeches of Tony Blair's between 1997 and 1999 (for comparison, 'modern' occurs 89 times, 'modernise/modernisation' 87 times, and 'reform' 143 times). The most frequent collocations are *New Labour* (72 instances) and *New Deal* (70 instances)...

Political renewal is linked to national renewal in the slogan *New Labour*. Political and national renewal are linked to the 'new times' we live in – 34 instances, including also 'new era and new millennium'...

Another prominent set of meanings relates to ideas and attitudes (36 instances in all, including 'new ideas' (7 instances) 'new confidence' (4 instances), 'new sense of hope (or purpose, or urgency)' (5 instances), and there are 20 expressions referring to 'new opportunities' or 'new challenges')...

(cited in Maybin, Mercer & Hewings, 2007, p. 73)

Koya (2005) investigates influential factors for collocation acquisition, 68 items were examined and characterized in terms of six collocational

features, which have been regarded as influential factors by many researchers. The six factors are as follows: 1) collocational restriction; 2) semantic opacity; 3) L1 equivalence; 4) delexicalized verbs; 5) core meanings; 6) collocational structure (prepositions and articles).

Koya (2005) also studies collocations in five domains as the following:

1) In descriptive studies, it is Firth (1957) who first elaborated the theory of meaning in terms of syntagmatic aspects of lexis and explored the distribution of words in a text and how some occur predictably together with others. His notion of collocation has profoundly influenced his successors in Firthian studies, who further examine collocations based on his concept.

2) In semantic studies, in contrast to descriptive studies, semanticists, who have discussed lexical relations and types of meanings in terms of the paradigmatic aspect of lexis, criticize the studies of collocations by Firth and his followers as insufficient because of certain inadequacies. Then, they have attempted to investigate collocations in terms of the semantic framework and syntagmatic lexical relations under the scope of semantics.

3) In computational studies, some researchers (Biber, 1993; Noel, 1992; Renouf & Sinclair, 1991) have applied computer techniques to extract collocations automatically and to create corpora and dictionaries based on the concepts of Berry-Rogghe (1973) and Sinclair (1966). They have developed specific programs and techniques of analysis which can be used to do further collocation studies.

4) In lexicographic studies, researchers have been discussing some questions of collocations in a dictionary: Should collocations be regarded as separate dictionary entries? If so, which collocations and how many should be dealt with in the restricted space of a dictionary?

5) In pedagogical studies, Lexical Approach advocates have made a breakthrough and have put forward the challenging concept that chunks, especially collocations, are a central component in language. Based on that theory, they have sought pedagogically effective practice to enlarge learners' mental lexicon by raising learners' attention of collocational knowledge from the early stages. In short, learning collocations explicitly and autonomously is fundamental in Lexical Approach and teachers should play a significant role to support learners to organize their notebooks containing many collocations, preparing activities, reviews and exercises on collocations. Thus, Lexical Approach advocates focus on collocations in language and concrete collocational teaching methodology.

(cited in Koya 2005, pp.88-92)

According to Koya (2005), delexicalized verbs are components in a large number of multi-word expressions and they have little or no meaning outside the context of particular use. Because of the wide range of patterns into which they enter, it is often more appropriate to think of these words as part of the grammar of English, rather than just as words in the lexicon. The main delexicalized verbs are: *do, get, give, have, keep, look, make, put, take*. Caroli (1998) also examines the learning burden of collocations including lexical words (lexical collocations) and collocations including delexical words (delexical collocations), respectively.

(cited in Koya 2005, pp. 189-190)

From the review of the previous research studies, most studies mainly focus on collocations in the linguistic and grammatical dimension. However, the results of the studies can lead to further studies in other aspects. Thus, studies on collocations in ESP, particularly *English for*

Business Purposes should be considered and conducted to provide practical recommendations concerning effective language pedagogy and English studies in the Thai context.

5. Collocations in English for Business Communication

In this part, the writer focuses on the use of collocations in *Advertisements, Business News, Describing Graphs, Writing Invitation Cards, Company Profiles, Writing Business Letters, Meetings, Negotiating, and Travel Arrangements*.

5.1 Collocations in Advertisements

Example:

The new whitening revolution
Pure Vitamin C + Melanin-Block
In just one step!

Dark spots and skin pigmentation, a growing concern by many Asian women, are mainly caused by constant exposure to harsh UV rays resulting in overactive melanin production in the epidermis.

