

L1 Influence on EFL Learners' Use of English Collocations

Lika Tian

Raden Della Amirulloh

University of Cincinnati

Abstract: The purpose of this literature review was to analyze and synthesize the most recent research about the first language (L1) influence on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' use of English collocations to shed some light on possible pedagogical interventions or changes of teaching methods in EFL classrooms. Understanding more about EFL students' use of English collocations and the root cause of collocational errors, in this case, L1 influence or lexical transfer, may inform pedagogical intervention, which can help learners of English avoid making the same mistakes repetitively, thus improving accuracy, fluency, and proficiency in English language use in the future.

Keywords: EFL, collocation, L1, influence

Most people learn English vocabulary through the acquisition of individual words. However, to know a word requires knowing what words it commonly occurs with (Nation, 2022). Collocations are multiword units that are different in size and type. They also are in a certain sequence. For instance, take notes, decide to do something, succeed in doing something, junk food, heavy rain, look for, regardless of, in the middle of, barking up the wrong tree are all examples of English collocations. Correct and natural usage of collocations is the key to achieving fluency and proficiency in English for EFL learners. Through repetitive

exposure to collocations, learners can learn and develop a better sense of collocations in both spoken and written texts.

It is widely documented that the first language (L1) impacts English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in various ways including word choices, phrases and expressions, figurative speech, and sequenced chunks of meanings within the sentence (Boulton, 2017). Odlin (1989) proposed “language transfer,” defined as the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the first language and the target language, which is highly acknowledged in the field of second language learning. I refer to this phenomenon as “lexical transfer,” which is “the influence that a person’s knowledge of one language has on that person’s recognition, interpretation, processing, storage and production of words in another language” (Jarvis, 2009, p. 99). Lexical transfer may have two possible results: positive and negative. This is of significance as many errors made by EFL learners of English, during the language learning process, are rooted in translation to equivalent words, phrases, or chunks in their mother tongue, which could be traced back to negative transfer.

The purpose of this literature review was to identify and synthesize the literature documenting the first language influence on EFL learners’ use of English collocations. The literature review is expected to address the following specific research questions:

Research Question 1:

What were the definitions of collocations?

Research Question 2:

What types of collocations were studied when analyzing L1 influence?

Research Question 3:

How were EFL learners’ use of collocations assessed?

Research Question 4:

What were the effects of L1 on EFL learners’ use of English collocations?

Addressing these questions can help not only EFL instructors teach collocations more effectively but can also inform instructors in academic content courses how to support their

students who are English language learners. While EFL instructors can instruct students in daily discourse collocations, instructors in other disciplines need to be aware of the discipline-specific collocations their students will need to know.

Method

The approach of the literature review was to collect, analyze, and synthesize literature of current research relevant to the impact of the first language on EFL learners' use of English collocations, using a systematic literature review as suggested by Galvan and Galvan (2017). An extensive search of research articles was carried out to build a database. The search was conducted via EBSCOhost through several electronic databases, including Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Premier, APA PsycInfo, Bibliography of Asian Studies, Education Full Text (H.W.Wilson), Education Research Complete, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Teacher Reference Center. These databases provide comprehensive scholarly articles on education and languages. I used a keyword search to locate the articles. The main keyword was *collocation*, collocated with *EFL*, *L1*, *learners*, *lexical influence*, *phrasal verb*, *cross-linguistic influence* and *theory*. The keyword search yielded 393 results from 2003 to 2022. A narrower search yielded 18 results by using a combination of four keywords *EFL*, *collocation*, *L1*, and *influence*.

To be included in this literature review, the literature must have been published and peer-reviewed between 2008 to 2022. The 14-year time frame was selected to include the most recent research in this field of study. It was also partially due to the inclusion of an article that studied Chinese and Swedish learners by Wang and Shaw (2008). In addition, the articles also must have been written in English. This search yielded 162 articles from 2008 to 2022. To locate more relevant studies, additional articles were found by snowball search and hand search by identifying titles and authors in the reference sections of the highly pertinent research articles. I established the following inclusion criteria:

