

Teaching in Chunks: Facilitating English Proficiency

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With a trend toward the extension of vocabulary range and a well-deserved thanks to corpus linguistics, it is now increasingly accepted that language comprises a wide range of lexical chunks that the native speaker processes as prefabricated multi-word units such as collocations, idioms, and other fixed or semi-fixed expressions. However, there remains a lack of detailed description and practical strategies for collocational proficiency as a basis for understanding how chunking or collocational competence develops, despite the increasing amount written or spoken about the role of lexical chunks in vocabulary acquisition in the EFL context. This paper addresses some current issues in teaching English chunks and discusses the major methods and strategies for the learners in terms of the Lexical Approach. In addition, the importance of the teacher's role is emphasized based on the questionnaire presented, particularly for those interested in the development of lexical syllabi and incorporating grammar and vocabulary that facilitate student proficiency, as well as teacher proficiency. Finally, a few practical suggestions for teaching chunks and pedagogical implications are discussed.

[chunks/chunking/collocations/idioms/multi-word units/lexical approach/
뭉치말/뭉치말화/연어/관용어/다단어 단위/어휘적 접근 방식]

I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the real-time communication era brings vocabulary instruction to center stage in learning a second or foreign language. Traditionally, vocabulary teaching has focused on the single word as the nuclear unit. However, corpus linguistics and lexicology have suggested a larger scope for vocabulary instruction that includes multi-word items that are composed of two or more words. In doing so, they have pointed out the significance of the bonds between collocations, idioms, and other fixed or semi-fixed expressions. McCarthy (1990) claims that languages are

full of strong collocational pairs; collocation deserves to be the central aspect of vocabulary teaching. Collocation, therefore, must take center stage as a teaching tool to increase vocabulary and proficiency.

Thornbury (2002) states that "the ability to deploy a wide range of lexical chunks both accurately and appropriately is probably what most distinguishes advanced learners from intermediate ones" (p. 116). In other words, without knowing the principles and applications of lexical chunks, learners will not have a command of English that produces good quality output as well as comprehends complex input. Thus, researchers, writers, and teachers alike have begun to stress the lexical connections between words in English, giving particular emphasis to multi-word lexical items. Also, effective strategies for teaching those chunks are needed to help students improve their language skills. Sadly, these strategies are being applied in some contexts but in others undervalued or ignored.

In addition, good teachers recognize the central role of vocabulary knowledge in EFL learning. Particularly, lexical content in chunks is not merely an aggregation of independent words nor an unstructured list of words but a collection of interrelating networks of relations between words (Stubbs, 2001). However, traditional Korean vocabulary learning has focused upon memorizing isolated words, using bilingual dictionaries in a purely paired-translational equivalent fashion. As a result, students were often not aware of word combinations or collocations, even though they knew the meaning of the individual words (Nahk-Bohk Kim, 2004).

In recent years, the changing status of vocabulary has broadened the definition of vocabulary from single words to multi-word items or units (Fernando, 1996). Some vocabulary researchers and language instructors have adopted this extended concept of vocabulary beyond just individual words and their meanings. Based on this fundamental theoretical groundwork, this study will put forward the proposition that collocations or word combinations must be integrated and taught as a core component to improve the proficiency of Korean learners of English.

In order to ameliorate this process, teachers and researchers also need to explore how a word collocates with or is used in conjunction with other words. The present study identifies how lexical chunks are produced in written or spoken contexts. Furthermore, it suggests that exceptional resources for more effective and productive instruction of collocation, word groups, or chunks could significantly improve comprehension, acquisition, and proficiency in the EFL classroom and must be developed, and implemented.

II. CATEGORIZATION OF THE LEXICAL CHUNKS

The attention of linguistics has shifted increasingly from grammar to lexis (Krishnamurthy, 2002). Collocation recurs as a key component of lexis, or lexical chunks.¹ Palmer (1933) first proposed the idea of using lexical chunks as a language learning and teaching unit. Additionally, Sinclair (1991) proposed the idiom principle through which he stressed the phenomenon of most words being glued to other words. Lewis (1993) advocated the Lexical Approach (LA), which is a concept of incorporating a wide variety of lexical phrases such as holophrases (Corder, 1973), prefabricated routines and patterns (Hakuta, 1974), formulaic speech (Wong-Fillmore, 1976), memorized sentences and lexicalized stems (Pawley & Syder, 1983), lexical chunks (Lewis, 1993), formulas (Ellis, 1994), and phraseology (Howarth, 1998). Here is an overview of the types of chunks divided into three larger categories: collocations, idioms, and other multi-word chunks/items.

1. Collocations

Although collocations can be described in a number of ways, Lewis (1997) defines it as, "collocation is the phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur with other words with more than random frequency: the concept is central to the Lexical Approach" (p. 215). Given that most language is acquired and remembered lexically, it follows that beyond the definition of the collocation, we need to focus on strategies for teaching and learning collocations through a variety of methods in a more practical manner.

One way of thinking about collocations is in terms of 'fixedness'—in other words, the degree to which one can vary the basic pattern and still have a collocation. We can only define the fixedness or unfixedness of collocations in terms of a continuum. Because some are more fixed than others, we can not neatly divide between *fixed* and *unfixed*. We will discuss this issue in more detail in Figure 1.

