

**A STUDY OF COLLOCATION ERRORS AMONG CHINESE  
LEARNERS OF ENGLISH (WITH REFERENCE TO CHINESE  
COLLEGE STUDENTS OF TONGJI UNIVERSITY IN CHINA)**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**2014**

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UNIVERSITY IN CHINA)**

**YE HONG**

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on collocation errors among Chinese learners of English. The main purposes are: 1) to describe and contrast the collocations of Chinese (Mandarin) and English; 2) to explain the occurrence of the major types of errors of English collocations committed by the Chinese learners of English; 3) to identify the areas of difficulty including the MT interference and hierarchy of difficulty encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations using CA and EA. To achieve these goals, both English and Chinese collocations are described and compared, which has been received little attention in the past.

The data was collected from one writing task administered during classroom hours. The learner corpus consisted of 117 pieces of written texts. In the data analysis, received categories about linguistic errors were critically scrutinized. Wordsmith Tool with concordance lines of BNC and LC was employed to highlight selected KWIC. Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary was also used to identify and analyze errors. SPSS and MicroFinder were employed to count the numbers and percentages of errors in the EA.

CA involves two methods - theoretical CA and applied CA, the latter of which is also Error Analysis (EA). The former is aimed at predicting potential learning difficulties by analyzing the differences between the structures of MT and TL. The latter is aimed at identifying and explaining actual errors committed by the students. In fact, both approaches are useful in the explanation of errors in a TL. This study gave a detailed description of the procedure of EA in concurrence with the CA method.

This study identified seven categories of English collocation errors. They were errors on noun + noun / prepositional phrase collocation, noun + verb / phrasal verb

collocation, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, adjective + noun collocation, verb + adverb collocation, adverb + adjective + noun collocation, and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation. Errors on English subject-predicate structures were found to be the most common among all subcategories of English collocations among Chinese learners of English, followed by English verb + noun collocation errors, and adverb + verb and adverb + adjective + noun collocation errors were the least common. English attributive modifier + head noun collocations are less common than verb + noun collocation errors.

Intralingual source of errors found in the context such as ignorance of restrictive collocation rules of English was found to be most responsible for English collocation errors committed by Chinese learners of English. From lexical and grammatical levels of collocations, violation of English lexical collocations is found more than that of grammatical collocations. They are grammatically and semantically plausible but inappropriate use in the context.

In terms of syntax, English collocation errors were traced back to interference from the MT. Chinese compounds, Chinese non-phrasal verbs and non-inflectional morphology in part-of-speech were structurally different from English and thus interfered with the learning of English collocations among Chinese learners of English.

Areas of difficulty in the learning of English collocations and the hierarchy of difficulty identified from CA were found to keep agreement with those found from EA. Hence, this verifies that Contrastive Analysis (CA) is a useful tool to predict potential problems facing learners. Intralingual errors and errors due to circumlocution (using more words than necessary) identified from EA indicate that EA is a complement to CA in identifying all possible learner errors. Therefore, blending of CA into EA to construct an

integrated theory and approach is significant in the identification, explanation and identification of TL errors. Pedagogically, the finding implies that CA-based methodology will enable students to locate and focus on the difficulties in learning English vocabulary to enhance teaching effectiveness. EA can be helpful in identifying all possible errors and thus overcoming them. Learning strategies such as collocation strategy is important for learners in the learning of English vocabulary.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini berfokus pada kesilapan kolokasi di kalangan pelajar Cina yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah: 1) untuk mengenal pasti aspek-aspek kesukaran dan tahap kesukaran yang dihadapi oleh pelajar Cina dalam penggunaan kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris; 2) untuk menerangkan kejadian jenis kesilapan utama kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris yang dilakukan oleh pelajar Cina dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris, dan 3) untuk mengesyorkan strategi dan prosedur yang sesuai untuk membantu pelajar Cina mengatasi masalah mereka dalam pembelajaran kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris. Untuk mencapai matlamat ini, kedua-dua sistem kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris dan Cina, yang kurang mendapat perhatian pada masa lalu, diterangkan dan dibandingkan.

Data dikumpulkan dari satu aktiviti penulisan yang di jalankan semasa waktu kelas. Korpus pelajar terdiri daripada 117 helai teks bertulis. Dalam analisis data, kategori tentang kesilapan linguistik telah diteliti secara kritis. Wordsmith Tool dengan garisan konkordans BNC dan LC telah diguna untuk menyerlahkan KWIC yang dipilih. *Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary* juga telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti dan menganalisis kesilapan. MicroFinder dan SPSS digunakan untuk mengira peratusan kesilapan dalam Analisis Kesilapan (EA).

Analisis Bandingan atau Konstratif (CA) melibatkan dua kaedah - teori CA dan gunaan CA, di mana gunaan CA adalah juga Analisis Kesilapan (EA). Teori CA bertujuan meramalkan potensi kesukaran pembelajaran dengan menganalisis perbezaan antara struktur bahasa ibunda (MT) dan bahasa sasaran (TL). Gunaan CA pula bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti dan menerangkan kesilapan sebenar yang dilakukan oleh pelajar. Malah,

kedua-dua pendekatan berguna dalam menjelaskan kesilapan dalam TL. Kajian ini memberi penerangan terperinci tentang prosedur EA yang berkait rapat dengan kaedah CA.

Kajian ini mengenal pasti tujuh kategori kesilapan kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris. Struktur subjek-predikat adalah yang paling biasa digunakan dalam semua sub-kategori kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris manakala gabungan adverba + kata kerja adalah jarang digunakan. Dalam Bahasa Inggeris, kolokasi kata pengubahsuaian sifat + kata nama di posisi depan adalah kurang ditemui kalau dibandingkan dengan kesilapan kolokasi kata nama + kata kerja.

Punca kesilapan intralingual yang berkait dengan konteks seperti kekurangan pengetahuan tentang peraturan terhadap kolokasi leksikal Bahasa Inggeris didapati menjadi sebab utama untuk kesilapan kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris. Kolokasi ini munasabah dari segi penggunaan tatabahasa dan semantik tetapi tidak sesuai berdasarkan konteks.

Dari segi sintaksis, punca utama kesilapan kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris adalah gangguan dari bahasa ibunda (MT). Antara beberapa aspek Bahasa Cina yang mengganggu pembelajaran kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris adalah kata majmuk Bahasa Cina yang berupa perumpamaan yang terbentuk daripada empat aksara, kata kerja yang bukan frasa kata kerja, kategori nahu kata yang tidak mengalami perubahan infleksi dan yang berbeza dari segi struktur berbanding dengan Bahasa Inggeris.

Ramalan tentang aspek yang sukar dalam kolokasi Bahasa Inggeris dan tahap kesukaran mengikut CA selaras dengan kesukaran yang dikenal pasti dalam Analisis Kesilapan. Ini mengesahkan bahawa CA adalah alat yang berguna untuk meramalkan masalah-masalah yang mungkin dihadapi oleh pelajar. Gabungan CA dengan EA untuk membina satu teori dan pendekatan yang bersepadu adalah penting dalam pengenalan, penjelasan dan ramalan kesilapan TL. Dari segi pedagogi, dapatan kajian menunjukkan



bahawa kaedah berasaskan CA akan membolehkan pelajar untuk mengenalpasti dan memberi tumpuan kepada kesukaran dalam pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata Bahasa Inggeris untuk meningkatkan keberkesanan pengajaran. EA boleh membantu dalam mengenal pasti kesilapan yang mungkin akan dihadapi dan seterusnya cara untuk mengatasinya. Strategi pembelajaran seperti strategi kolokasi kata-kata adalah penting untuk pelajar dalam pembelajaran perbendaharaan kata Bahasa Inggeris.

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

1	AC	Adjective + Complement
2	APs	Adjective Phrases
3	BNC	British National Corpus of British English
4	BROWN	Brown University Corpus of American English
5	CA	Contrastive Analysis
6	CAH	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
7	CET-band 4 / 6	(national) College English Test level 4 / 6 In China
8	CLEC	Chinese Learner English Corpus
9	CLS	Classifier
10	COCNUS	Corpus of Canadian Native University Student English Essays

11	COSDV		Collocations of Six De-lexicalized Verbs
12	De	attributive particle	Signal of Chinese Adjective
13	DE	adverbial / auxiliary particle	signal of Chinese adverb
14	EA		Error Analysis
15	ECNS		English Corpus of Native Speakers
16	EFL		English as a Foreign Language
17	ELT		English Language Teaching
18	EMT-Band 8		English Major Test of China Level 8
19	FL		Foreign Language
20	FLA		Foreign Language Acquisition
21	FLT		Foreign Language Teaching
22	KWIC		Key Word In the Context
23	LC		Learner Corpus
24	le		Perfective Aspect
25	LOB		Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English
26	LOCNESS		An A – Level English Native Speaker Corpus
27	LTL		Language Teaching-Learning
28	LTLM		Language Teaching-Learning Methods
29	L1		The 1 <sup>st</sup> Language / MT
30	L2		The 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language /TL
31	MT		Mother Tongue
32	NPs		Noun Phrases

33	p	Perfect Aspect
34	PDC	People's Daily (1998) Corpus
35	PPs	Preposition Phrases
36	RQ	Research Question
37	S4	one Sub-Corpus in CLEC
38	S6	one Sub-Corpus in CLEC
39	SLA	Second Language Acquisition
40	SWECCL	Spoken and Written English Corpus of Chinese Learners
41	T	Text: Student Essay Collected
42	TCA	Theoretical Contrastive Analysis
43	TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
44	TEM	Test of English Major-Band 4
45	T-G	Transformational-Generative Model
46	TL	Target Language
47	T-Rules	Transformation Rules
48	UG	Universal Grammar
49	VC	Verb + Complement
50	VO	Verb + Object Phrase
51	VPs	Verb Phrases