With this in mind, L'Oréal Skincare Laboratories has successfully formulated the latest breakthrough in whitening skincare treatment. White Perfect Double Action Concentrated Whitening Essence effectively targets pigmentation both the skin surface and in the epidermis.

THE UNIQUE DOUBLE CHAMBERS
 MELANN+BLOCK+LACTIS ACID+DERMOLISS CHAMBER

Melanin-Block acts directly on melanogenesis and effectively reduces melanin production by -53%.

Efficient exfoliating agents: Lactic acid and Dermoliss gently exfoliate away melanin-filled dark dead cells to recover skin tone evenness, radiance and greater transparency.

(Adapted from Maybin, Mercer & Hewings, 2007: p. 70)

From the example, the collocations found in this advertisement are as follows: *Mainly caused by, effectively reduces, and gently exfoliate*. According to McCarthy & O'Dell (2005), the words such as *mainly, effectively, gently* are called *Intensifying Adverbs*. Intensifying adverbs refer to the combination between an adverb and an adjective that can lead to the more attractive and powerful language. In this regard, it indicates the role of collocations to create persuasive language in advertising English.

The following is another example of collocations used in advertisement:

Nation
Educational
Services



Communicative English for Call Center Officers

One-day Course Outline

This course provides the participants with the use of proper English in different kinds of situations especially on the phone. It is designed for the people who provide business information and services on the phone. Theoretical and practical exercises are included.

Course Objectives

1. To *acquaint the participants* with the art of telephoning
2. To *practice the participants* with the skills in dealing with enquiries and complaints on the phone
3. To *equip the participants* with linguistic etiquette used in telephoning
4. To *enhance the participants* with the use of grammatically and semantically correct English

Course Contents

- ☐ Introduction to the Workshop
- ☐ The Art of Telephoning
 - Making phone calls
 - Receiving calls
 - Giving and taking messages
 - Dealing with names and numbers
- ☐ Providing information to the customers
- ☐ Answering general inquiries
- ☐ Dealing with complaints

Who should attend?

Operator, Admin Officer, Sales Officer, and Call Center Officer who involve in giving information, answering inquiries, taking messages, and dealing with complaints, and want to *boost their confidence* and *sharpen their communicative skills*.

Course Fee

4,900 Baht (*Certificate of Attendance provided*)

(Source: <http://www.nation-education.com/images/telephone.doc>)

From the example, the collocations found in this commercial advertising, such as *make phone calls*, *receive calls*, *give and take messages*, and *answer general inquiries* are specific collocations which are widely used for telephoning in Business English.

Based on the notion of *Advertising English*, repetition is also one language characteristic mostly found in advertisements to grab attention. The word *participant* in this advertisement is emphasized, repeated several times, and combined with several verbs as shown in the advertisement: *to acquaint / practice / equip / enhance the participants*. Such various combinations can indicate the powerful language use when English collocations are used for business purposes

Apart from this, to convince and to arouse the feeling of the readers so that they decide on this advertised course, these purposive collocations are employed: *boost their confidence* and *sharpen their communicative skills*.

5.2 Collocations in Business News

Example 1: *Oil Companies Slash Prices* (There was goods news for motorists today as pump process were lowered by the major oil companies).

Example 2: *Floods hit Central Region* (Towns and villages in the Central region were battling against floods tonight as heavy rain continued).

(McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 15)

In addition to the examples of the headlines illustrated above, McCarthy & O'Dell (2005) mention that some collocations are mainly found in newspapers. In most cases they would not normally be based in every conversation, for instance, 1) *Computer Factory To Axe Jobs (Make staff redundant)*; 2) *Airline Slashes Prices (Cuts process drastically)*; 3) *Police Crack Down on Speeding (Start dealing with it in a more severe way)*.

(McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 14)

5.3 Collocations in Business Letters

Payment Request

Sampson's Stationary

30 Silverstone Ave
Kamloops, BC
V2A 8B1
Tel:250-429-0002

February 21st, 2013

Mr. Ken Davis
Hanson's Montessori School
15 Main St.
Kamloops, BC
V2A 7B5

Our ref: #223

Dear Mr. Davis:

Outstanding Invoice

Our records show that you have an *outstanding balance* dating back to January, 2013. Your January invoice was for \$445.00 and we have yet to *receive this payment*. Please *find a copy* of the invoice enclosed.