Regarding the collocation types, *The BBI Dictionary* (Benson, Benson, & Ilson, 1997) divides collocations into two main syntactic groups: lexical collocations and grammatical ones. Lewis (2000) divided fixed expressions into three large configurations: they range from the totally fixed (*An apple a day keeps the doctor away*), the semi-fixed (*What I'm saying/suggesting/proposing is ...*), to the fairly

¹ Newell (1990) defines 'a chunk' as the main principle of human cognition: "A chunk is a unit of memory organization, formed by bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them together into a larger unit" (p. 7).

loose yet still predictable (*go on holiday*). According to Fernando (1996), some collocations, like idioms, show a habitual co-occurrence of words but these are multi-word expressions that permit lexical alternatives as a matter of course, either restricted (*addled eggs/brains*) or unrestricted (*catch a bus/train/tram*).

Hill (2000) offers the four schema for pointing out collocations to students based on collocational strength: (1) unique collocations (*foot the bill, shrug your shoulders*); (2) strong collocations (*trenchant criticism, rancid butter*); (3) weak collocations (*a tall woman, a red shirt*); (4) medium-strength collocations (*hold a conversation, a major operation*). However, Hill holds that it is the medium-strength collocations which are most important for the ESL classroom, such that the collocations in the middle of the collocational spectrum make up a large part of what we say and write.

A innumerable number of collocations can be found in real-life situations. Many researchers have implied that the acquisition of collocations is a key to native-like fluency (Lewis, 1993; McCarthy, 1990). On the basis of proposals of Benson et al. (1997), Hill (2000), and Lewis (1997, 2000), we can pick out and teach collocations, focusing on the four major types: noun+noun (N+N) collocations, adjective+noun (Adj+N) collocations, verb+noun (V+N) collocations, and verb+adverb (V+Adv) collocations. For example, if a learner knows the meaning of the noun 'exam', the teacher can try to expand a variety of word combinations as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Examples of Four Major Types of Collocations

Types	Examples
N + N	entrance exam, employment exam, bar exam, exam paper (sheet), exam questions, exam type, exam room (hall), exam technique, exam fee, exam nerves, exam results, eye exam, etc.
Adj + N	midterm exam, final exam, physical exam, competitive exam, professional exam, preliminary exam, difficult exam, easy exam, written exam, oral exam, etc.
V + N	take an exam, succeed in/pass an exam, retake an exam, conduct/administer/proctor an exam, cancel an exam, prepare/study/cram for an exam, postpone an exam, fail/flunk an exam, mess up an exam, cheat in an exam, etc.
V + Adv	pass the exam comfortably, pass the exam easily, barely pass the exam, pass the exam luckily, fail the exam dismally/unluckily, etc.

2. Idioms

Words generally come in expressions, not individually. Idioms² are among the most

² We need to make a distinction between idioms and slang. Although idioms and slang

common of these expressions. They form an important part of everyone's vocabulary and are used both in formal/informal and written/spoken language use situations. Simply, we can define idioms as multi-word chunks which usually have a different meaning when used together.

Many idioms are not so difficult to understand. For example, *hit the nail on the head*. If you understand the individual word *hit*, *nail*, and *head*, there's a very good chance you'll understand the figurative meaning of the idiom. Other idioms, such as *looking for a needle in a haystack*, may be more difficult to understand because of their low frequency vocabulary. In the same vein, Ellis (1997) states that "an important index of native-like competence is that the learner uses idioms as well as sequences within words fluently" (p. 130).

Goodale (1995) expounds that many English idioms can be translated into other languages almost word for word; some idioms can be easily understood because the meaning is translatable, but not the words. Others can be impossible to translate: these are often idioms which express cultural concepts. Also, he states that idioms have grammatical patterns and form word combinations as follows:

- a. Verb+noun phrase (e.g., face the music)
- b. Adjective+noun (e.g., red tape)
- c. Prepositional idioms (e.g., at loggerheads)
- d. Combinations of the above (e.g., bang your head against a brick wall) (p. vii)

These types of idioms are similar to the types of collocations in terms of word combinations including specific grammatical patterns. Goodale (1995) adds that native speakers use idioms for the following reasons: (1) to be amusing or witty; (2) to play with words; (3) to be different; (4) to put other people at ease, even in the most formal situations; (5) to express something which other words do not quite express; (6) to communicate more clearly, more visually (p. vi).

Howarth (1998) presents the split between idiomatic and non-idiomatic expressions applies equally to grammatical and lexical composites as shown Table 2. Basically collocations fit between free combinations on one side, and idioms on the other. Here if we assume that word combinations are represented by a continuum with free

commonly have idiomatic phrases which are composed of two or more words, idioms are different from slang in that idioms are used for a long period of time and fixed completely, especially in informal conversational setting, whereas slang tends to disappear after temporary popularity and are used by people who know each other very well or who have the same interests, jobs, or backgrounds.

combinations on one end and idioms on the other, then an idiom can also be described as ranging from partially fixed to frozen types which have a high degree of syntactic frozenness. That is, towards pure idioms, they are decreasing in compositionality due to their syntagmatic rigidity and semantical non-analyzability.