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The figures obtained from Grimes (2003) indicate that there are about 200 languages which have a million or more native speakers. Mandarin Chinese is one of the most widely used languages in the world, with over a billion speakers among them, and English with over 320 million speakers (Grimes, 2003 and Lewis, 2009), as shown in table 1.1 below:

**Table 1.1**

**Number of Native Speakers and Countries where English and Mandarin Chinese are Spoken**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Approximate number of native speakers</b>	<b>Countries with substantial number of native speakers</b>
Mandarin	1,213,000,000	16
English	328,000,000	104

With globalization, China has transformed itself into a member of the global village. One of the most important changes is the adoption of the English language as a second language of the educated Chinese population (William, 2005:5). The English language has become increasingly important, especially during the Shanghai 2010 World Expo which English speaking visitors from all over the world participated. Globalization of work, industry and international companies implies that current and future contacts with foreign businessmen and transactions with foreign countries are and will be carried out in English (ibid.). With the nation's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and of the Shanghai 2010 World Expo,



the popularity of English has reached a new peak with government policy-makers, educationists, and the Chinese public (Bolton, 2002:149). Chinese people now view English as an important tool offering easy access to modern scientific and technological advances. In addition to CCTV 9, a documentary channel of the television network in English language, there are other resources for English-language television available in China. By enjoying these TV programs and entertainment shows, Chinese learners can improve their English. In many Shanghai schools and universities, students make their own radio shows, search the Internet, watch movies and study their majors in English. Taxi drivers and hotel staff, who are often likely to encounter English speaking visitors and customers, are obligatorily required to speak English well. In China, the mastery of English can also help one to find a high-paid job in a foreign invested company.

Figures on the remarkable spread of English underway in China are hard to obtain, but some statistics are available, which shows the rapid spread of English in China in the last 40 years. Current estimates of the number of English speakers in China have recently soared to more than 200 million and rising. According to an estimate from the Committee of the National Ministry of Education China, 50 million secondary school children are studying the English language now, and the ratio of English teachers over students is one over one hundred thirty among college English. According to the speech delivered by Fu (2009), Ambassador to Great Britain, on December 14, 2009, 20 million more people take up English classes each year.

In this situation, learning and teaching of English has become essential in China. Last decade has seen the emergence of great interest in the study of English as a foreign language in China. These studies have provided helpful guidelines for vocabulary learning and teaching in China and also provided a platform for further research on learning and teaching of English (Meng, 2008). I observed that in spite of time and energy spent on vocabulary learning of English on the part of students, their performance is far

from satisfactory. They very often have problems in choosing the correct English word especially collocations. Such an experience with my students did motivate me to investigate the learning of English collocations among my students. Moreover, previous studies indicated that EFL learners made many English collocation errors and a further exploration of English collocations among EFL learners becomes necessary (Tang, 2004; Chan, 2005; Li, 2005; Wang, 2010; Sun and Wei, 2005; Siyanova and Schmitt, 2007).

### **1.1.1 English Language Collocations**

Collocation is fundamental in the study of vocabulary as it functions as an important organizing principle in the vocabulary of any language. Over the past decade, lexical theory, corpus statistics, and psycholinguistic research have pointed out the pedagogical value of collocations. Collocation meaning of a word is one of the multiple aspects of that word in any language. Knowing how a word can match another, a subset of grammatically possible utterances native speakers commonly use, often determines the meaning of the lexical items. "The correct usage of collocations contributes greatly to one's idiomaticity." (James, 1998:152) Knowledge of collocations also enables learners to compose grammatically and semantically acceptable sentences. Koya (2005:86) holds the assumption that if language users store quite a number of collocations in producing lexicalized or institutionalized sentences, their chances of composing native-like sentences and using the language fluently are good. This assumption suggests that language knowledge is collocation knowledge. Some researchers investigating written English of students have found that collocation has everything to do with the quality of students' writings (Hsueh, 2005). Learning a word with its collocations will not only reduce learners' burden of memorization but also expand their vocabulary stock. Awareness of the restrictions of collocation can facilitate ESL and EFL learners' ability to encode language. In contrast, the absence of such awareness may lead the learners of

English being unable to communicate fluently.

In addition, one's collocation proficiency is often regarded as the mark which differentiates native and non-native speakers and an important criterion for assessing students' English language proficiency (Zughoul, 1991 and Hu, 2001). Frequency of using English collocation is an indicator of high quality of English (Lu, 2005; Hsu and Chiu, 2008). It is even recognized as an important part of native speakers' communicative competence. Lewis (1997:15) remarked that fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items. Knowledge of collocations is also a significant indicator of speaking proficiency (Hsu and Chiu, 2008). Learners' lack of knowledge of collocation patterns of lexical items often result in committing all sorts of collocation errors, and it has been argued that lexical collocation errors are more disruptive in communication than grammatical errors (Rotimi, 2004 and Tang, 2006).

English collocations has thus emerged as an important category of vocabulary learning and teaching and has become a research focus in second language vocabulary learning as well as in language teaching and development of teaching materials. First conceptualized by Palmer (1933) and then introduced into theoretical linguistics by Firth (1951) as the level of meaning created in language independent of the individual words or the contextual level of meaning to be derived (pragmatics), the definition of collocations most commonly shared refers to words that keep company with one another. In other words, collocations refer to collocates of words that immediately precede or follow each other. Corpus studies have also shown that collocations are a frequently occurring type of semi-prefabricated unit. In an analysis by Howarth (1996:120) of over 5,000 verb + noun combinations in a written 240,000 word corpus, over a third of the combinations were found to be collocations. Another definition of collocation given by Firth (1968:1930-1955) is that "collocations of a given word are statements of the habitual or customary places of that word". Firth's (1957:22) view that the 'habits' of co-occurrence

of these words contains inherent meanings, which simply fits into a structural or grammatical frame of collocation in the lexical level and grammatical relations.

Since Lewis (1993) systematically re-evaluated the status of collocations in EFL/ESL education, many scholars have engaged themselves in the study about English collocations, especially in the field of vocabulary acquisition, ESL/EFL material and curriculum design, pedagogy and lexicography. Now there is a growing awareness that much of the systematicity of language is lexically driven, with the resultant concepts of ‘lexico-grammar’ (DeCarrico and Larsen-Freeman, 2002), “clusters” (Offord, 2001), “lexical chunks” (Granger, 1998) and “lexical phrases” (Schmitt, 2000; Zhen, 2009; Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992) or “lexical bundles” (Ken, 2008) being developed.

Knowledge of collocations is important for a number of applications: natural language generation, computational lexicography (to automatically identify the important collocations to be listed in a dictionary entry), parsing (so that preference can be given to parses with natural collocations), and corpus linguistics like the reinforcement of cultural stereotypes through language (Stubbs, 2002). Alexander (1984:128) once observed that the learning process may benefit if the emphasis is laid on the three ‘C’s: collocation, context and connotation. Among the three ‘C’s, collocation is the most important one (Lu, 2005).

### **1.1.2 The Learning of Vocabulary and English Collocations among Chinese Learners**

Vocabulary is a critical factor contributing to the understanding and application of a language through which man’s reasoning and communication can be carried out. It is the smallest unit in the meaning system of a language. Widdowson (1990) points out that vocabulary embodies the meaning whereas grammar conveys relations between the words. Lewis (1993) states that if a learner of a foreign language does not understand the

meaning of the key word, he will be unable to join in the conversation even though he knows the morphology and syntax of that language. Croydon (2002) also remarks that if university students know some words of high-frequency occurrence in the text, they can comprehend what they are reading even though they have difficulty in composing a complete sentence.

Thus, the learning of English vocabulary is indispensable to learn English as a foreign language and to obtaining a level of vocabulary that is needed for success in all English language skills. The learning of English vocabulary, as a kind of essential technique, is to explore what students have already learnt and how they learn English (Wang, 2001). Since lexical competence has an immediate effect upon a person's listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation (Tan, 2006; Wei, 2008; Zhang, 2008 and Tao, 2010), if the learning of vocabulary of a foreign language is neglected, the learner's linguistic competence acquisition will be inhibited. However, in recent years, in China, the exam-oriented educational system has led Chinese students to ignore the study of vocabulary, simply because the testing of vocabulary in the national test paper has been removed. Thus, the learning of the vocabulary has not been given the priority it deserves.

In the learning of English vocabulary, collocation has become a major problem among the Chinese learners, and this in turn has prevented learners from developing their vocabulary. Previous work undertaken in this area reveals that Chinese learners of English were deficient in collocations in their writing (Guo, 2003; Chan, 2005; Lu, 2005 and Tang, 2004). The generation of English collocations has always plagued not only beginners but also advanced Chinese learners of English and it has been found that Chinese students often fail to produce appropriate English collocations (Liu, 2000). According to Guo (2003), the collocation errors committed by Chinese students make up 70.3% of the total collocation errors. Even those advanced Chinese learners of English present a big problem in the production of English collocations as they tend to overuse a

small range of favorite phrases, especially if they are frequent items (Nesselhauf, 2005).

When facing problems in determining which word can collocate with another, normally, Chinese learners heavily rely on the English-Chinese dictionary for inference meaning. For instance, when one decides which word is more appropriate among a group of English synonyms in order to combine with another one, the learner usually looks at the denotative meaning of the word. But some of them are inapplicable to English in terms of source of synonyms (Zhou, 2008:30; Jin and Zhou, 2007). Neither definitions nor citations in the dictionary will give the learner much help with the two questions he needs to answer if these words are to enter into his active vocabulary – Firstly, how do they relate to other words with similar meaning? And secondly, which other words can they be used with, and in which contexts? (Channell, 1981:118)

From the perspective of semantics, among the seven types of meaning (conceptive / denotative, connotative, social, affective, reflective, collocation and thematic meanings) a word carries between two languages (Leech, 1993), there is at least one type of meaning equivalent words between two languages is semantic gap. The differentiation of the synonyms is determined by three factors: the denotation and connotation, collocation meaning in context of each word, as well as the collocation strength between synonyms. However, Chinese learners tend to simply make reference of denotation of an English word and ignore other meanings. It is certain that students have not yet reached the full degree of vocabulary use for each word they think they know, especially the commonly used simple words (Guo, 2006). And as a result, collocation errors at the lexical level and grammatical relations and unidiomatic expression due to transfer from mother tongue Chinese frequently occur among the Chinese learners of English.