If this amount has already been paid, please *disregard this notice*. Otherwise, please forward us the amount owed in full by March 1st, 2013. As our *contract indicates*, we begin charging 5% interest for any outstanding balances after 30 days.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We hope to continue doing business with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Maria McPhee
Accountant

Enclosure: Invoice #223

(Source: <http://www.englishclub.com/business-english/correspondence-payment-request.htm>)

Business letters are used for many purposes such as to make inquiries, to send replies, and to place orders. The main and basic function of the business letter is not only to convey messages to the person who receives the letter but also to influence the reader. From the example, these specific collocations used for business transactions are found: *Outstanding balance, receive this payment, find a copy, disregard this notice, contract indicates, charge interest, and do business.*

As English learners, we are supposed to learn these collocations when dealing with business writing. In other words, such business collocations are expected to be inevitably employed for business correspondences.

5.4 Collocations in Invitation Cards

Mr. and Mrs. John C Smith
request the pleasure of the company of
Mr. James K Brown & Guest
at a small holiday party and dance

Monday, the twenty-third of December
from seven o'clock in the evening until eleven o'clock.

5555 Wilshire Road.
Semi-Formal Holiday attire

R.S.V.P.
5555 Wilshire Road
Los Angeles, CA 90039

(Source: www.couplescompany.com)

Based on this invitation, the collocations specifically used for writing an invitation can be as follows:

- Mr. and Mrs. John C Smith *request the pleasure* of the company of Mr. JamesK Brown & Guest at a small holiday party and dance.

To accept a written invitation, you may use the collocations as follows:

- Mr. James K Brown and Miss Jennifer Jacobs *accept with pleasure the invitation* of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Smith to a small holiday party.

- Sonya Mariana thanks Lord and Lady Corringken for their kind invitation to dinner on Tuesday, 7 October, and *has much pleasure* in accepting.

To decline a written invitation, you might use these collocations to give reasons for declining:

- Miss Jennifer Jacobs regrets that she will be unable to attend due to a *previous engagement*.

- Miss Jennifer Jacobs regrets that she will be unable to attend due to *professional obligations*.

To conclude, the collocations used for writing, accepting, and declining an invitation can be particularly used according to the purpose of writing. These collocations are essential for business writing when you have to deal with businesspeople around the globe.

5.5 Collocations in the Company Profile

Due to the *rapid growth* of tourism and *business investments* in Thailand, air transportation has become an *increasingly important* aspect contributing to both the Kingdom's economic growth and its *infrastructure development* into becoming a *major destination* capable of hosting several million overseas visitors per year.

In order to *fulfill the increasing demands* for air transportation, Bangkok Airways officially began its operations in 1986 as the country's first *privately-owned domestic airline*; initially offering scheduled flights from Bangkok to Krabi, Korat, and Surin.

Presently, Bangkok Airways has *obtained permits* to *operate scheduled flights* over 20 different major routes -covering nearly all major resort destinations in Thailand. Additionally, the airline has also obtained permits to fly internationally to Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Bangladesh and Maldives.

Bangkok Airways has also invested in building and maintaining its own privately-operated airports at Samui, Sukhothai, and Trat. These developments provide Thailand with more air transportation hubs to in order to facilitate increasing air traffic volume.

(Adapted from: www.bangkokair.com)

From the company profile illustrated above, various types of collocations are found as follows: 1) Adjectives and Nouns: *Rapid growth, major destination*; 2) Nouns and Verbs: *Fulfill the(increasing) demands, operate scheduled flights, obtained permits*; 3) Nouns and Nouns: *Infrastructure development*; 4) Verbs and Adverbs: *Officially began*; 5) Adverbs and Adjectives: *Increasingly important*.

In short, it is obvious that several types of collocations are widely used in the company profile to verify the significance of the English collocations in the business context to a great extent.

5.6 Collocations in Negotiating English

The following are some examples of collocations in Negotiating English:

If your company *accepted our terms*, we would provide free maintenance for one year.

We'll be able to accept your terms provided that there are no *further objections*.

We could give you a twenty percent discount if there was *substantial order*.

If you *accept our proposal*, we may be able to give you special discount.

We'd *have no objection* provided that there was no delayed payment.

If there was no *additional charge*, it would be quite acceptable.

What are the company's *main objectives*?

Do they have any *conflicting aims*?