1. Investigated definitions of collocations and/or types of collocations
2. Addressed L1 influence or lexical transfer

3. Collected and analyzed written samples or corpora
4. Or recruited EFL participants

Studies were excluded because they might have included “collocation” in the title or as a keyword, yet collocations were not the article’s main focus. Many articles were excluded because the main focus is too distant from the topic of this review. For instance, designs of online collocation aids or online video-assisted collocation learning systems, development of web applications for the picture-based e-learning of phrasal verbs, contrastive and non-contrastive analysis on the acquisition of collocations, and aural decoding capacities of EFL learners in collocation familiarity were excluded. Dissertations and books were excluded due to the short length of the review. Studies that focused on data-driven learning, spoken collocational competence to measure accuracy, complexity and fluency, and children’s second language acquisition, were also excluded. The literature that did not examine L1 influence was excluded as well. Of these results, I narrowed the number down to 25 possible articles by reading abstracts, introductions, and method sections.

During the process of searching for pertinent research articles, I created a data extraction matrix to compile notes and gather key information from each study to get an overview of the literature, conducting a preliminary analysis of the 25 articles in a method recommended by Galvan and Galvan (2017). Categories included basic information such as authors’ last names, the title of the article, publication year, journal, the purpose of study, research questions, population/samples, research methodology (Qualitative vs Quantitative), results/findings, implications, limitations, potential gaps, and personal notes. More specific categories included definitions of collocations, types of collocations, L1, and lexical transfer/ L1 influence. These categories were chosen intentionally because they were closely aligned to the original research questions. By examining columns of definitions of collocations and types of collocations, some articles were excluded because the authors did not define collocations or specify types of collocations. One article was excluded because the authors did not collect writing samples or build a learner corpus in the study.

Further, by synthesizing the results based on the research questions, samples, and findings, a total of 10 studies met the criteria and were included in this review. As suggested by Galvan and Galvan (2017), I also built a summary table (Table 1) and arranged the 10 studies chronically by year to see if there were any historical trends across time although L1 varies from one language to another. The studies were classified into varied categories according to EFL settings (Chinese-2, Korean-2, Swedish-1, Chinese and Swedish-1, Japanese-1, Hebrew-1, Thai-1, Turkish-1). The findings of each category will be described in the following sections. This review mainly focuses on EFL learners' use of English collocations.

Table 1

Summary of Studies

Author(s) Year of Publication	L1	Participants (Age/ Education)	Types of Collocations	Sample	Findings (L1 influence)
Wang & Shaw (2008)	Chinese, Swedish	19-27	verb-noun collocation	200 essays	L1 influence is only one of the factors in the use of collocations.
Yamashita & Jiang (2010)	Japanese	College students, researchers, instructors	congruent and incongruent collocation	20 native speakers of English, 24 Japanese ESL users, and 23 Japanese EFL learners	L1 and L2 input are the two interacting factors of the acquisition of English collocations.
Laufer & Waldman (2011)	Hebrew	Grade 9-12, young adult	verb-noun collocations	759 essays	L1 influence accounts for about half of erroneous collocations at all proficiency levels.
Wolter & Gyllstad (2013)	Swedish	M 23.1-26.6	congruent and incongruent collocations	25 Swedish learners of English and 27 L1 English speakers	L1 may play an important role in processing collocations, even at higher proficiency levels.
Phoocharoensil (2013)	Thai	Freshmen	lexical collocations and grammatical collocations	90 Thai EFL learners	L1 has a considerable impact on learners' collocation learning.
Lee (2016)	Korean	University students (20-24), instructors	congruent and incongruent collocations	19 native speakers of English and 45 Korean EFL learners	L1 knowledge is enormously influential in processing L2 collocations.
Chang (2018)	Korean	23-40	lexical collocations: Adjective-Noun Verb-Noun Noun-Noun Adverb-Verb Adverb-Adjective	eight Korean learners and eight native speakers of English	L1 influence on English collocations is speculated according to the semantic similarity between L1 and English.

Ye (2019)	Chinese	17-18	Noun-Verb semantic collocation and grammatical collocation	115 essays	More than half of the errors are caused by L1.
Yigit (2021)	Turkish	18-26 Freshmen	congruent and incongruent collocations	61 Turkish students	L1 has a strong impact on the processing of L2 collocations.
Wu & Tissari (2021)	Chinese	Undergraduate and graduate	Intensifier-Verb Collocations	2696 essays	L1 influence is dominant in the use of collocations.