Table 2
Collocational Continuum

	Free/open combinations	Restricted collocations	Figurative idioms	Pure idioms
Lexical composites	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

Note. Source from Howarth (1998, p. 28).

Now, let us identify the similarities and differences between idioms and collocations. It is not easy to clearly differentiate the two concepts by using extreme poles. Collocations and idioms have in common that each consists of word combinations with two or more words and lexicogrammatical structures. Also, collocations are regarded as the lexical items with idiomaticity rather than idioms. The idiomaticity of lexical chunks is determined depending on the degree of fixedness of form and transparency of meaning. However, a fixed collocation has fixedness of the form in common with idioms.

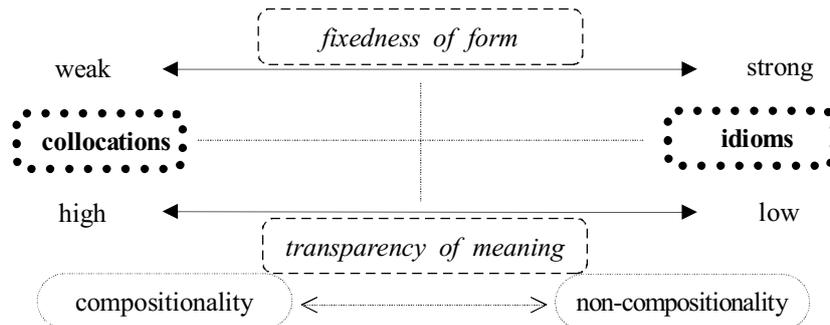


Figure 1. Comparisons between collocations and idioms.

As shown in Figure 1, idioms have the characteristics of strong structural fixedness which means we can not grasp the whole meaning from the components of the idiom. Collocations, in contrast, have much wider range; from non-compositional phrases

which have strong structural fixedness and weak transparency of meaning, to compositional phrases which have weak structural fixedness and strong transparency of meaning. For example, in the case of the fixed idiom *to spill the beans* (to tell/reveal a secret) which has a strong fixedness of form, we can not grasp the idiom from its literal meaning at all. Those examples are non-compositional phrases, that is, the entire phrases as a whole are not composed of the discrete parts. So they contradict the principle of compositionality.

3. Multi-word Chunks/Items

A multi-word chunk is a vocabulary item which consists of two or more words, forming a meaningful and inseparable unit semantically and/or syntactically. According to Moon's (1997) categories, there are three important criteria which help distinguish holistic multi-word items from other kinds of strings: institutionalization, fixedness, and non-compositionality.³ These three criteria co-relate and operate together. That is, the more the degree of fixedness of form is, the stronger the degree of non-compositionality is. A multi-word chunk can not be interpreted on a word by word atomical basis, but has a specialized unitary meaning. For example, when somebody *kicks the bucket* (i.e., *dies*) they are not actually doing anything to a receptacle with their foot. We can not understand the meaning of this chunk *kick the bucket* if we break it down; generally grasping the meaning of *kick* like *kick the ball* and the meaning of *the bucket* as container with an open top and a handle.

Let us look at the following multi-word chunks.

- a. Drop me a line.
- b. Keep me posted.
- c. Keep in touch.
- d. Keep me updated.
- e. I love to hear from you.

These multi-word chunks have almost the same meaning. When we part with someone we use these expressions in order to let someone know we want to keep contact with them. Thus, we have to take these chunks as individual units or lexical chunks, not discrete ones. Moon (1997) states that a multi-word item is a

³ "Non-compositionality is the degree to which a multi-word item can not be interpreted on a word-by-word basis, but has a specialized unitary meaning" (Moon, 1997, p. 44).

superordinate term. It includes the following different types of multi-word item: compounds, phrasal verbs, fixed phrases and prefabs. Many open or two-word compounds are nouns, verbs, adjectives, composing of several types: e.g., nouns like *cable car*, *garden flower*; verbs like *freeze-dry*, *hang-dry*; adjectives like *long-haired*, *three-legged*. In many cases, in order to form compounds, they are typically hyphenated.

Regarding multi-word chunks, Lewis (1997) also suggests the following four major taxonomies of lexical chunks: (1) words (e.g., *book*, *pen*), polywords (e.g., *by the way*, *upside down*); (2) collocations, or word partnerships (e.g., *community service*, *absolutely convinced*); (3) institutionalized utterances (e.g., *I'll get it*; *We'll see*; *That'll do*; *if I were you*); (4) sentence frames and heads (e.g., *that is not as...as you think*; *The fact/suggestion/problem/danger was ...*). Within the lexical approach, special attention is directed to collocations and lexical expressions that include institutionalized utterances and sentence frames and heads. That is, rather than trying to break things into ever smaller pieces, there is a conscious effort to see things in larger, more holistic chunking ways.

III. STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING CHUNKS

Lexical chunks such as collocations have emerged as an important category of lexical patterning, but they have not yet become an established unit of description in language teaching courses and materials. Fundamentally, if we have an essential lexical knowledge suitable for communication situations, we can easily make a sentence that we want to express, and extend from a phrasal or sentence expression to a discourse. Therefore, chunking is central to effective communication, and efficient acquisition (Lewis, 1997). The single most important contribution the teacher can make to ensuring that input becomes intake, is ensuring that learners notice the collocations and other phrases in the input language.

1. Textual Analysis

Extraction of concordances, collocations, and word frequency are available from corpora. Here we focus on one activity, that of 'concordancing', and how it is used to help the students develop their knowledge of collocations and patterns. Concordances provide much richer sources of co-textual information than dictionaries, and they can lead to a more efficient exploration of the collocates of a word. Thus,

concordancing is an essential tool for effective independent learning.

We can look for all the instances of a target word/string in the corpus or concordance to the text being used and find the entries or citations in which they appear as shown in Table 3 below. Due to the lack of explicit and systematic explanations of the operation of vocabulary in English textbooks used in Korea, teachers and students have difficulty in teaching and learning lexis. A concordance is an alphabetical index of the principal words of a book, as of a textbook, with a reference to the passage in which each occurs. Teachers can use the specific word or phrases through corpus analysis (Nahk-Bohk Kim, 2004).

Table 3

Concordance Lines of Wear from 12 Korean High School Textbooks

... you're pretty strict in general. We don't	wear	uniforms, though. Most American schools ...
...e from the car in front, and they don't	wear	seat belts. What is reaction time? ...
... happen to the stopping time when you	wear	a seat belt? In Korea, wearing seat b...
... seat belts! It is simply foolish not to	wear	one. Lesson 7. Teen Worries Readi ...
... ater. Or it is a shirt you might rarely	wear.	Perhaps it is a comic book you will be ...
... may be a little strange, but I like to	wear	all the same color. One day I wear all ...
...e to wear all the same color. One day I	wear	all green clothes, another day all blac...
... others, another day all black. I usually	wear	blue on Monday. After I get dressed, I ...
...t. First, when you are in a car, always	wear	a seat belt. Even if you are sitting in ...
...re sitting in the back seat, you should	wear	your seat. In addition, whether yo...
... top. Sometimes he says, "Why do you	wear	make-up? You look so much prettier with ...
... She looked everywhere for something to	wear,	but the only thing site could find tha...
... owever, most high school students don't	wear	a custom to school. After dark, young ...
... ring wet suits. What do the haenyeo	wear?	How long can haenyeo the stay under wa...
... their used cellular phones? He doesn't	wear	leather shoe or belts or even wool swea ...
...e aims to convince people that they can	wear	beautiful clothes, eat great food an en...
...ture. Why do you think Danny doesn't	wear	leather products? Lesson 10 The Wa...
... ll-known abroad. Ondol We do not	wear	shoes in our homes. We want to keep our ...
...ts. DARK UNIFORMS Teams often	wear	dark uniforms for road games. Do you kn...
... an around 1890. Baseball teams chose to	wear	gray, blue, or dark red uniforms during ...
... at school just before 8 O'clock. We all	wear	our school uniforms which are white and ...

Note. Source from Nahk-Bohk Kim (2004, pp. 61-62).

Generally, existing corpora from textual analysis focus on lexical chunks which meet grammatical requirements. So, lexical items are relatively consciously learned even in natural language learning situations in the classroom; the use of existing corpora with adequate linguistic and lexical modifications can serve as good pedagogical materials (Duk-ki Kim & Dong-kwang Shin, 2004). Nahk-Bohk Kim (2004) substantiated that 12 Korean textbooks used in high school were inadequate resources for teachers and learners to use collocation data effectively for language

teaching and learning. In the same vein, in many cases, the corpora based on the textbooks used in Korea lack enough information on the specific lexical chunks. Given these findings it is perhaps essential that students/teachers rely on the use of collocation-based dictionaries in order to compensate for the shortage of necessary information about lexical chunks as well as actual word function and use.

2. Dictionary Use

Unlike the traditional dictionary in which the entries give the meaning of single words, a collocation dictionary made on the basis of the corpus-based studies has very useful and invaluable information on how to use the word and when to use the word. It is worth emphasizing to students that they do not really know or own a word unless they also know how the given word is used, which means knowing something about its collocational field. A collocation-based dictionary is a new kind of dictionary that helps learners of English use the words they know more effectively.

As previously mentioned, if we want to speak and write naturally, then we must combine words naturally as they collocate with other words. In situating the words, where to place collocations in dictionaries is determined by which word functions as the base and which functions as the collocator. The base, in the large part, bears most of the meaning of the collocation and triggers the use of the collocator. For example, in the collocation, *take a test*, *test* is the base and the verb *take*, a semantically empty word in this context as a de-lexicalized verb,⁴ is the collocator. The base-collocator pairs listed in Table 4 illustrate why this is the case. In order to get much more information on collocations or lexical chunks, and enhance awareness of the resources, we should and must have access to collocation dictionaries, such as *The BBI Dictionary* (Benson et al., 1997), *LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations* (Hill & Lewis, 1997), *Oxford Collocations Dictionary* (Crowther, Dignen, & Lea, 2002). Recently, much work and several dictionaries dealing with collocations have emerged from or been influenced by corpus-based research.