Studies have established that reading is helpful in acquiring vocabulary, and students have been encouraged to improve their vocabulary incidentally by reading (Gai, 2003; Cui, 2005; Cao and Xiao, 2007), or by watching English movies (Jiang, 2009). However,

whether or not a Chinese student succeeds in carrying out an incidental vocabulary acquisition during reading depends on how many words he has already acquired previously. The more vocabulary students know, the better they can understand what they read. The more a person reads, the more he will develop his vocabulary knowledge (Luo, 2004 and Chou, 2011). A Chinese student with a vocabulary size fewer than 2, 000 will have difficulty comprehending what is read (Li and Tian, 2005) but Laufer (1997) argues that so long as the learner reaches a minimum percentage of 95% of the total percentage of what is read in order to acquire vocabulary, a learner can understand what he is reading. However, many Chinese students have failed to read well enough to address reading comprehension questions because of their limited vocabulary size (Chou, 2011). Many other factors such as the learners' cognitive style and learning task and richness of context clues also contribute to the failure of incidental vocabulary acquisition approach during reading (Chou, 2011:38).

Chinese students have been known to employ the traditional approach — rote learning in order to learn English vocabulary, with particular attention to the form and literal meaning of a word (Yu, 2009). Most Chinese learners of English are compelled to piece structures together word-by-word in producing sentences. They often acquire words individually without taking care of their immediate environment, and combine words that do not normally go together. One common method that students use is to learn L2 vocabulary intentionally by making vocabulary cards or lists in order to practice the spelling or to help them memorize those unknown words more efficiently (Cheng, 2011). Learners equate vocabulary learning by memorizing as many lexical items as possible before their examination (He, 2010). When they fail to find the equivalent in their interlanguage system, Chinese students break an MT Chinese prosodic word or phrase into smaller lexical units and follow the sequence and habits of Chinese combination to coin their own phrases or collocations without considering the English collocation

context (Qiao, 2011) and tend to choose those words and lexical chunks they are most familiar with. However, the practice of vocabulary through rote-learning proves insufficient among Chinese learners of English (Wang, 2001 and Cui, 2005).

Firstly, students turn out to be short of productive vocabulary which refers to the learner's ability to recall and use appropriate words in their writing and speaking activities. Knowledge from cognitive studies suggests that presentation of a word should be carried out in the way of context → list of vocabulary → semantic field. Context-dependent learning of a word will enable the learner get long-term memory. On the contrary, learning a word isolated from its context without considering its immediate environment will lead to poor memory for learners. Chinese students learn words arbitrarily according to the word list, often bearing a word in their mind by isolating it from the context. When they find themselves in situations where they are uncertain about expressing themselves in English, they usually resort to their mother tongue Chinese and combine one word with another based on the equivalents between Chinese and English. So, incorrect productive errors of vocabulary continue to persist.

Secondly, many students complain that their minds are saturated and they have difficulty in remembering new words. After reaching the intermediate level, students feel that they find learning vocabulary by rote boring and lose their motivation. They also often encounter problems accessing the vocabulary they have learned through memorizing (Li, Xun and Sun, 2010). However, this is not because their memories are saturated but because they have not adopted multiple vocabulary memorization strategies (Cui, 2005), involving collocation strategies (Hou, 2011; Özgül and Abdükadir, 2012). For another, fossilization of the incorrect vocabulary usage has been developed in the learning of English among Chinese learners at a certain stage of learning (Huang, 2010; Zhang, 2009; Li and Mo, 2009). Research in vocabulary has established that multiple aspects of a word need to be known for a learner, that is, the denotative, connotative,



collocation meanings, and so forth (Leech, 1993). But due to the education system which is exam oriented in China, the main teaching approach is cramming under which students have to memorize the denotative meaning of words through rote learning. They learn words by heart according to the list of the vocabulary on the syllabus, ignorant of other aspects of word knowledge. For them, often, the process of target language English vocabulary learning is merely a mapping of it onto their mother tongue. When hesitating to choose a word to make a phrase or sentence, they tend to fall back upon their mother tongue. This process of word-for-word translation from the L1 Chinese to the L2 English gradually results in fossilization whereby language development ceases despite continuous exposure and practice (Li, et al. 2009 and Huang, 2010).

Finally, the monolingual Mandarin Chinese speaking environment gives the learners limited opportunities of learning English outside the classroom, and inhibits Chinese learners from enhancing their language learning effectiveness. In this foreign language setting, Chinese is an exclusive means of communication with people around them, involving their teachers, classmates, families, and friends. Even the whole environment on which they depend for their survival is the Chinese language. The way that students think is based in Chinese context. In the foreign language setting, not knowing which TL item is appropriate in TL context, learners tend to resort to MT context. This inevitably results in the mismatch between TL form and TL context. Classrooms are the one and only place for students to practice their English, in situations where they are short of highly-contextualized input of English. As a result, students face difficulties acquiring many other information of a word: semantic, syntactic, and lexical (Carter, 1992; Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2001; Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997:4). In other words, in a monolingual Chinese speaking environment, Chinese students face difficulties in perceiving the form of a word, retrieving its meaning and then keeping it in their lexicon during listening or reading. They also have difficulty “producing the appropriate spoken or written word

forms” (Nation, 2001:24). Although students can express themselves in the classroom, they can convey their idea in English about what they can but not about what they want. The moment they leave the classroom, Chinese students often find themselves at a literal loss for words in the uncontrolled English speaking environment. And errors due to mother tongue Chinese interference inevitably take place.

### **1.1.3 Teaching of English Collocations in China**

The teaching of English vocabulary is one significant aspect in the teaching of English language in China. Pedagogically, there has been an increased awareness of the importance of collocations in the field of EFL vocabulary teaching. The teaching of collocation has proven to be an effective vocabulary cognitive strategy in the teaching of English (Hou, 2011). While struggling to remedy what was not working in the target language (TL) class, instructors find TL collocation critical in order to make students improve their writing of TL (Liu, 2000). Work in the area of corpus linguistics has also convincingly shown the urge for reconsideration of the role of collocations in ESL/EFL instruction (Li, 2005; Pu, 2005 and Sun, 2005). The diagnostic function of a learner corpus, when contrasted with a native speaker corpus, is becoming more and more explicit to researchers (Guo, 2006). Analysis of collocation errors can provide important pedagogical implications for the study in learner interlanguage and for applications in the compilation of manuals for students, especially bilingual and monolingual learners’ dictionaries.

Many English teachers, however, are still used to either simply presenting an English word for students or after presentation of an English word, the teacher makes a sentence by using this word for students, without stressing restriction rules of co-occurrence words (Zhang and Wei, 2004). Such single and rigid presentation of words is difficult for students to memorize, and thus discourage students from learning vocabulary. Research

has further shown that this de-contextualized teaching approach is more ineffective than expected (Wang, 2001 and Tao, 2010).

Chinese instructors believe that a theoretical presentation of the word category may make it more effective for students to memorize under condition where enough practice is provided for students (Fan and Wang, 2002), as this would enable them to deal with any problem with vocabulary. Yet, it is not an easy task for Chinese learners to learn English lexical categories, for it involves knowledge of derivational morphology of a word which most often does not exist in Chinese. They often get confused with a word's lexical category, and are likely to confuse an adjective for a noun or a verb for a noun or an adjective for a verb. In the classroom, many of the instructors require students to turn to the page of the vocabulary list first and start with the new words by using the procedure of interpreting – memorizing – dictating, and then turn to the text analysis. However, most of the words they have learned in the classroom usually slip away within a couple of days or they bear only a vague concept of the words in their mind.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Chinese researchers hope to understand the underlying mechanism in error production and work out the problems which have plagued Chinese EFL learners for decades. However, few studies of English errors have been carried out by using EA combined with CA between the mother tongue (MT) and the target language (TL) English. Sources of errors could not be explained thoroughly nor could sound reason for the errors be identified due to lack of differences based on theoretical CA. The wrong choice of English words is thought to be due to the interference of Chinese, but it has failed to explain how Chinese interfered with students' lexical choices (Zhu, 1999; Zhao and Dong, 2001). These studies were conducted mainly from the perspective of EA in the absence of CA, largely because of disagreement on the view of CA among Chinese linguists in

China.

In an effort to construct a theoretical framework of contrastive analysis, it is acknowledged in China that one should either be occupied with the study of the mother tongue Chinese language, or concentrates on the study of English as a foreign language only (Yang, 2000:17). As a result, the professionals who are engaged in the study of English language have not touched on the study of the Chinese language at home. Most theories underlying the study of learning of English as a foreign language in China are thus based on the findings of studies abroad, for instance, among French and German learners of English. The majority of the research studies of CA have been carried out in English speaking countries in the West and the U.S.A, and CA based studies of descriptions between TL English and MT Chinese subsystems in Chinese speaking contexts are rare. Studies of MT Chinese in the last century which have also been influenced by structuralism and transformation-generative linguistics, have often failed to explore the features of Chinese (Pan, 2002). A theory which is suitable for Chinese learners and capable of challenging foreign linguistic field has yet to be constructed in the study of CA in China (Yang, 2000:26).