Results

In this review of the literature, I first addressed the definitions of collocations to establish a consistent realization of “collocation” for comparisons. With this definition, I then established what types of collocations were studied in the exploration of first language influence. In addition, I explored how these studies assessed the learner’s use of second language collocations, and finally, I looked at how these studies documented the effects of first language on second language use of English collocations.

Definitions of Collocations

Four studies were very specific about the definition of collocations (Chang, 2018; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Wu & Tissari, 2021; Ye, 2019). Wu and Tissari (2021) defined collocation as “a sequence of words or terms that co-occur more often in corpus data than would be expected by chance” (p. 471). Ye (2019) cited Lewis (1997, p. 25) to define collocation as “the combination of words which occur naturally with greater than random frequency.” Chang (2018) stated that lexical collocations “are composed of two (or more) content words in different word classes constructing particular syntactic structures in various degrees of semantic fixedness” (p. 7). Phoocharoensil (2013) held that lexical collocations “comprise two or more content words” whereas grammatical collocations comprise one content word and a function word (p. 1). Despite defining collocations with various phrasing and terms, the

frequency of occurrence and composition of content words is the key to these specific definitions.

Three studies (Lee, 2016; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021) regarded collocations as a type of multiword unit. Lee (2016) believed that multi-word units included collocations. Equally, Yamashita and Jiang (2010) considered collocations as one type of multiword unit besides formulaic sequences and idioms. To be precise, collocations are “multiword units that consist primarily of open class items” (Yamashita & Jiang, 2010, p. 649). Yigit (2021) defined collocations as “recurrent word combinations” (p. 2). In short, the definitions of collocations vary somewhat from one researcher to another. Yet they share a similarity, that is, collocations are intrinsically recurrent multiword units.

Interestingly, two studies proposed that there was not an accurate and agreed-upon definition of collocations (Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Wang & Shaw, 2008). By explicitly stating that “collocations do not have one simple and precise definition” (p. 648), Laufer and Waldman (2011) contended collocations “as habitually occurring lexical combinations that are characterized by restricted co-occurrence of elements and relative transparency of meaning” (p. 648). Likewise, Wang and Shaw (2008) believed that “there is no universally accepted formal definition of collocation” (p. 204). However, they did try to classify verb-noun collocations that had been studied into three categories: “free collocations, restricted collocations and idioms” (Wang & Shaw, 2008, p. 208). Nevertheless, one study did not give a precise definition (Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013). The researchers instead explored collocations “under three conditions, namely, congruent, incongruent, and noncollocational” (Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013, p. 456). Specifically, Laufer and Waldman (2011) focused on verb-noun collocations whereas the other research teams categorized collocations into different types.

Types of Collocations

Also, I identified different types of collocations being studied in the articles. Wang and Shaw (2008) as well as Laufer and Waldman (2011) discussed verb-noun collocations (e.g., *make a mistake*, *catch a bus*, *break a leg*, and so on). Congruent and incongruent collocations

were studied with Japanese, Swedish, Korean, and Turkish learners of English, respectively (Lee, 2016; Walter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021). Congruent collocations are multiword units with the same literal meanings in two languages, which can be translated word for word from one language to another, whereas incongruent collocations are not translated word by word (Yigit, 2021).

Generally, a collocation is categorized into two types: semantic collocation and grammatical collocation (Nesselhauf, 2005). Ye (2019), in this case, illustrated both types of collocations in his article. Semantic collocations are phrases that are formed from “a dominant word (e.g., Noun, adjective, verb) and a grammatical structure (e.g., preposition, infinitive)” (Ye, 2019, p. 647). On the other hand, grammatical collocations are constitutive of “two equal words that both contribute to the sense of the combination” (Ye, 2019, p. 647). Furthermore, grammatical collocations can be categorized into three types: adjective-noun, verb-noun, and noun-verb (Schmitt, 2000). Phoocharoensil (2013), who regarded lexical collocations as collocations that “comprise two or more content words, i.e. nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs” (p. 1), focused on lexical and grammatical collocations instead. Chang (2018), on the other hand, focused on six types of lexical collocations, which include “adjective-noun (A-N), verb-noun (V-N), noun-noun (N-N), adverb-verb (Ad-V), adverb-adjective (Ad-A), noun-verb (N-V)” (p. 12). Wu and Tissari (2021) conducted research on the usage of intensifier-verb collocations (e.g., *fully understand*, *strongly support*, *closely associate*) of Chinese EFL learners.