(Adapted from: Lafond, Vine, & Welch, 2010)

Such collocations in italic as *Accepted our terms*, *substantial order*, *have no objection*, *additional charge*, *further objections*, *accept our proposal*, *conflicting aims*, and *main objectives* are typical collocations in Negotiating English. These collocations can be found in the negotiation process or used in the legal documents when a businessperson has to sign the deal.

To properly use collocations in the context of negotiation, it is suggested that learners should study the specific and significant collocations in the aspect of language and power which will result in the effective and powerful negotiation.

5.7 Collocations in Business Meetings

... Let me just *summarize the main points* of the last meeting. We *began the meeting* by *approving the changes* in our sales reporting system discussed on May 30th. After *briefly revising* the changes that will take place, we moved on to a *brainstorming session* concerning after sales customer support improvements. You'll find a copy of the main ideas developed and discussed in these sessions in the photocopies in front of you. The meeting was declared closed at 11.30.

(Adapted from: http://esl.about.com/cs/onthejobenglish/a/a_meetex.htm)

It is clear that some particular collocations used in English for meetings, such as *summarize the main points*, *began the meeting*, and

brainstorming session are broadly employed in the situations of business meetings. Apart from the collocations in relation to meetings shown in the example above, other collocations for business meetings can be additionally presented as the following:

When allocating roles in the meetings, you can use these collocations:

- ...has agreed to *take the minutes*.
- ...has *kindly agreed* to give us a report on this matter.
- ...will *lead point 1...*

To close an item in a meeting, you can say:

I think that *covers the first item*.

Shall we *leave that item*?

When closing the meetings, you can use these collocations:

I think we can *end the meeting* at this point.

Can we *fix the next meeting*, please?

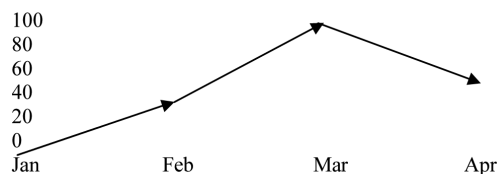
(Adapted from: http://esl.about.com/cs/onthethejobenglish/a/a_meetex.htm)

To sum up, the collocations presented above are typical ones which can be heard in the business meetings. These collocations are useful for the learners' future career when they have to take the minutes of business meetings. It is recommended that learners should conduct studies on other possible collocations for business meetings which are not mentioned in this part to further their career in the workplace where a good command of English is required.

5.8 Collocations in Describing Statistical Graphs

Sahanaya, W., Lindeck, J., & Stewart, R. (1998) mention some significant collocations used for describing graphs as follows:

Example 1: Sales of computer



(Sahanaya, Lindeck, & Stewart, 1998, p. 106)

From the graph, we can write sentences using collocations as

follows:

<i>Time period</i>	<i>Subject of the sentence</i>	<i>Verb to describe change</i>	<i>Adverb to describe how much change</i>
From January to February	sales	increased	slightly.
From February to March	sales	rose	dramatically.
From March to April	sales	fell	moderately.

To variously use collocations to describe the graph, we can construct the sentences as the following:

<i>Time period</i>	<i>'there' to introduce the subject</i>	<i>adjective to describe the amount of change</i>	<i>noun to describe change</i>
From January to February	there was a	slight	increase in sales.
From February to March		dramatic	rise
From March to April		moderate	fall

(Sahanaya, Lindeck & Stewart, 1998, pp. 107-109)

Collocation types in the forms of Verb and Adverb (increased slightly) and Adjective and Noun (slight increase) do have the same meaning. The various forms of different collocations can indicate the significant role and a wide range of the use of collocations in describing graphs. Other related collocations that can be possibly used in this aspect are as follows: Moderate growth, gradual fall, dramatic drop, slight decrease, and rapid decline. Hence, English learners are supposed to possess this sort of language knowledge when using collocations to describe the statistical graphs in Business English.

Example 2:

- 1) Our *market share decreased* in size in the last quarter of 2004.
- 2) *Complaints have declined dramatically* since 2004.

(Adapted from: Thomson, 2007, p.25)

To facilitate better understanding of the collocating verbs appearing in different forms of the grammatical tenses in English, Thomson (2007) explains that we change the form of collocations using: 1) The Past Simple to talk about developments in finished time frames, and 2) The Present Perfect to talk about developments in unfinished time frames.