Previous work reveals that learners of English are deficient in collocations in their writing (Nesselhauf, 2003; Tang, 2006; Sun and Wei, 2005). A conclusion reached by a number of studies is that learners use fewer acceptable collocations than native speakers (Sinclair, 2000:191-203). Other studies found that language learners are often not aware of restrictions of potential words they know and insecure in the production of collocations. Collocation problems are more serious than general vocabulary problems (Chan, 2005:17). Analysis of students' speech or writing shows a lack of collocation competence (Hill, 2000:44) and while native speakers typically use conventional phraseology to express meaning, learners often express meaning with unconventional combinations of words. These unexpected combinations can be perceived as foreign and odd, thus making

the learners less effective communicators, and hindering their acceptance into the speech community (Siyanova and Schmitt, 2008:429-458).

Collocations have received increasing attention in language teaching in the recent years (Wei, 1999; Tang, 2006; Schmitt, 2008; Sun and Wang, 2007). For Chinese instructors of English, they believe it necessary to teach collocation explicitly (Wei, 1999:11; Chan, 2005 and Cui, 2005). However, few have provided any effective strategy of instruction for the prevention and remedy of the collocation errors on the basis of the findings based on CA theory (Fries, 1945; Lado, 1957; James, 1980 and Corder, 1981). Furthermore, a coherent methodology for teaching collocations in China has been still far from developing.

In recent years, some strategies and approaches on how to teach English collocations have been applied in the Chinese university context such as the lexical approach, the lexical phrases approach, and corpus approach to investigate English collocations. The lexical chunks approach was more often utilized in improving learners' spoken English fluency and accuracy than in writing (Zhen, 2009). Yet, the issues of which types of collocations are most difficult for certain groups of learners, what are the types of errors that occur and what are behind the collocation errors, have been received little attention so far in China. Though both English and Chinese have similar lexical collocation patterns, such as verb + noun, adjective + noun and verb + adverb collocations, the problem for the Chinese learners of English is that there are no collocation rules that can be really learned. The patterns of collocation are largely arbitrary and independent of meaning, such as 'bend rules' in English but are unlikely to describe rules as unbendable since rules are usually inflexible. Relying on intuition alone, that is, how collocation should be handled in the classroom has failed to create an accurate picture of the extent that collocation exists in the real world.

Furthermore, the attention given to Computer Aided Language Teaching approach in the teaching of ESL has been paid to theoretical overview of corpus application rather than to how to improve vocabulary and collocations (Guo, 2006; Song, Yang and Sun, 2009). More importantly, in China, the commonly used communicative approach in the EFL seems to be challenging at present after expanding enrollment of students in the universities. Instructors have felt that more students are insufficient in primary English grammatical structures which hold the instructors back to interact with students by using English more fluently and frequently.

Over the last decade, previous studies of English collocations in China, similar to the situation in other parts of the world, covered three main areas: (1) grammatical and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocations consist of a noun, or an adjective or a verb, plus a particle (Bahns, 1993:57), such as noun + preposition, noun + to + infinitive, noun + that - clause, preposition + noun, adjective + preposition, predicate adjective + to + infinitive, adjective + that - clause, and the English 19 verb patterns (Benson, Benson, and Ison, 1997). In contrast to grammatical collocations, lexical collocations do not contain grammatical elements and mainly refer to combinations between those content words such as noun + verb, verb + noun, or adjective + noun, and so forth (Benson, Benson, and Ison, 1997). (2) One subtype of collocations (verb + noun collocation or adjective + noun collocation). (3) The eight subtypes of collocations (i.e. noun + noun / prepositional phrase, noun + verb, verb + noun, adjective + noun, verb + adverb, adverb + adjective + noun, and a / numeral + quantifying noun collocations). However, among the previous studies conducted in China on English collocations, there has been a lack of studies of the classifications of English collocation errors at lexical and grammatical levels among the Chinese learners using both CA and EA. Even for some theoretical CA-based studies, their purpose was to simply present the features of each system by description of similarities and differences and pure contrast between two subsystems (Li, 2006; Chu,

2008; Zhang, 2009; Ulrich and Sybille, 1989). For some EA studies, a CA between TL English and MT Chinese involving the description of the two languages was not provided. A study of seven types of collocation errors with a level of difficulties has been scarce. Furthermore, very few attempts have been made to the issue of how the mother tongue affects the learning of English collocation errors among the Chinese learners. This leaves room for a further examination of this prominent issue in Chinese learners' English collocation acquisition. Although more studies about English collocation errors in China have employed Chinese Learner English Corpus (CELC) instrument (Deng, 2004; Li, 2005; Shi, 2005 and Wei, 2005), they were based on EA alone.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The primary aim of this study is two-fold. First, it is an attempt to identify the major problems faced by Chinese students who are intermediate-level EFL learners in the production of English collocations at lexical and grammatical levels. The second objective is to identify the factors that contribute to the problems of using English collocations among them. So, the objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) to describe and contrast the collocations of Chinese (Mandarin) and English
- 2) to describe the occurrence of the types of errors of English collocations committed by the Chinese learners of English
- 3) to identify and explain the areas of difficulty including the influence of the mother tongue and hierarchy of difficulty encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations using CA and EA

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study proposes to address the following research questions:

- 1) What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and English collocations (RQ1)?
- 2) What are the types of collocation errors that are most frequently made by the Chinese learners of English (RQ2)?
- 3) What are the areas of difficulty involving the interference of the mother tongue and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations from the perspective of (a) Contrastive Analysis and (b) Error Analysis (RQ3)?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The present study makes an investigation of contrastive analysis of collocations by making use of CA and EA between Chinese and English and thereby it will contribute to both theoretical and applied contrastive linguistics including Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) theory and practice among the Chinese learners of English.

As Chinese language structure is more phrase structure / syntactic structure oriented one (not morphology as its core grammar), collocations at different levels of language structure occupy lot of importance in order to explain, interpret and understand the complex Chinese constructions with as much accuracy as possible. So, this study has not only lexical relevance, but also grammatical and contextual significance which would be more useful for language teaching and learning purpose.

This study also contributes to collocation errors of Chinese learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The findings of this study will contribute more to an understanding of the problems Chinese students encounter in the learning of collocations in English and hopefully this kind of knowledge will have pedagogical implications in the teaching of English collocations to the Chinese learners of English.



Most importantly, by employing the Contrastive Analysis (CA) theory and approach between the MT Chinese and TL English, this study provides with a detailed description of Chinese and English collocation subsystems separately and makes a contrast between the two languages. This will fill the gap where a detailed study of English collocations found among Mandarin Chinese learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is lacking. It provides needed data and systematic analysis proving the prediction that collocations of different types constitute an area of difficulty in learning English as a foreign language among the Chinese learners of English.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the students of English at Tongji University who are majored in science in Shanghai, China. The data collected are from essays written by these students and findings are by no means universal.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

#### 1) Agent and Patient

Agent is defined as the entity that performs an activity or brings about a change of state, and patient as the affected or effected. The case grammar defined these two concepts on the semantic basis. In most English sentences, the agent and patient in the semantic sense are equivalents of the subject and the object in traditional grammar.

#### 2) Avoidance

It is a strategic use of alternative strategies to avoid difficult forms.

#### 3) Chinese Numeral Classifiers

Chinese numeral classifiers are usually inserted between a head noun and a numeral or a demonstrative. Whenever a noun is preceded by a numeral or a demonstrative, a classifier must come in between. For example:

#### Example 1

Chinese: san ben ci dian

三 本 词 典

three CLS dictionary

English: three dictionaries

#### Example 2

Chinese: liang juan zhi

两 卷 纸

two CLS paper

English: two rolls of paper

#### Example 3

Chinese: zhe ba yi zi

这 把 椅子

this CLS chair

English: the chair

#### 4) Chinglish

Is a portmanteau of the words Chinese and English and refers to spoken or written English, which is influenced by the Chinese language.

#### 5) Classifier (CLS)

Is a term functionally similar to unit noun, quantifier or quantifying noun.

#### 6) Concordance

Refers to a means of accessing a corpus of text to show how any given word or phrase in the text is used in the immediate context where it occurs.

#### 7) De-lexicalized Verbs

Refer to those verbs 'do, have, make, take, put' used to verbalize nouns.

## 8) Denotation and Connotation

A word's denotation is its reference to the things it designates, its direct, explicit meaning; a word's connotation is things or attributes that the word brings to mind, any idea or notion suggested or associated with the word.

## 9) ECNS

English Corpus of Native Speakers, which is often used as a referenced corpus of LC in order to, by a contrast between NNSs and NSs in the SLA, identify what linguistic features of English learners are and which part of TL is overused or underused.

## 10) Endocentric (phrase)

A term used in grammatical analysis as part of a two-way classification of syntactic constructions, which include noun phrases and verb phrases, where the constituent items are subordinate to the head, e.g. *the big man*, *the man in black* (Crystal, 1991:122), and also some types of coordination, e.g. *boys and girls* (Crystal, 1991:122). In other words, endocentric phrase refers to a word group consisting of a modifier and the word it modifies.

## 11) Foreign Language (FL) and Second Language (L2)

Both refer to the language that is learned after the native language has been learned. FL is usually learned in the environment of one's native language while SL is usually learned in the environment in which that language is spoken. Sometimes L2 refers to third, fourth, and fifth language. E.g. FL: Japanese learned by French people in France SL: Japanese learned by French in Japan.

(<http://www.geocities.jp/akiramochida33/term.html>)

## 12) Fossilization

It refers to the process whereby language development ceases despite continuous exposure and practice. Learners internalize grammatical rules which are different from those of the target language. They fail to reach native-like competence. Fossilization does

not happen in L1.

### 13) Interference

Negative transfer, which usually results in errors (Jakobovits, 1970 and Pietro, 1971).

### 14) Interlanguage (IL)

The systematic knowledge of linguistic rules underlying L2 comprehension and production. Interlanguage is independent of the learners' L1 and the target language. It is developed in reaction to Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH).

### 15) Interlingual and Intralingual Error Analysis

Interlingual errors are those that can be attributed to the Native Language (they involve cross-linguistic contrast). Intralinguistic errors are those that are due to the language being learned, independent of the native language.