Assessments of EFL Learners’ Use of Collocations

Four studies implemented phrase acceptability judgment tasks to assess EFL learners’ use of collocations in terms of accuracy, reaction times, and error rates (Lee, 2016; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021). All four studies made a list of classified collocations in two types: congruent and incongruent as the items of research. They also constructed a list of word combinations as noncollocational items. Three of them administered the test with an experimental group and a control group (Lee, 2016; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010). To be more specific, Lee (2016) included 45 Korean

EFL learners and 19 native speakers. Wolter and Gyllstad (2013) recruited 25 Swedish learners of English and 27 native speakers. Yamashita and Jiang (2010) included 24 Japanese ESL users, 23 Japanese EFL learners, and 20 native speakers. Only one study did not have a control group; the test was administered by 61 first-year Turkish learners of English (Yigit, 2021).

Among these four studies that administered phrase acceptability tests which produced similar results (Lee, 2016; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021), three of them found that native speakers responded considerably faster than EFL learners in identifying incongruent collocations (Lee, 2016; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010). Plus, there were no significant differences between the two groups on the congruent or noncollocational items. Similarly, the lowest error rate was displayed by native speakers whereas the error rate among EFL learners was considerably higher. Due to the lack of participants of native speakers in the study, a comparison was made between a low-level and high-level group (Yigit, 2021). Compared to the low-level group, reaction times were shorter and error rates were lower for the high-level group.

Three were corpus-based studies, extracting collocations that aimed to measure the distribution and frequency of correct and incorrect collocations from corpora (Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Wang & Shaw, 2008; Wu & Tissari, 2021). Corpus-based studies involve the exploration and research of corpora, namely, large collections of spoken or written texts in different settings according to specific criteria. Wu and Tissari (2021) used three corpora: the Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers (MICUSP), the British Academic Written English (BAWE), and Ten-thousand English Compositions of Chinese Learners (TECCL). Laufer and Waldman (2011), on the other hand, adopted the Israeli Learner Corpus of Written English (ILCoWE), the comparative native-speaker (NS) corpus, and Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS). Wang and Shaw (2008) used two learner English corpora: Chinese-speaking learners of English (CSLE) and Swedish-speaking learners of English (SSLE).

Two studies shared similar results regarding the frequency of collocations (Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Wu & Tissari, 2021). Both descriptive data showed that native speakers

produced considerably more collocations compared with EFL learners in essay writing. Wu and Tissari (2021) found that there were merely 52 types of intensifier-verb collocations out of 796 in TECCL. However, there were 46 types in 228 in BAWE and 58 in 582 intensifier-verb collocations in MICUSP. Echoing this, Laufer and Waldman (2011) found that there were 2527 verb-noun collocations in the native speaker corpus of LOCNESS while there were only 1082 verb-noun collocations in learner corpora of ILCoWE. In their comparative study between Chinese and Swedish EFL learners, on the other hand, Wang and Shaw (2008) found that there were 32% free collocations errors for CSLE and 41% for SSLE whereas there were 22% restricted collocations errors for CSLE and 13% for SSLE.

In contrast, three studies were conducted by building their own learner corpora of relatively small size (Chang, 2018; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Ye, 2019). They recruited participants and collected written essays. Collocations were then identified and erroneous collocations were calculated by the researchers. To be more specific, Ye (2019) built a learner corpus of 115 Chinese students' essays to identify collocations with lexical errors possibly caused by L1 using Youdao machine translation engine and dictionary and Corpus Concordance English. Chang (2018) requested Korean EFL learners and native speakers to write argumentative essays. Having adopted the elicitation method, Phoocharoensil (2013) included 90 Thai EFL learners to write an essay and identified erroneous collocations by using four collocation dictionaries. To identify if it was a significant error type, Ye (2019) calculated the frequency of incorrect collocations. Each category's error frequency was based on 1,000 words. Collocation and multiword units accounted for 82.81% of the total number (Ye, 2019). Surprisingly, Chang (2018) found that collocation occurrences were almost the same between Korean EFL learners (8.8%) and native English speakers (8.1%). The distribution of lexical collocations between the two groups was also extremely close. Two possible reasons contributed to the results. One was the small size of the corpora. Another was that the numbers included both correct and incorrect collocations. Phoocharoensil (2013) counted incorrect collocations and compared two different levels of Thai EFL groups. Results showed

that high-proficiency groups made fewer collocational errors compared to the low-proficiency group.