⁴ These verbs like 'take', 'do', 'make', 'have', 'put' are components in a large number of multi-word expressions. They are used in a wide range of patterns which are thought of as part of grammar of English, rather than just as words in the lexicon, generally creating many collocational connections such as 'take a rest', 'do some exercises', 'make a decision', 'have my hair done', and 'put someone at their ease'.

Table 4

Examples of Base-Collocator Pairs

Base	Collocator	Example
Noun	Noun	<i>pain relief</i>
Noun	Verb	<i>take a test</i>
Noun	Adjective	<i>natural resources</i>
Verb	Adverb	<i>issue regularly</i>
Adjective	Adverb	<i>newly released</i>
Verb	Preposition	<i>take off</i>
Noun	Preposition	<i>without success</i>

3. Lexical Notebooks/Syllabus

In order to encourage students to be aware of the principle of collocations, or lexical chunks, a well-organized lexical notebook is essential for all students. Through the notebooks, lexical chunks need to be recycled to be learnt through a variety of exposures. If recycling is neglected, many partially-known chunks will be forgotten, wasting all the efforts already put into learning them. When dealing with any texts, teachers should be asking students to notice and underline useful collocational pairs, and encouraging learners to store them in their notebooks in some retrievable way, along with the L1 equivalents of the whole collocation. Through this method, we can identify that unpredictable and non-congruent collocations are naturally vulnerable to interlingual interference. Also by making sense of text, teachers need to help students be aware of collocations as a vital key to L2 language learning. A typical exercise would be asking students to underline all V+N collocations in a text. Taking a common word and asking students to find as many collocates as they can would be another typical activity in raising lexical awareness.

On the one hand, Willis (1990) advocated the lexical syllabus, which attempts to focus on the lexical entry in order to make learners expose to the natural language. Willis and Willis (1988) also tried to apply a lexical syllabus to the classroom with a task-based methodology for the first time, and their first practical model was *Collins COBUILD English Course*. Lewis (2000) attempts a wide variety of approaches to putting the lexical approach into the classroom in terms of integrating four skills through classroom strategies and activities.

In addition, we can modify and adapt existing books and vocabulary-building books based on word-lists or roots and affixes. Reading in most textbooks is organized around theme based material such as environment or language. This presents an ideal opportunity to train students to observe collocations in their reading,

and to note and use these expressions in learning activities. With this method, we can record and recycle the given collocation in different settings like Table 5.

Table 5
Examples of Make-up of Lexical Notebooks

A		B	
Verb (Verb phrases)	Noun	Verb	Noun (Noun phrases)
increase/build (up)			a shower/medicine
beef up/improve			into account/responsibility
extend/expand/widen			a picture/a deep breath
memorize/have	one's (a/the) vocabulary	take	a day off/a test/an exam
store/enrich/learn			a look (at)/advantage of
brush up/enhance			a course/a walk/action
coin/find/acquire			a nap/the train
develop/enlarge			my word/a break/notes
use/employ			a seat/it easy

Table 6
Examples of Chunking with the Verb 'Run'

A	B
	a in my family
	b a fancy restaurant
	c every thirty minutes
	d high over the project
run(s)	e for mayor in 2008
	f out of time
	g an errand
	⋮
	⋮

a. Musical talent runs in my family.
b. My father runs a fancy restaurant.
c. The school shuttle bus runs every thirty minutes.
d. Expectations are running high for the project.
e. He is running for mayor in 2008.
f. We am running out of time.
g. My sister runs an errand.
⋮

In Table 5, column A is the collocator *verb* which must be elicited for activating the base *noun*, whereas Column B is the base *noun* which is elicited for activating the collocator *verb*. In other words, we can try to make learners match the most

suitable word collocating with verbs on the left/right column from nouns column, using each verb only one among other delexicalized verb such as make, do, have, etc. Also, teachers can purposely utilize the collocations listed in reading in extended classroom English. Table 6 shows the benefit of the lexical notebook, helping prevent the confusion by noticing the usage of the polysemous word the verb 'run'.

4. Lexicogrammar Continuum

In the past, grammar and vocabulary were considered a dichotomous branch. However, in teaching chunks, the grammar/vocabulary dichotomy is invalid because a significant amount of the English language is made up of multi-word chunks or lexical phrases. That is, language consists of grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar (Lewis, 1993). Thus, we try to integrate grammar and vocabulary as an organizing principle within a syllabus and a lesson plan. In classroom activities, it is better to conceive grammar and lexicon in the line of one continuum as lexicogrammar while trying to incorporate lexical ideas into the lesson. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) referred to the grammar and vocabulary continuum, saying that what is handled by the grammar of one language may be part of the vocabulary of another like Figure 2, which shows that more stable aspects of meaning tend to be represented lexically whereas more fluid and complex messages require grammar in addition to lexicon for their expression.