### 16) Key Word in Context (KWIC)

Language used in context and word senses defined by their surrounding context. It is more representative than other words in the text as the erroneous word with its higher frequency.

### 17) Language Transfer

It refers to the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been learned previously. It contains positive and negative transfers. Positive transfer from MT helps or facilitates learning in TL due to similarities, whereas negative transfer occurs when the some elements of MT which are different from TL are transferred into the learning of TL.

### 18) LC

Learner Corpus is a collection of the language spoken or written by non-native speakers. The primary objective of LC is to provide resources of research for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers and language teaching professionals.

#### 19) Mandarin Chinese

It is a national language spoken across most part of northern, central and Southeastern China. When taken as a separate language, as is often done in academic literature, the Mandarin language has more native speakers than any other language.

#### 20) Native Language (NL) / First Language (L1) / Mother Tongue (MT)

Native language refers to a language which a person acquires in early childhood and is spoken and / or it is the language of the country where he or she is living (Richards et al., 2000:302). It is also called first language (L1) or mother tongue (MT).

#### 21) Native Speakers (NNs)

“A native speaker of a language is someone who speaks that language as his / her first language rather than having learnt it as a foreign language.” (COBUILD English Dictionary, 1995) “The intuition of a native speaker about the structure of his or her language is one basis for establishing or confirming the rules of the grammar.” (Richards et al., 2000:302) “Native speakers (NSs) are people who know their language perfectly.” (James, 1998:2)

#### 22) Node and Collocate

The node and collocate are two terms in the study of collocations.

#### 23) Parameter

Some universal principles that differ in the way they work from language to language. Parameters account for cross-linguistic variation.

#### 24) SLA theory

It refers to the theory that explains the process of learning and teaching a second language, the naturalistic or formal language setting, individual differences among learners and L1 influence.

## 25) Second Language Acquisition and Learning

Second language acquisition or second language learning is the process by which people learn a second language in addition to their native language. “Second language acquisition” does not refer to what the teacher does but rather refers to what the learner does. Sometimes the terms “acquisition” and “learning” are not treated as synonyms and are instead used to refer to the subconscious and conscious aspects of this process respectively.

## 26) Semantic Prosody

Collocates of a word form a semantic class which can be characterized in terms of attitudinal meaning. This is roughly referred to as semantic prosody/preference. It is usually investigated through KWIC.

Semantic prosody is a feature of the node word while semantic preference can be viewed as a feature of collocates (Xiao and Mcenery, 2006). Both interact: while semantic prosody dictates the general environment which constrains the preferential choices of the node item, semantic preference contributes powerfully to building semantic prosody.

## 27) Span

A term in this study, referring to the number of lexical items on each side of a node in a collocation. Items in the environment set by the span are termed as collocates. Node-5 describes the five positions to the left of the node and the node + 5 describes the five positions to the right of the node.

## 28) Target Language (TL)

Refers to the language being learned.

## 29) The Acquisition / Learning Hypothesis

The following table is about contrast between Acquisition and Learning Hypothesis (Krashen, 1981).

**Table 1.2****Combined Models of Acquisition and Production**

<b>Acquisition</b>	<b>Learning</b>
Implicit, subconscious	Explicit, conscious
Informal situations	Formal situations
Uses grammatical ‘feel’	Uses grammatical rules
Depends on attitude	Depends on aptitude
Stable order of acquisition	Simple to complex order of learning

## 30) Types of Collocation

There are several different types of collocation, which include classification of lexical collocation and grammatical collocation. Collocations can be adjective + noun, verb + noun, and so forth. The following are the main types of collocation in this study. The examples in table below are all extracted from the data or other studies.

**Table 1.3****Category of English Lexical Collocation and Example**

<b>Type of Collocation</b>	<b>Category of Lexical Example</b>
1. Noun + Noun Collocation	film star; finance director (Benson, et al., 1997)
2. Noun + Verb Collocation	They succeed.
3. Verb + Noun collocation	achieve success; compose music (Benson, et al., 1997)
4. Adjective + Noun Collocation	ordinary people; heavy blow (Zhang and Chen, 2006)
5. Verb + Adverb	study hard

**Table 1.4****Category of English Grammatical Collocation**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. Noun + Verb Collocation	Problems created.
2. Noun + Phrasal Verb Collocation	Success depends on effort.
3. Noun + Auxiliary Verb + Verb Collocation	He can / will succeed.
4. Verb + Noun Collocation	achieved success; gave him
5. Phrasal Verb + Noun Collocation	result from industry; complain about us
6. Noun + Prepositional Phrase	attitudes toward life
7. Noun + Noun Collocation	arts school (Biber, et al., 1999)
8. Adjective + Noun Collocation)	greatest man; warmest regards (Benson, et al., 1997)
9. Verb + Adverb	do poorly
10. Phrasal Verb + Adverb	lay down gently
11. Adverb + Verb	slowly turned
12. Adverb + Phrasal Verb	unhappily looked around
13. Adverb + Adjective Collocation	really true story
14. a + quantifying noun + of + Uncountable Noun	a piece of cake; a heap of stones
15. a + Measure word + of + Countable Noun	a box of books
16. Numeral + of + Countable Noun	millions of words

## 31) Universal Grammar

It refers to abstract knowledge of language that constrains the shape of grammatical rules of a language. UG consists of principles and parameters that govern the form grammatical rules can take.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a review of literature related to Contrastive Analysis (CA), Error Analysis (EA) and English collocations at lexical and grammatical levels. CA and EA are the two basic theoretical underpinnings and important research methodologies used in this study. Firstly, in this chapter, the theory and methodology of CA and EA will be described. This will be followed by the review of literature of CA and EA, and a description of English collocations. Finally, studies in English collocations especially in the context of China will be reviewed.

#### 2.2 Theory of Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is based on behavioral psychology and structural linguistics, which claims that language learning, is a process of habit formation in which learners learn a language through imitation and reinforcement of a set of new linguistic habits upon old habits. It also argues that the major barrier in learning a second language is due to the interference of native language habits (Fries, 1945 and Lado, 1957). In other words, errors committed by L2 learners are maintained to be the result of L1 linguistic habits interfering with the learning of the sound system and the structural system of the L2 (Martin, 1996). CA theory also hypothesized that the greater the difference between L1 and L2, the more acute the learning difficulties will be. What needs to be taught therefore can be done by comparing the languages and subtracting what is common to them (Corder, 1981).

The concept underlying the CA hypothesis is the notion of language transfer. The crux of the CA hypothesis is that elements that are 'similar' in the L1 and the foreign language

will be easier to learn than those that are different. In the former, the learners benefit from positive L1 transfer, which is helpful to the learner even though they may be lacking in using accurate expressions of the target language (Hammerly, 1991). In the latter, learning of the target language may be blocked by negative transfer or interference (James, 1998:179).

Thus, CA is the basis for identifying the differences between the L1 and L2 and for identifying areas of potential errors. Proponents of CA hypothesis contend that the learning problems common to second language learners can be identified after making formal distinction between his L1 and the L2 (Lado, 1957; Pietro, 1971; James, 1980 and Choi, 1996).

Modern contrastive linguistics started in countries of Europe and America and has undergone several stages:

In the 20th century, many linguists in the Prague School took an interest in contrastive analysis. Its proponents were Mathesius who published an article about contrastive study between English and Czech in 1926, and the American linguist Whorf who published his book *Language and Logic* in 1941. The Prague school stressed the function of elements within language, the contrast of language elements to one another, and the total pattern or system formed by these contrasts. Its aim was to make contrast of languages and to allow for the possibility of establishing typologies of linguistic systems.

In early 20th century, studies about L2 learning were influenced by behaviorist-psychology learning theory, which stressed that language learning can be viewed as a mechanical process of habit formation. Imitation and reinforcement were two major approaches to learning language. It was argued that the formation of new habits in the learning of L2 was prevented or facilitated by the old habit of their L1 (James, 1980). Hence, by contrasting the similarities and differences between the two languages, potential difficulties in the learning of a L2 language could be identified. And this

knowledge in turn could be used for pedagogical purposes.

In 1945, Fries established the relationship between the contrast of languages and language teaching. In 1953, Weinreich published his book *Languages in Contact* based on structuralism, which provided a theoretical framework of contrastive analysis and put forward the theory of mother tongue interference. In 1957, Lado published his work *Linguistics Across Cultures*, which has become widely applicable in the subsequent translation method of teaching the target language. Lado's work is the landmark work of CA, which signals the dominant rule the structural linguistics and behavioral psychological play in the study of language learning. At this stage, strong claim of CA has developed the mainstream of linguistic study.

Lakoff (1968) took Chomsky's transformational-generative (T-G) theory of Deep Structure and agreed that language transformed from the deep semantic structure and generated the surface syntactic structure of a sentence. In other words, the deep structure behind the surface structure of a sentence is a semantic rather than a syntactic structure. He argued that interpretations are generated directly by the grammar as deep structures, and are subsequently transformed into recognizable sentences by transformations. This generative semantic theory offered a powerful mechanism for explaining synonyms. The generative semantic theory argued that it was not the fact that active / passive pairs were synonymous that motivated the passive transformation, but the fact that active and passive verb forms had the same selection requirements. For example, the agent of the verb *kick* (i.e. the thing that is doing the kicking) is animate whether it is the subject of the active verb (as in "John kicked the ball") or appears in a *by* phrase after the passive verb ("The ball was kicked by John").

The other is Case Grammars as one type of functional grammars proposed by Fillmore (1963, 1968), who claimed that the semantic aspect of agent and object was determined by syntactic structure from the deep level of a sentence. Focusing on the

generation of subjects and objects at surface level, case grammar refers to the semantic relation at deep level between each content word and head verb, confined to semantics rather than syntax and pragmatics.