5.9 Collocations in Travel Arrangements

In terms of travel arrangements, using appropriate collocations can create and illustrate the persuasive language to persuade the target customers to make a choice for the tour program. These are some examples:

- Visit the *floating market*, one of the most *famous tourist attraction places* in Thailand.

- This Palace consists of several buildings with a *marvelous decoration* which features the most attractive architecture in South East Asia.
- Bangkok is a *food heaven*; a *sensational culinary journey* and *taste experience*.

(Adapted from: <http://www.bangkok.com/food-top10.htm>)

From the examples above, a full range of collocations can be used in English for Tourism: *Floating market*, *famous tourist attraction places*, *marvelous decoration*, *food heaven*; *sensational culinary journey*, and *taste experience*. It can also be perceived as the persuasive language device which is created from the suitably selective words, resulting in the linguistic power for the effective and successful business communication. English learners who wish to work in the tourism industry need to enhance their skills in relation to these collocations.

6. Teaching English Collocations in Classroom

In terms of pedagogical implications, Koya (2005) states that the following things should be considered:

1) *Present new vocabulary with some of its most frequent collocations.*

When teaching basic vocabulary, a teacher should couple it with words that frequently co-occur and help learners build a database of collocations. For example, *decision* should be introduced with *make*.

2) *Present collocations in different ways according to their different features*

Different collocations should be taught differently in accordance with their different processes of acquisition. In order to do this, teachers have to be familiar with the features of basic collocations and the process

of the development of learners' collocational knowledge. This should be considered in instruction for all vocabulary level learners.

3) Verbs should be explicitly focused on when teaching collocations.

Collocations whose constituents were delexical verbs with opaque and peripheral meanings should be explicitly taught to raise learners' awareness of them and keep them firmly in their minds.

(cited in Koya 2005, pp.246-249)

According to McCarthy & O'Dell (2005), a way to study English collocations and to illustrate how sentences are constructed can be shown as the following:

Word	Collocates with	Example
criticism	harsh (strong), constant, constructive (useful)	The play came in for some harsh criticism .
critical	highly and sharply	The writer is sharply critical of our political system.
criticize	roundly (thoroughly), fiercely, bitterly	He has roundly criticized for his rudeness.

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 124)

From the table, the use of collocations for the topic *Criticizing*, for instance, shows how the three words, namely *criticism*, *critical*, and *criticize*, are collocated with other words to make appropriate and meaningful sentences. English learners are required to construct a meaningful sentence with an appropriate collocation. This means that the useful pattern in the table can lead them to make sentences correctly. Additionally, learners can examine which words can co-occur and be properly used together.

In the following part, McCarthy & O'Dell (2005) also suggest various types of exercise for English collocations which are useful for English teachers and learners. Besides, the writer provides some practical recommendations concerning effective pedagogy and English studies in the Thai context. The following are some selected examples:

Example 1: *Make three collocations from the words in the box.*

make strictly engine mistakes powerful forbidden
--

Answers: make mistakes / powerful engine / strictly forbidden

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 7)

Matching is one of the most popular activities in a foreign language classroom.

This exercise can be best used as a warm up activity in class at the first step of the teaching. Learners will have a chance to learn and practice collocations at the basic level.

Example 2: *Underline the collocations in the text.*

When I left university, I made a decision to take up a profession in which I could be creative. I could play the guitar, but I'd never written any songs. Nonetheless I decided to become a singer-songwriter. I made some recordings but I had a rather heavy cold so they didn't sound good. I made some more, and sent them to a record company and waited for them to reply. So, while I was waiting to become famous, I got a job in a fast-food restaurant. That was five years ago. I'm still doing the same job.

Answers: left university / made a decision / take up a profession / play the guitar / written any songs / made some recordings / heavy cold / become famous / got a job

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 7)

Underlining words can also be considered as the broadly used activity for foreign language teaching and learning to make learners recognize what is being learned. In this step, learners are studying collocations in sentences in the form of a reading passage.

Example 3: *Complete each sentence with a collocation*

1. Come to my office ten minutes before the meeting, so we can have ...
2. In your essay on the influence of TV, don't forget to discuss these ...

Answers: 1. a brief chat / 2. key issues

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 13)

In this step, learners start learning collocations by completing sentences with an appropriate collocation on their own. In doing so, learners can simultaneously develop and foster their productive skill.