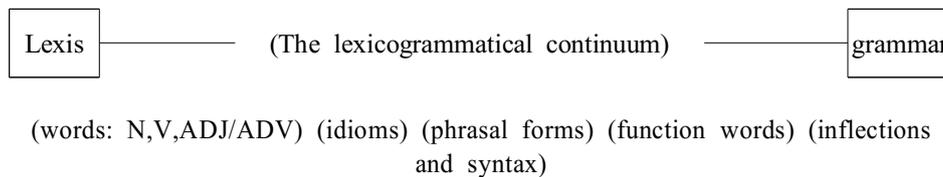


Figure 2. Lexicogrammar continuum. Source from CelceMurcia and Olshtain (2000, p. 77).

Addressing the focus of this research, even though we know the meaning of words individually, we often can not express our ideas appropriately with single words. We have to know how to deal with combinations of words that go together in various manners. In this vein, Ooi and Lee (1996) point out that the usefulness of the target items to be presented in collocation by teaching a verb with a noun, an adjective with a noun, an adverb with a verb or adjective, and a verb with a preposition. Thereby, the student is directed to the lexical items with a word-like object representing a

single sense selection. Beyond the traditional structural approach, many scholars try to integrate vocabulary and grammar in a continuum (Decarrico, 2001; Ellis, 1997; Lewis, 1997; Willis, 1990; Woolard, 2000).

In conclusion, the strategies mentioned above can give learners several benefits and make lots of contributions to success of language learning. In other words, the chunked expressions enable learners to reduce cognitive effort and to save processing time and to have language for immediate use (Nation, 2001). By having chunked knowledge in long-term memory, not only language reception but also production can be made more effective.

IV. THE TEACHER'S ROLE

In order to identify teachers' perception of vocabulary teaching in the classroom, I did a simple survey about vocabulary teaching and assessment, using a questionnaire which was conducted in August, 2007. The participants were 41 teachers (male 16, female 25; middle school 16, high school 25) who participated in the in-service teaching training for first-class certification at Chungcheongnam-do Teachers' Training Center. Teachers had generally had less than 5 years of teaching experience. A 10-item questionnaire was administered to see how teachers teach and assess vocabulary in the classroom.

Table 7

Teacher's Recognition of Teaching Vocabulary and Dictionary Use

Item No.	Content	Responses (N/%)				
		①	②	③	④	⑤
1	Perception of importance of vocabulary			1 (2.4)	20 (48.8)	20 (48.8)
3	Investing time for teaching vocabulary	3 (3.7)	13 (31.7)	19 (46.3)	6 (14.6)	
10	Types of dictionary used	31 (75.6)	8 (19.5)	2 (4.9)		

Table 7 shows that almost all the teachers (40 out of 41 respondents) thought of vocabulary as a crucial factor in learning English, and most teachers invested 5-10 minutes for vocabulary teaching (78%) in a lesson. In an attempt to expand English vocabulary, the use of dictionaries is essential for learners to gain proficiency. Most of the surveyed English teachers used bilingual dictionaries (75.6%). This figure indicates that teachers tend to look up the unknown or confused words in the

English-Korean dictionary, depending on the single word. They are familiar and comfortable with that kind of method. As this study has addressed, we already know that the method is not useful or helpful as we think.

Table 8 shows that more than half of the secondary teachers knew the concept of the collocations or chunks. However, few teachers among them actually implemented teaching about collocations in the classroom (A: 4.9%, SA: 2.4%), even though a majority of teachers had high recognition of the importance of vocabulary in learning English. Based on this data, we can infer that even though teachers knew about the concept of collocations or chunks, they did not recognize the theoretical and practical benefits for classroom practice. The results tell us that lexical chunks such as collocations have emerged as an important category of lexical patterning, however they have not yet become an established unit of description in language teaching courses and materials (Nahk-Bohk Kim, 2004).

Table 8

Teacher's Satisfaction with Textbooks and Implementation of Teaching Vocabulary

Item No.	Content	Responses (N/%)				
		①	②	③	④	⑤
4	Satisfaction with textbooks' wordlist		18 (43.9)	13 (31.7)	9 (22.0)	1 (2.4)
5	Satisfaction with the vocabulary make-up of the textbooks		21 (51.2)	14 (34.1)	5 (12.2)	1 (2.4)
8	Recognition of collocations or chunks	3 (7.3)	10 (24.4)	12 (29.3)	10 (24.4)	6 (14.6)
9	Implementation of collocations	7 (17.1)	23 (56.1)	8 (19.5)	2 (4.9)	1 (2.4)

Note. The researcher used 5 Likert scales in item 4, 5, 8, 9: ① = strongly disagree (SD), ② = disagree (D), ③ = neither agree nor disagree (N), ④ = agree (A), and ⑤ = strongly agree (SA).

As shown in Table 8, a number of teachers were not satisfied with the textbooks' wordlist (D: 43.9%, N: 31.7%). Furthermore, only a small number of teachers were satisfied with the make-up of the textbooks (14.6%). On this point, Nahk-Bohk Kim (2003) investigated 12 different high school textbooks for 10th graders and found that "all books have a wordlist or a list of phrases that can be found in an appendix. However, they are of limited value to the teacher because little explicit teachable material is presented" (p. 231).