Following developments in the area of cognitive psychology, CA has encountered skepticism by theorists who question the validity of CA. CA's basic weakness is that it heavily laid emphasis on interference errors of MT and ignored other sources of errors. Its weakness can be summarized into two aspects.

First of all, earlier cognitive psychologists have argued that language and language learning can be no longer perceived based on behaviorism. Language acquisition / learning can no longer be taken as the development of a habit but a process of the rule establishment which can be seen as a process of creative hypothesis testing, where learners constantly amend those false hypotheses and lay down acceptable rules of the second language. Ultimately, they succeed in acquiring the second language.

Secondly, it is inadequate to merely make a contrast between two language systems such as phonetics, grammar and lexis without taking into consideration the semantic and contextual contrast (Qu, 2003).

In response to the criticism for CA, in the 1970s, research from Error Analysis (EA) found that many errors identified by CA did not turn out to be traceable to the learner's L1, nor could CA be used to identify all problems of learning the target language. The linguistic differences between L1 and L2 do not equal to L2 learning difficulty. CA between the mother tongue (MT) and the target language (TL) was insufficient to elucidate the underlying psycholinguistic processes of second language learning. Jackson and Whitman (1971) discovered that CA had hardly any power to identify problems at all. Furthermore, Dulay and Burt (1972, 1974b) reported that cross-sectional analysis showed that the majority of errors made by children were due to problems with TL usage rather than the children's MT interference. Tran (1975) found that there was low correlation

between CA-based predictions of difficult areas. This was supported by James (1980:146) who argued that not all errors were the result of L1 interference. In addition, Sridhar (1981:223) argued that there were many kinds of errors except those due to the result of L1 interference that could neither be identified nor explained by CA and this was further supported by Ashton (1991) who argued that around one third to one half of errors could be identified by CA and the left over 50% of errors were unexplained. According to Ellis (1997), some errors committed by a group of homogeneous learners, were a result of omission and overgeneralization rather than a contrast between the MT and TL. Klein (1986) explored the acquisition of English phonetics among German learners, and found that in the learning of the sound /th/ in the English word “that”, a learner who was unable to produce this sound, would replace it by similar near equivalent German sounds, for example /z/. This sound could not be identified if one contrasted only phonetic / structural properties of the two languages. Thus, Klein (1986) argued that structural similarities and differences between two linguistic systems and actual production and comprehension were two different matters, pointing out that contrastive linguistics was basically concerned with the linguistic systems or structures, whereas acquisition had to do with comprehension and production. A specific second language structure might be easy to perceive but hard to produce, or vice versa. Hence, the prediction of possible transfers could not be based on contrast of structural properties but on the way in which learners processed such properties. Nuria (2006) focusing on the learning process of British students learning Spanish as a foreign language, argued that some similarities could mislead rather than facilitate the learning like what CA claimed.

In recent years, structural CA has been challenged by Chinese semantic-grammatical theory. Some Chinese scholars argued that the understanding of connotation of grammatical form and meaning would be more difficult, in particular, when there is a connotation gap of a word between Chinese and English (Wang, 2001). Chinese

grammar is independent of the morphological change but dependent on other means such as word order, function word, overlapping, and so forth to convey its grammatical relation and meaning. So, it is important to perceive Chinese connotation of grammatical form / structure and grammatical meaning from diverse dimensions.

Over these three stages in history and development of contrastive analysis (CA), three major schools of view on CA have been formed, which are: strong, weak and moderate versions. Both strong and weak versions are equally based on the assumption of L1 interference (or cross-linguistic influence) in L2 learning. They differ in that both follow different inductive reasoning way. The strong version of theoretical CA uses simply inductive reasoning way in which some data involving description of features of two languages, to discover similarities and differences on which the prediction of problems are based. The weak version of theoretical CA (i.e. EA) uses scientific inductive reasoning way where the two prerequisites are true. The first prerequisite is the errors found from error analysis due to L1 interference in L2 learning, the second prerequisite is that similarities facilitate the learning of L2 and differences inhibit the learning of L2, and therefore, similarities and differences between two languages can be explained. Thus, the weak version of CA (i.e. EA) sounds better than theoretical CA in terms of evidence which interference errors from L1 can provide.

The strong version, supported mainly by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957) claimed to be able to identify learners' error before they ever committed them, on the basis of identifying in advance the contrasts between the two language systems. It claimed that prediction of not only points of difference, but also the forms which the learner would substitute (Essein, 1985:48). The main cause of difficulty and errors in FL learning was interference of learners' native language. The difficulty of learning a L2 was due to the difference between the learner's L1 and L2. Corder (1992) held that the more distance there was linguistically from the learner's L1 to his L2, the longer it took for him to learn

the language. Furthermore, it was thought that the greater the differences between the linguistic structure of L1 and L2 in terms of phonology, morphology and syntax were, the more complex would the learning difficulties be for the L2 learner, and vice versa (Lado, 1957). In fact, contrastive analysis of the structures between two languages would lead to the identification of all the points of difficulty.

While weak version of theoretical contrastive analysis, supported largely by Woodhaugh (1970) and James (1988), and argued that without requirement for prediction of difficulties, it could account for a great number of errors that L2 learners have actually made. It claimed that it started with the evidence provided by linguistic interference and used such evidence to explain the similarities and differences between systems. It declared that it was “no more than the power to diagnose those errors that have been committed as a result of L1 interference.” (James, 1998:180)

There also exists a moderate version of theoretical contrastive analysis, which argued that the strong version of CA was too rational and the weak is too conservative, and that distinct difference between two languages did not cause difficulty in learning. Therefore, moderate version of CA seems to be untenable in the analysis of errors.

In spite of some of the imperfectness in CA, it has made significant contributions to language teaching and learning. CA has provided ideas for material production and some guiding principles for language instruction. For foreign language teaching CA has been “the least questioned or questionable application of linguistics” (Politzer, 1967:151). In addition, CA has stimulated studies for explicating learning difficulty. James (1998) claimed that CA seemed to be a hybrid linguistic enterprise — a linguistic enterprise aimed at producing inverted (i.e. Contrastive, not comparative) two valued typologies (as CA is always concerned with a pair of languages), and founded on the assumption that languages could be contrasted. Despite inability to cover all sources of errors apart from the contrastive errors caused by L1 interference, what is indisputable is the fact that the

L1 is an important factor to be taken into consideration in second language acquisition.

### **2.3 Theory of Error Analysis**

Error Analysis plays a big role in foreign language learning and teaching. Errors are, “a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning” (Corder, 1967), which becomes “an integral component in much SLA research” (Cook, 1993:22). Errors are important for the understanding of the processes of second language acquisition, which are the current focus in the literature on modern language teaching (Richards, 1984). Ellis (1994:18) and Pica (1994) also mentioned that second language learners’ errors have been given top priority in SLA research. Cook (1993:22) held that the Error Analysis was viewed as a methodology systematized over the years. Choi (1996:87) argued that Error Analysis could be viewed as a theory as well as a method for language teaching and learning.

At the end of the 50s’ and beginning of the 60s’, with the birth and spread of Chomskyan’s transformational-generative (T-G) theory, structuralism-based theories became unpopular and researchers found that many of the difficulties faced by second language learners were not supported by findings from studies, as showed that many errors committed by learners were not due to the negative transfer from their native language. Researchers came to the conclusion that like acquisition of the first language, the learning of the second language was a creative construction process where the learners can create some output of their own, and the errors were the necessary products in the process of second language learning. Corder’s (1967) article *The Significance of Learners’ Errors* pioneered the study in EA, and since then behaviorism-based CA began to be abandoned, at least, in their strong forms.

Error Analysis (EA) is a linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make in their L2. It is a branch of applied linguistics which is based on the theory of CA.



EA theory is based on cognitive-psychology which argues that every human being has a language acquisition device (LAD). EA is closely related with the emergence of Interlanguage Theory (Ellis, 1997), which claims that every human being has the innate ability to process language and this ability helps learners construct a grammar system from the finite linguistic input. According to Selinker (1992), L2 learners go through a process of making and testing hypotheses about the target language. Promoters of EA (Corder, 1967; Richards, 1974; Dulay and Burt, 1972 and Selinker, 1972, 1992) view errors as evidence of the learner constantly testing out hypotheses about the rules of his second language. Corder (1967) pointed out that errors a learner makes in his L2 reflect underlying linguistic rules. The primary aim of EA is not only to identify and explain source of errors but also to explore the strategies and environment in order to minimize the errors committed by the learners (Zhang, Wang and Zhao, 2009). The concern of EA is about inner strategies adopted by learners. EA maintains that a teacher is supposed to know and meet learners' needs rather than impose the teacher's view and requirement on the learners (Liu, 1998).

Review of previous studies in EA from the 60s' to the present has demonstrated the significance of EA. EA became distinguished from CA in that errors were thought of as being attributable to all possible sources, not just those which resulted from negative transfer from the native language. So when CA faced challenges due to its inadequacy, EA gradually took over its place and began to play a central role in the study of errors produced by learners.

It is widely recognized that EA has contributed much in describing language learning and improving second language pedagogy. Theoretically, EA can experimentally confirm or disprove the findings by using CA. In reality, errors can tell the teacher what needs to be taught, and also allows teachers to figure out what area of language teaching should be emphasized in a L2 classroom.

Studies in EA have its limitations in that they do not take into account avoidance strategy during the process of L2 acquisition. When a L2 learner finds a L2 word or structure difficult due to differences between his mother tongue and target language, he may use avoidance strategy to create a simpler word or structure than his intended output instead. In addition, EA analysis is subjective; it is impossible to grasp a clear and holistic picture of the substance of learner errors, since EA does not consider what learners can do correctly alone but instead focuses on the errors that the learners commit. Besides, EA is time-consuming as it counts correct usage and incorrect parts in learner data, and categorizing learner errors is often laborious. The various ways of classifying errors also undermine the reliability of using EA as a tool.