L1 influence on EFL learners' use of English collocations

Altogether, seven L1s were discussed in the literature review. The L1 differed across samples and methodologies, but almost all studies reported a noticeable L1 influence in the use of English collocations for EFL learners (see Table 1).

Chinese as L1

Three studies included written samples of Chinese EFL learners (Wang & Shaw, 2008; Wu & Tissari, 2021; Ye, 2019). Ye (2019) found that there were 101 typical examples of negative lexical transfer identified in 115 essays. The results suggested that Chinese polysemes (i.e., words with multiple meanings) lead to 52% of lexical errors whereas Chinese collocations caused 29% of lexical errors. The second study of Chinese as an L1 focused on intensifier-verb collocations, which were called degree adverbs in Chinese (Wu & Tissari, 2021). Their study suggested that L1 plays a predominant role in Chinese learners of English based on their overuse of intensifiers that have equivalents in Chinese.

Chinese and Swedish as L1

The third study involved both Chinese and Swedish EFL learners (Wang & Shaw, 2008). The results displayed that there were 32% free collocation errors for CSLE and 41% for SSLE respectively. Furthermore, there were 22% restricted collocation errors for CSLE and 13% for SSLE. They also found that the essays of CSLE were indirect by starting to write something else before they addressed the issue, which demonstrated a strong influence of the Chinese mindset. Essays of SSLE, on the other hand, were direct by stating purposes and opinions. The differences between the two EFL groups demonstrated the effects of L1 on their language use (Wang & Shaw, 2008).

Swedish as L1

Focusing on Swedish in L2 collocational processing, Wolter and Gyllstad (2013) found that the native English group responded considerably faster than the Swedish EFL group on incongruent items only. Furthermore, no significant differences between the two groups on the congruent or noncollocational items were identified. What was noticeable was that higher EVST scores minimized the chances of producing an erroneous response, which provided evidence of the dominant influence of L1 on the development of L2 collocations (Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013).

Korean as L1

Two studies recruited Korean EFL learners to examine Korean EFL learners' use of English collocations (Chang, 2018; Lee, 2016). Lee (2016) included 45 Korean EFL learners and 21 native speakers of English whereas Chang (2018) recruited eight Korean learners and eight native speakers of English. Lee (2016) found that intermediate EFL learners made more errors and responded slower in both congruent and incongruent collocations compared to advanced EFL learners. The results implied that L1 played an important role in processing L2 collocations. Chang (2018), on the other hand, demonstrated the problematic use of English collocations by Korean EFL learners, which in most cases, were literal translations based on L1. Thus, inappropriate or incorrect collocations were generated, which indicated L1 influence on Korean EFL learners' collocation use.

Turkish as L1

The analysis of error rates and reaction times in both congruent and incongruent collocations between the low-level and high-level Turkish EFL groups revealed that congruency was the key to the correct use of L2 collocations, which showed that L1 had strong effects on the acquisition of L2 collocations (Yigit, 2021).

Thai as L1

Three collocation error types that involved prepositions, nouns and verbs, and adjectives made by two English proficiency groups were discussed by Phoocharoensil (2013), which

suggested both Thai EFL groups were negatively influenced by L1, contributing to 46.55% and 53.45% respectively of the total number of errors.

Hebrew as L1

Laufer and Waldman (2011) found errors increased with proficiency level. The high-proficiency Hebrew EFL learners were more likely to produce more collocations and, therefore, more collocation errors as well. The study showed that L1 influence was constant throughout all levels of proficiency.

Japanese as L1

Yamashita and Jiang (2010) found that Japanese EFL learners made more errors than ESL learners and native English speakers on both congruent and incongruent collocations. The results suggested that L1, as well as L2 input, affected the time-consuming acquisition of L2 collocations.