Table 9 shows the result of the teacher's types and methods of vocabulary teaching and assessing. Many teachers assigned some vocabulary for next period to

Table 9
Teacher's Types and Methods of Vocabulary Teaching

Item No.	Content	Responses (N/%)				
		①	②	③	④	⑤
2	Types of teaching vocabulary	assignment	introduction stage	culmination stage	incidental instruction	almost nothing
		11 (26.8)	19 (46.3)	1 (2.4)	9 (22.0)	1 (2.4)
6	Methods of teaching vocabulary	word lists	derivatives	semantic mapping based on topic	guessing in context	chunks -based instruction
		18 (43.9)	12 (29.3)	3 (7.3)	6 (14.6)	2 (4.9)
7	Methods of checking vocabulary learning	oral test	written test	group checking	ppt. or computer	performance evaluation
		6 (14.6)	17 (41.5)			18 (43.9)

the students and checked it before the next main class (26.8%), or in the middle of the class (46.3%). In the method of vocabulary teaching, a number of teachers (43.9%) followed the traditional method, which mainly focuses on the use of bilingual dictionaries in a purely paired-translational equivalent fashion. The second method of teaching vocabulary is to teach the derivatives such as antonym, synonym, prefix and suffix, etc (29.3%). These two methods mainly dominate the secondary English vocabulary teaching. In methods of checking vocabulary learning, teachers preferred performance assessment (43.9%). Also, they made use of written tests (41.5%) more than oral tests (14.6%).

With these results, we can conclude tentatively that the Korean secondary teachers implemented vocabulary through direct teaching rather than indirect teaching. Also, they followed conventional methods such as focusing on the individual words, giving assignments or teaching vocabulary in the introduction phase. As we can know well, in studying English, the secondary school students are exposed to a more critical period than any other in terms of crossing the bridge from the beginning to the intermediate or advanced level. They will be greatly influenced for a long period of time by the activities, exercises, and methods they experience in school days. So, in order to improve learners' English proficiency, teachers consciously need to apply the collocational approaches to English vocabulary teaching in terms of chunking the words, since learners can not learn English effectively without an effort-effective, principled method.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Vocabulary is not just words but more than words (Gough, 2001; Lewis, 1997). Just knowing the word and its meaning in a purely paired-translational equivalent fashion is of little value for improving English proficiency. We also need to know how a word collocates with other words in context and how the word combinations work in chunks. An approach that includes collocations, or word combinations leads to improvement in reading ability, vocabulary development, and English proficiency (Taeduck Hyun, 2007; Nahk-Bohk Kim, 2003, 2007; Jeong-Won Lee & Nahk-Bohk Kim, 2005). Furthermore, "fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items, which are available as the foundation for any linguistic novelty or creativity" (Lewis, 1997, p. 15). Thus, the chunks-based approach to second language teaching has received interest in recent years as a strong alternative to grammar-based approaches. It concentrates on developing learners' proficiency with lexis, or words and word combinations and is based on the idea that an important part of language acquisition is the ability to comprehend and produce lexical phrases as unanalyzed wholes, or chunks.

From a chunking point of view, language consists not of traditional grammar and words but often of lexis, ready-made chunks. Thus, an explanation for native speakers' fluency is that vocabulary is not stored only as individual words, but as parts of phrases and larger chunks that can be retrieved from memory as a whole, reducing processing difficulties. On the other hand, learners who only learn individual words will need a lot more time and effort to express themselves (Lewis, 1997). Consequently, explicit teaching of chunks needs to be fully implemented in English education in order to facilitate students' understanding, use and proficiency of appropriate chunks in the target language. In addition, it is vital to make students aware of chunks, giving them opportunities to identify, organize and record frequent and routine chunks.

This study recommends that various methods and strategies be further developed for English teachers to teach English vocabulary in a more effort-effective and principled manner by utilizing, describing, and explaining collocational pairs and lexical chunks within the lesson. In teaching chunks, we need students to think about and practice X+Y combinations as in Table 1 through an X+Y collocation game as a vocabulary awareness activity. Actually, our brain tends to store language in chunks, rather than individual words. Thus, when we speak or write, it is more efficient for us to remember and use phrases as chunks rather than constructing them one word at a time. This increased efficiency also promotes fluency as well as

accuracy. Finally, above all, teachers are the most important factor for language learners to acquire institutionalized chunks of words. In other words, foreign language teachers should develop activities to raise students' collocating awareness of the strategies they use by helping them become aware of the language chunks in the input they receive and the output they produce.

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APPENDIX

Survey Questionnaire⁵

다음은 자료 처리를 위한 조사입니다. 해당번호에 'V'표시를 하여 주십시오.

1. 성별

(1) 남 ()	(2) 여 ()
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2. 학교 급별

(1) 중학교 ()	(2) 고등학교 ()
-------------	--------------
3. 교직 경력

(1) 5년 미만 ()	(2) 5 ~ 10년 ()
(3) 11 ~ 15년 ()	(4) 16 ~ 20년 ()
(5) 21년 이상 ()	

※ 다음 질문에 선생님의 진솔한 의견(생각)을 해당번호 하나에 'V'표시하여 주십시오.