Example 4: *Replace the underlined words with a collocating verb.*

1. The economy was extremely high 20 years ago.
2. The increase of oil prices certainly creates a problem for us.

Answers: 1. was booming / 2. poses

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 13)

From the examples, nouns and verbs are used together. In this step, the background knowledge is required to do this exercise by replacing one word with another word. However, learners at the fundamental level may find this exercise difficult if they lack the background knowledge regarding the relevant vocabulary.

Example 5: Match the beginning of each sentence on the left with its endings on the right to make typical collocations.

1. We raised a business to supply sports equipments to schools.
2. We started up capital to expand the business.

Answers: 1. We raised capital to expand the business.
 2. We started up a business to supply sports equipments to schools.

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 15)

This exercise seems to be easy for learners as they merely match the first part with the second part to construct a full sentence. In fact, learners at the intermediate level of L2 learning are studying new collocations related to business terms which are particularly used in the business context. If learners do not get used to the specific language of Business English, they might have difficulties to do this exercise. According to McCarthy & O'Dell (2005), some collocations are characteristic of business English, for instance, 1) to submit a tender (present a document offering to do a job and stating the price); 2) to raise capital (get money to put into a business); 3) to go into partnership with (someone to start or run a business with someone); and 4) to start up a business.

Example 6: Choose a formal or informal collocation as instructed the end of each sentence. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1) She was *dead / extremely* keen to meet the new director. (informal)
- 2) We should be *boarding the aircraft / getting on the plane* in about ten minutes. (formal)
- 3) Mr Trotter *paid for / bore the cost of* the repairs. (formal)
- 4) I *withdraw from / dropped out of* my university course after a year. (informal)

5) The president *launched into* / *embarked upon* a detailed explanation of this policies. (informal)

Answers: 1) dead keen; 2) boarding the aircraft; 3) bore the cost of; 4) dropped out of; 5) launched into

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 15)

Despite the similar meaning of words, learners are supposed to be aware of formality and informality of the language in this step. Learners are expected to be able to distinguish and differentiate formal collocations from informal ones. To summarize, we - as foreign language learners - cannot deny that formality and informality can be found in almost all languages as this language feature can be regarded as common and universal.

Example 7: Complete the collocations in these descriptions of TV programmes.

Monday The ..(1).. News from the world solo balloon attempt in this 30-monute
7.00-7.30pm BBC1 documenatary with live pictures from the balloon.

Friday The Deenazon drug scandal which ..(2).. the headlines last year
9.15-9.55pm MBC left 10,000 people with health problem. A major newspaper ..(3)..
a story claiming that scientists had not done proper tests. But who
was to blam?

Sunday Next Sunday, European Heads of State will ..(4).. a news confer
5.30-6.30pm LAK3 ence to end their summit. It could contain important developments.

Answers: 1) latest; 2) hit, ran; 3) hold

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 77)

Example 8: Improve the style of these e-mails by replacing the underlined words with other appropriate collocations.

E-Mail 1: Gareth, you probably didn't know I didn't get the job I applied for. It's a very big disappointment.

E-Mail 2: I felt a big sadness when I heard of Patrick's death. Will you be going to the funeral? It will be such a sad thing, won't it?

Pamela

Answers: 1) huge; 2) great, occasion

(Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005, p. 74)

Examples 7 and 8 allow students to practice using collocations based on the real situations. These exercises would cause learners to realize how collocations play a vital role for English in everyday use and how they will be able to apply their acquired knowledge in their daily life and everyday situations.

Discussion and Conclusions

As mentioned in the introductory part, English learners in Thailand have to encounter the use of collocations as they are widely employed for both communicative and academic purposes. From the review of the previous studies, studies on collocations in ESP, in particular *English for Business Purposes* (EBP) should be considered and conducted to provide practical recommendations concerning effective language pedagogy in the Thai context. All the situations and examples illustrated in this article demonstrate a remarkable breadth of knowledge. Collocations can also be understood and regarded as a persuasive linguistic device when specifically used in English for business communication. As an English instructor, designing and creating exercises as well as activities according to the learners' competence level in class can be a challenging task.

As a successful language learner, using a wide range of collocations can indicate the language aptitude of that learner. In terms of language instruction, teaching collocations is essential and indispensable to foster the language proficiency of learners. In other words, this kind of enhanced ability is necessary for their English studies. Additionally, research studies on collocations should be carried out further and to a greater extent.

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