Discussion

In this review, I aimed to identify L1 influence on the use of English collocations by EFL learners. Ten articles in this review, to some extent, showed that L1 does have an impact on EFL learners' use of English collocations. Despite the differences in collocational definitions and types, all studies showed L1 played a role in EFL learners' acquisition of English collocations.

In phrase acceptability tests (Lee, 2016; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021), EFL learners responded faster and made fewer errors when the collocations were congruent. On the other hand, native speakers responded considerably faster than EFL learners in identifying incongruent collocations, suggesting the difficulties in acquiring incongruent collocations for EFL learners. The results also implied that the congruency effect is ubiquitous among EFL learners of various L1 backgrounds, which suggested the long-lasting L1 influence in the acquisition of English as a second language. Further, the results between the low-proficiency and high-proficiency groups suggested that high-proficiency groups erred

less and responded faster compared with their counterparts, which sent a promising message to EFL learners that correct collocational usage may go hand in hand with proficiency (Lee, 2016; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021). Nevertheless, Laufer and Waldman (2011) found that L1 influence does not have a decreasing tendency with time and the erroneous collocations that stem from L1 are prevalent at all levels of proficiency. In corpus-based studies (Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Wang & Shaw, 2008; Wu & Tissari, 2021), native speakers produced substantially more collocations than EFL learners. The overall results suggested that EFL learners depend heavily on those collocations that have equivalents in their L1s.

Implications for Practice

The literature highlighted the importance for teachers to be cognizant of the significance of instructing collocations, particularly incongruent collocations (Lee, 2016; Nesselhauf, 2003; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Wang & Shaw, 2008; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021), given that the primary challenge with L2 collocations is not about identifying them, but rather about learning to use them properly (Laufer & Waldman, 2011). In addition, the process of acquiring collocations for learners is time-consuming, influenced by factors such as L1 congruency and L2 input (Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013). As noted by Nesselhauf (2003), collocations “do deserve a place in language teaching” (p. 238).

The findings of the current literature review identify several implications for teachers who work with EFL learners related to the problematic usage of collocations including more exposure to incongruent collocations in natural settings (Lee, 2016; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang, 2010; Yigit, 2021). As remarked by Wang and Shaw (2008), the instruction of “high-frequency verbs” should not be overlooked when learners use them incorrectly and repeatedly (p. 222). Moreover, given learners’ lack of knowledge regarding “collocational restrictions” (p. 222), it is imperative to offer systematic instruction to tackle the problem.

Additionally, Laufer and Waldman (2011) suggested that “task-based teaching should be supplemented by form-focused instruction” (p. 666). For example, place emphasis on “eliciting the collocations” and “crosslinguistic comparison” (p. 666). In the same vein, Lee (2016) maintained that the acquisition of incongruent collocations might necessitate rote memorization, along with extensive reading or interaction, to establish the necessary connection. Similarly, Yamashita and Jiang (2010) emphasized the importance of focusing on “lexical networks” within learners’ L1 (p. 663), coupled with extensive exposure through reading and listening. In cases where instructors share students’ L1, it is advantageous for them to draw attention to differences in collocations between L1 and L2 to mitigate the negative influence of L1 (Lee, 2016; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Yamashita & Jiang; Ye, 2019). Chang (2018), on the other hand, proposed that long-term and consistent instruction on frequent collocation types, including adjective-noun and verb-noun combinations, is essential.

Further, researchers proclaimed that the teaching of collocations should be included as part of a syllabus (Nesselhauf, 2003; Yigit, 2021). Acknowledging the impracticality of teaching all collocations to learners, Nesselhauf (2003) advocated for the establishment of criteria to decide which collocations to incorporate into the syllabus. Specifically, these selected collocations should be deemed acceptable and prevalent in a neutral register. Moreover, when teaching verb-noun collocations, it is crucial to reference the learners’ L1, with a particular focus on the verb.