1. 선생님께서는 영어 학습에서 어휘가 차지하고 있는 비중이 높다고 보십니까?
 ① 전혀/거의 그렇지 않다 ② 별로 그렇지 않다 ③ 보통이다 ④ 대체로 그렇다 ⑤ 매우 그렇다
2. 선생님께서는 학생들의 어휘력 향상을 위해 어휘지도를 주로 어떻게 하고 계십니까?
 ① 학습할 부분의 어휘를 과제로 내주고 수행여부를 수업 중 점검한다.
 ② 본 수업 시간 전에(도입단계에서) 별도로 일정 시간을 내어 학습할 어휘를 직접 지도한다.

⁵ This questionnaire was originally written in Korean when it was given to the secondary teachers. For accuracy of interpretation, it is shown here in its original Korean form, rather than in translation.

- ③ 본 수업 후에(정리단계에서) 별도로 일정 시간을 내어 학습한 어휘를 직접 지도한다.
- ④ 수업 시간 중 어휘지도가 필요한 경우(예: 독해/청해 지도 중) 간접적으로 지도한다.
- ⑤ 어휘 학습은 학생들에게 주로 맡기고 지도는 별도로 거의 하지 않는다.

3. 선생님께서는 수업 중에 어휘 학습 지도를 위해 수업 한 시간에 평균 어느 정도의 시간을 할애하고 있습니까?

- ① 5분 이내 ② 5분 정도 ③ 10분 정도 ④ 15분 정도 ⑤ 20분 이상

4. 현재 사용 중인 교과서의 부록에 나와 있는 어휘 목록(wordlist)의 구성에 대해 만족하십니까?

- ① 전혀/거의 그렇지 않다 ② 별로 그렇지 않다 ③ 보통이다 ④ 대체로 그렇다 ⑤ 매우 그렇다

5. 현재 사용 중인 교과서의 어휘 학습 부분(words in context, key/useful/idiomatic expressions, word power, word partnership 등) 구성에 대해 만족하십니까?

- ① 전혀/거의 그렇지 않다 ② 별로 그렇지 않다 ③ 보통이다 ④ 대체로 그렇다 ⑤ 매우 그렇다

6. 선생님께서는 수업 중에 어휘 학습 지도 유형(중점을 두는 형태)을 주로 어디에 두고 계십니까?

- ① 교과서에 나와 있는 어휘 목록(word lists)처럼 학습할 영어 단어에 해당하는 한국어의 의미를 묻고 가르친다(예, decision: 결정/결심 또는 결정/결심: decision).
- ② 학습할 영어 단어의 파생어(접두사, 어근, 접미사 등), 유의어, 반의어 등을 함께 가르친다(decide, decisive, decided, decider, undecided, decision, decision-making...).
- ③ 주제별로 의미망을 활용하여 학습할 어휘와 의미적 연관이 있는 어휘를 함께 익히도록 가르친다.
- ④ 학습할 영어 단어가 포함된 문장(문맥)을 주고 그 의미를 추측(추론)하게 한다.
- ⑤ 기본 단어와 결합되는 어휘를 뭉치말(어휘덩어리)로 함께 익히도록 가르친다.

7. 선생님께서는 교실 내에서 학생들의 어휘력을 주로 어떻게 점검하십니까?

- ① 차시에 배워야할 단어를 제시해 주고 암기하도록 한 후 다음 수업 시간에 외웠는지 유무를 단어 퀴즈나 질의 응답 형태의 구두로 확인한다.
- ② 매 시간이나 종종 알아야할 영어 단어를 한 쪽에 써놓고(handout 등 이용) 그 것에 해당하는 우리말을 쓰도록 하여(쪽지 시험 등) 확인한다.
- ③ 소집단(모둠)이나 짝 활동 등을 통해 학습자 상호 간 어휘력을 평가하고 확인하도록 하는 집단 확인(개인 스스로 확인 포함)을 권장한다.
- ④ 중요한 단어 목록을 교육 공학 기기나 영상매체 등(칠판, 파워 포인트, 컴퓨터 등)을 활용하여 단어를 제시하고 그 의미를 학생을 지정하여(혹은 집단별로) 확인한다.
- ⑤ 어휘력은 정기 고사나 수행 평가 등에 반영하여 시험 형태로 확인한다.

8. 선생님께서는 어휘 지도 방법에 있어 연어(collocations)나 뭉치말(chunks)같은 용어의 개념을 알고 계십니까?

- ① 전혀/거의 그렇지 않다 ② 별로 그렇지 않다 ③ 보통이다 ④ 대체로 그렇다 ⑤ 매우 그렇다

9. 선생님께서는 연어/뭉치말 방식으로 어휘 지도를 실천하고 계십니까?
① 전혀/거의 그렇지 않다 ② 별로 그렇지 않다 ③ 보통이다 ④ 대체로 그렇다 ⑤ 매우 그렇다
10. 선생님께서 주로 사용하고 있는 사전(전자사전 포함)의 종류는 무엇입니까?
① 영한 사전 ② 영영한 사전 ③ 영영 사전 ④ 한영 사전 ⑤ 연어 사전

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