#### **2.4 Methodology of Contrastive Analysis (CA)**

CA methods lie at the crossroad of disciplines among general linguistics, psycholinguistics and pedagogy. Nickel (1971:2) felt that CA was not merely relevant for foreign-language teaching but could also make useful contributions to machine translation and linguistic typology.

According to Di Pietri (1986), two types of methodology are employed in the use of CA — the classic analysis and generative analysis.

The classic method is the approach proposed by Fries (1945) which includes description, contrast and pedagogical implications. Fries (1945:9) firmly established contrastive linguistic analysis as an integral component in the methodology of target language teaching. Pedagogically, Fries (1945:259) argued that “the most effective materials for teaching an L2 were those based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully contrasted with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.” Lado (1957:vi) claimed, “We can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by

comparing systematically the language and culture to be learnt with the native language and the culture of the student”. Lado (1957) also maintained that contrastive analysis had a practical goal, “if you recognize the differences between your native language and the target language, you are able to overcome the linguistic habits of your native language that interfere with the habits of the target language.” So, he affirmed that the key to relieving or eliminating the difficulties in foreign language learning is to make a contrast between MT and TL. Udo (1978:1-8) claimed that “Analysis of contrasts is a fundamental method in linguistic description”, and that CA was expected to inform the teacher of the errors that his students were likely to make in learning a TL before the teacher begins teaching. James (1980) argued that nothing is of greater potential value to language teachers and learners than a comparative and contrastive description of the learner’s mother tongue and the target language.

According to Jacek (1980:43), the most important and distinctive methodological feature of classical analysis is that it provides a set of statements concerning what may be called ‘contrastive facts’ which are:

(1a) A sentence in L1 has a feature  $\alpha$ , and the ‘corresponding’ sentence in L2 has a feature  $\beta$ ;

(1b) There is a sentence in L1 that has a feature  $\alpha$  and which has no ‘corresponding’ equivalent in L2.

The second method is derived from Chomsky’s Theory of Universal Grammar (UG). For instance, a native English speaker, according to the transformational-generative (T-G) rule of English, can turn a certain English deep structure which may be similar to Chinese into English surface structure and thus composes an English sentence. Equally, a native Chinese speaker, according to the transformational-generative (T-G) rule of Chinese, turns a certain Chinese deep structure which may be similar to English into Chinese surface structure and thus makes a Chinese

sentence shown as table 2.1. However, a Chinese learner of English inevitably commits errors when he turns a Chinese deep structure into the equivalent English surface structure (Lu, 1999).

**Table 2.1**

**CA between Surface and Deep Structures of Verb + Noun Collocation in Chinese and English in this Study**

<b>Language structure</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>English</b>
Surface structure	chuanzhe waitao 穿着 外套	wear an overcoat
	daizhe shoubiao 戴着 手表	wear a watch
Deep structure	Verb + Noun Collocation	Verb + Noun Collocation

The generative analysis method is based on DiPietro (1971), which contains three steps - observation of differences between surface structures (e.g. single / plural form of noun), assuming the universals embedding varieties of languages (e.g. concept of single / plural), and describing a certain universal through generation from deep to surface structures. In effect, Lado (1957:7) has already pointed out that by using the results of linguistic and cultural contrast of the native and the foreign languages and cultures, we can pinpoint our research problems, and individuals can carry out highly significant and sorely needed experiments singlehanded. This implies that other factors such as cultural factors which have an impact on the connotation of a word or structure at the deep level cannot be neglected apart from linguistic structure in CA.

**2.5 An Integrated Theory and Methodology: Blending of CA into EA**

Both theoretical contrastive analysis (CA) and error analysis (EA) can be taken as two methods to investigate the problems with learners of EFL. EA evolved as a direct

consequence of CA and it incorporates CA in the explanation of errors (Asher, 1994 and Choi, 1996). If CA can identify and prevent errors, in which the differences between L1 and L2 represent potential causes of errors (Ellis, 1985 and He, 2009), then EA can identify and explain as well as cure all errors of learning English. In other words, EA presupposes a CA in which CA functions as preventive method while EA as curative method. One of the presuppositions of EA is that making of errors indicates learning difficulty. It is assumed that where a learner makes errors he has difficulties in learning. CA could help teachers to identify potential problems; while EA enabled teachers to work out how a learner was learning and to what extent the learner had understood the target language. The combination of CA with EA has improved method of the explanation of errors, particularly, interference errors. Contrastive analysis and Error Analysis can be integrated into a model which aims to detect all potential errors due to both mother tongue (MT) and target language (TL), and explain errors more profoundly and extensively as well as provide some pedagogical implications. The model for blending of CA into EA is based on the methods of contrastive linguistics between language-particular analysis and application by Gast (2012), who constructed a model of representing the methods of contrastive linguistics shown as in the diagram given below:

Analysis of single language(s) → Contrastive Analysis → Application

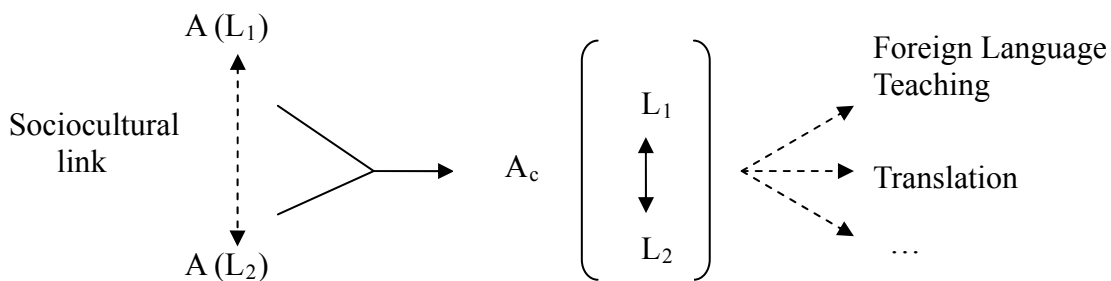


Diagram 1: Contrastive Linguistics between Language-particular Analysis and Application

The above diagram indicates that analysis of single language(s) requires a socio-cultural link between the two languages investigated, and contrastive analysis (CA) should be applied to foreign language teaching, translation and so on. CA focuses on the structural linguistics methods, whereas EA focuses on the language teaching-learning methods (LTLM). CA is based on phonology, grammar (including morphology and syntax) as well as semantics which are quite needed and relevant for EA, language teaching-learning (LTL) methods (LTLM) and material production. This kind of teaching-learning based method would help to interpret, easily understand and reproduce relevant materials and also would be very much useful for producing remedial materials and help the interactive learning. Therefore, CA and EA are interdependent on one another.

Some experts of CA have proposed possibilities of combining the two: CA and EA (Corder, 1967; DiPietri, 1984, Choi, 1996 and Geethakumary, 2002). Geethakumary (2002) made a contrastive analysis between mother tongue Malayalam and target language Hindi independently and completely, in order to compare the two languages item by item at all levels of the two languages contrasted. She was able to identify both similar features as well as dissimilar features found.

So, it becomes essential to apply both CA and EA approaches to discover, evaluate and amend Chinese learners' errors. Blending the methods of CA into EA is basic, more rational and needed for an effective LTLM (language teaching-learning methods).

## **2.6 Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis Research in China**

Previous studies of CA and EA in China have gone through a long history, which can be divided into three phases. The first phase started from the publications of *Chinese Grammar* by Ma (1898) followed by *English-Chinese Contrastive Grammar* by Yan

(1904) and *A preliminary Study of English Intonation* (with American Variants) and *Its Chinese Equivalents* by Zhao (1933) as well as *An Essential Theoretical Outlines of Chinese Grammar* by Lv (1942). These studies, following the theories of Nesfield and Bloomfield, based on contrastive analysis between Chinese and English grammatical systems, identified similarities and differences between two languages and paved the way for contrastive studies in China.

The second phase started from 1949 to 1976, during which there was very little development of CA due to the Great Cultural Revolution.

The third and most important phase began from the publication of *Studying Grammar by Contrast* by Lv (1977) till date.

In these three phases, many linguists in China had a tendency of supporting the strong claim of CA. Many Chinese researchers were of the view that CA is an effective approach in foreign language learning and teaching with which the similarities and differences can be discovered, researchers and learners come to see the essence of the two languages, and therefore difficulties and errors can be solved (Lv, 1990; Pan, 1997; Xu, 1992; Yang, 2004 and Cheng, 2007). In addition, English and Chinese history and culture were believed to be important in the study of CA (Zhao, 1979; Pan, 1997:19; Qu, 2003 and Li, 2009). Lv (1990) pointed out that for Chinese learners of English, the teaching and study in English was supposed to be based on contrast between the English language and Chinese. Xu (1992) maintained that description of similarities and differences in the method of CA is essential for the study of any two languages and proposed that CA between Chinese and English could be put into use synchronically. All these researchers laid emphasis on the importance of CA in terms of a general description of similarities and differences between Chinese and English. But, Zhao (1979) took a different view that CA between Chinese and English should be focused on the differences from the structural features and similarities. This implies that the focus

of contrastive study between Chinese and English should be towards structure. Zhao's (1979) view is more specific than general proposal how important the similarities and differences between Chinese and English.

By contrast between Chinese and English, previous studies merely presented the grammatical features of both language patterns and sentences, highlighting the differences between them. Few studies, however, were intended to find out which structure or pattern were least likely and most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English based on similarities and differences, needless to say, with purpose of establishing a hierarchy of difficulties encountered by Chinese learners of English.

In the investigation of the problems of Chinese learners of English, some previous studies of theoretical CA have not used EA to find out whether there are other causes of problems in addition to the interference from the mother tongue. Zhou (2008) undertook a CA study describing the similarities between Chinese and English synonyms from collocations, affections, stylistics and sources. Jin and Zhou (2007) did the similar study from the vagueness of synonyms. These studies contrasted common features on synonym categories between the two languages alone. Their findings imply that synonym is related to many factors contributing to the problems. However, these studies simply gave a general analysis and discussion on the possible cause of the problems with English synonyms among Chinese learners.