Limitations

The literature identified in this review did not provide consistent definitions and/or terminology regarding collocations, which affected the accuracy of the body of literature. Further, the definition of *collocations* varied across studies; therefore, the literature included a wide range of various collocations. In addition, different types of collocations were discussed in studies, confounding my ability to compare learners’ use of collocations across L1s or accurately focus on one particular type of collocation. There were also methodological issues that should be considered. The small sample size of some studies may limit the ability to

generalize the findings. For instance, one study recruited less than 10 EFL learners. Another issue was inconsistent requirements or restrictions for participants when collecting writing samples. For example, some were allowed to use language tools with unlimited time while others wrote the essays under test conditions. Moreover, genres of essays varied across studies as well. These factors may impact EFL learners' output of collocations (e.g., accuracy, applicability, correctness, underuse, or overuse of collocations). More importantly, it was entirely unclear if gender, age, ethnicity, or class played a role in collocation acquisition for EFL learners. Further, all studies were cross-sectional, thus restricting my ability to gauge EFL learners' growth and change over time. No longitudinal studies were conducted to repeatedly observe participants examining the learning outcomes of the recommended pedagogical interventions. The expansion of in-depth research is encouraged.

Implications for Future Research

The field can benefit from further research that explores the collocational usage of EFL learners in a more rigorous and systematic fashion. For example, writing samples collected from EFL learners and native speakers should be accomplished under the same conditions and restrictions (e.g., length, topics, genres, timed or untimed, with or without language tools, under test conditions or not). Moreover, future research could be conducted to measure whether gender, age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status plays a role in the acquisition of L2 collocations. Additional research is needed to understand more about EFL students' use of English collocations and the root cause of collocational errors, especially regarding L1 influence, to improve accuracy, fluency, and proficiency in English language use in the future.

References

- Boulton, A., & Cobb, T. (2017). Corpus use in language learning: a meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, 67(2), 348–393. <https://doi-org.uc.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/lang.12224>
- Chang, Y. (2018). Features of lexical collocations in L2 writing: A case of Korean adult learners of English. *English Teaching*, 73(2), 3–36.
- Galvan, J.L., & Galvan, M.C. (2017). *Writing literature reviews: a guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (7th ed.). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315229386>
- Jarvis, S. (2009). Lexical transfer in a Pavlenko (Ed.), *The Bilingual Mental Lexicon: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (pp. 99-124). Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847691262-007>
- Laufer, B., & Waldman, T. (2011). Verb-noun collocations in second language writing: a corpus analysis of learners' English. *Language Learning*, 61(2), 647–672. <https://doi-org.uc.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00621.x>
- Lee, S. (2016). L1 influence on the processing of L2 collocation: An experimental study of Korean EFL learners. *Linguistic Research*, 33, 137-163. <https://doi.org/10.17250/khisli.33.201609.006>
- Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach: putting theory into practice*. Language Teaching Publications.
- Nation, I. (2022). *Learning vocabulary in another language* (3rd ed., Cambridge Applied Linguistics). Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781009093873
- Nesselhauf, N. (2003). The use of collocations by advanced learners of English and some implications for teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 24(2), 223-242. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/24.2.223>
- Nesselhauf, N. (2005). *Collocations in a learner corpus* (Vol.14). John Benjamins Publishing.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Phoocharoensil, S. (2013). Cross-linguistic influence: Its impact on L2 English collocation production. *English Language Teaching (Toronto)*, 6(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n1p1>
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Wang, Y., & Shaw, P. (2008). Transfer and universality: Collocation use in advanced Chinese and Swedish learner English. *ICAME Journal*, 32(32), 201.

- Wu, J., & Tissari, H. (2021). Intensifier-verb collocations in academic English by Chinese learners compared to native-speaker students. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 44(4), 470-487. <https://doi.org/10.1515/CJAL-2021-0030>
- Wolter, B., & Gyllstad, H. (2013). Frequency of input and L2 collocational processing: A comparison of congruent and incongruent collocations. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 35(3), 451–482.
- Yamashita, J., & Jiang, N. (2010). L1 influence on the acquisition of L2 collocations: Japanese ESL users and EFL learners acquiring English collocations. *TESOL Quarterly*, 44(4), 647-668. <https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2010.235998>
- Ye, Z. (2019). Chinese to English lexical transfer errors in the writing of rural senior high school students. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 9(6), 645–654. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0906.06>
- Yigit, G. (2021). The influence of L1 on the acquisition of L2 collocations: Turkish ELT students. *TESL-EJ*, 25(3), 1–13.