Findings drawn from some of previous studies of CA have supported CA theory that positive transfer from the MT can facilitate TL learning and conversely, negative transfer from the MT can inhibit learning of the TL (Wang, 2000; Qu, 2003; Shi, Sun and Cong, 2005). But these studies did not provide sufficient evidence for how the L1 Chinese language transfer (cross-linguistic influence) worked in the learning of L2 besides Cheng (2007). Cheng (2007) reported that 75% SVO simple sentences made by Chinese learners were correct due to similarities between Chinese and English. This



suggests that SVO structure is least likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English. Cheng (2007) also reported that there were 22 errors due to disagreement between subject and predicate. That was indicative of most likely problems among Chinese learners of English.

Other studies were inclined to use error analysis (EA) – the weak claim of CA, to investigate problems with Chinese learners of English ignorance of theoretical CA – strong claim of CA. The focus of these previous studies were more frequently on the remedy of the problems after they happened based on EA than on the prevention of the problems from happening based on CA. These studies by using EA alone argued that identification of difficulties was important by describing differences (Li, 2007; Hu, 2007; Li, 2008 and Zhang, 2009) and emphasized that differences between two languages in CA were one of fundamental reasons for errors (Yang, 2000; Chen, 2004; Li, 2007; Chen, 2008 and He, 2009). However, more of these studies by EA have remained on the theoretical level about the importance of CA in the error analysis, having not performed a real description of the Chinese and English and made a contrast between the two languages.

Very few previous studies made use of CA in its original strong form – that is, doing a contrastive presentation between the TL English and MT Chinese subsystems to help learners understand better about the essence of the two languages, having had an independent description of the two languages and then diagnosing all errors in EA as an improvement and supplement to CA.

Some of the previous studies did propose the use of CA blending into EA to investigate problems facing learners of target language, but they did not put the integrated method into practice. Supporting the strong version of CA, Guo (2006:223) agreed with McCarthy (1990:87) that identifying what learners will need in the way of vocabulary is important in selecting what to teach. Guo (2006) supported the diagnostic

function of CA, and argued that EA was over-dependent on the error aspect of learner language, and therefore it was impossible for EA researchers to draw up a more complete profile of learner language and to depict a picture of learners' errors for clear pedagogical purposes. Guo (2006) probed similarities and differences between Chinese and English verbs and stressed the significance of performing error analysis based on both CA and EA. However, Guo (2006) did not put the integrated methodology by CA combined with EA into use, and thus cannot provide sound evidence to what extent errors is the result of negative transfer. Wang (2008) reviewed the theories of CA and EA and the application of two approaches of error analysis: CA and EA as well as the practice of error correction. However, Wang (2008) made a theoretical exploration of CA and EA alone, stressing the importance of the two theories and methods in the error analysis without providing evidence for blending CA into EA.

Wei (2011) argued that contrastive study was the integration of CA and EA, and that error of TL was caused by the MT interference, ignorance of the TL grammatical rules and culture. Wei (2011) also provided examples to explain interlingual and intralingual errors as well as discussed their pedagogical implications. Wei's (2011) approach of study on EA is more practical than Guo (2006).

On the other hand, most of the previous EA studies have analyzed errors made by Chinese learners of English and brought out the findings such as whether the source of an error is interlingual or intralingual or the influence of teaching and learning strategies and so forth. However, most of the previous EA-based studies paid more attention to the error identification than the interpretation of errors. Among these studies the detecting of error seems to be the ultimate purpose of study, and the explanation of errors in more detail was neglected. Few other studies reported sources of errors (Gao and Guo, 2010).

Many other factors were found to contribute to Chinese learner English in the previous EA-based studies (Liu, 1998 and Wang, 2008) and among them, Chinese

interference (Tang, 2011; Wang, 2008; Gao and Guo, 2010) and de-context (Zhang, Yang and Zhao, 2009) were the two important factors. Nevertheless, to what extent these two factors affected English learning in order to solve the existing problems effectively, was not provided from the point of view of grammatical structure and lexical meaning.

In the analysis of errors, most of the previous studies provided with a general qualitative description of the intralingual errors by giving examples, not reporting the percentage of the source with reference to intralingual errors.

## **2.7 Studies of English Collocations within and outside China**

Linguists have studied collocations from the perspective of co-occurrence syntagmatically (Saussure, 1916; Firth, 1957; Halliday, 1961:276 and Carter, 1987:55) and from the point of grammatical and semantical selection rule restriction (Chomsky, 1985). However, studies on defining collocation and rules to follow regarding classification of collocation have not yet been given more definitely.

### **2.7.1 Terminology Problems on Definition of Collocations**

Firth (1957:22) studied collocation with respect to co-occurrence and stated that “You should know a word by the company it keeps” defining that “collocations are actual words in habitual company” (Firth, 1957:99). Other corpus linguistic studies defined that collocation can be referred to as combination between two high frequency words (Sinclair, 1966; Durrant, 2008: ii and Leijten, et al., 2012). Sinclair (1966) gave some terms such as node, span and collocates to collocations based on corpus linguistics, defining node as an item whose collocations are being studied by us and span as the number of lexical items on each side of a node. Items in the environment set by the span are termed as collocates (Sinclair, 1966:415). The term ‘span’ termed by Sinclair (1966) here matches with ‘collocation strength’ termed by some other scholars (Lewis, 2000:63 and Abdaoui, 2010).

There are studies which focused on collocations from the standpoint of semantic prosody (Stubbs, 2002; Schmitt and Carter, 2004; Wang and Zhang, 2005). Both individual words and phrases can have semantic prosody (Schmitt and Carter, 2004:7). In Stubbs' words (2002:255), between some nodes and collocates present some typical semantic preference or semantic prosody (affective meanings of a given node with its typical collocates). However, there is semantic prosody limitation / control between two words or phrases, and scope of study on semantic prosody is smaller than that on collocation (Wang and Zhang, 2005).

The present study argues that collocation is combination between two words occurring in pair at lexical and grammatical levels. Collocation is largely based on the lexical semantic match between two words that tend to co-occur, which is essential to a collocation, and otherwise, collocation makes no sense. Collocation is the way in which words are used together regularly, which deals with native speakers' speaking habits. In other words, collocation needs to follow native speakers' speaking habits in the semantic selection of collocates of one word. To be matched between two independent words includes two aspects. At lexical level, collocation relies on native speakers' habits in terms of lexical semantic and selection restrictions. There is semantic prosody limitation / control between two words or phrases (Wang and Zhang, 2005). For instance, 'strong tea' is conventional and 'powerful tea' is unconventional (Halliday, 1966:150). At grammatical level, collocation depends on agreement between two words in morphology and syntax. In the case of collocation 'The sun rises', the noun 'sun' as the subject must be in agreement with the verb 'rises' as the predicate, where 'rise' presents in its simple present tense in syntax 'rises'. Such grammatical contrastive study of collocation between Chinese and English which is conducted from standpoint of morphology is rare. Shi (2005: 42) argued that collocation includes grammatical aspect, but simply provided a general discussion on it from English subject-predicate and

Chinese topic-comment structures rather than from the level down to morphology: a micro-study of CA. It is important to focus on those TL rules which are not carried in mother tongue (MT) grammar from micro-aspect of CA in order to know TL rules well and find out how well MT interferes with the learning of TL rules (Yang and Li, 1997: 98). English is characterized by morphology in word formation in syntax but Chinese has no such feature. Therefore, it is necessary to make an exploration of collocation at grammatical level starting from morphology between Chinese and English. Collocation can be acceptable only if two words in pair are matched in lexical semantics and also keep concord in grammatical structure in morphology and syntax, just as the case that 'The sun rises'. On the contrary, 'A problem make out' is unconventional since 'problem' and 'make out' is mismatched in lexical semantic selection. At lexical level, the most likely collocates on the right of the node 'problem' are supposed to be 'occur, arise, and create' and so forth, and 'have, work out, settle, handle, deal with, cope with, and address' and so forth on the left of 'problem'. Therefore, 'make out' cannot collocate with 'problem' from collocation restriction at lexical level. At grammatical level, 'problem' is unmatched to 'make out' in morphological form, since subject 'problem' in singular form should keep concord with 'makes out' in number.

### **2.7.2 Terminology Problems on Classification and Types of Collocation**

So far, an agreeable classification and type list of collocation has not been given.

According to Benson et al. (1997: xxx-xxxiii), collocation can be classified into lexical and grammatical collocations. As per this, lexical collocation refers to the combination between two content words, which can be further divided into seven sub-categories, shown as table 2.2 below. Some examples cited are given by the researcher, others are taken from Benson et al. (1997: xxx-xxxii).

**Table 2.2****Classification of English Lexical Collocations**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. verb (usually transitive, denoting creation or activation) + noun / pronoun (prepositional phrase)	make friends; come to an agreement
2. verb (meaning eradication and or nullification) + noun	break a code; crush (put down) resistance
3. adjective + noun	great success; ordinary people
4. noun + verb	Alarms go off; Bees buzz (sting, swarm)
5. noun1 + of + noun2	a piece of bread
6. adverb + adjective	definitely true
7. verb + adverb	suggest strongly

According to table 2.2, noun + verb collocation in which verb is intransitive and verb + noun collocation are two types of lexical collocation. But, the present study argues that this classification needs to provide a further description. Classification of lexical collocation is supposed to lay emphasis on the principle it follows. Lexical collocations can be based on word formation including compound forms based on CA and structural linguistics methodology since the Chinese language does not present morphology as its core grammar. Only following this notion, classification that noun + verb collocation and verb + noun collocation are lexical collocation can be rational in the CA between Chinese and English. In “they succeed” and “achieve success” no morphological form exhibits, so both are type of lexical collocations. The morphological forms shown as ‘friends’ in ‘make friends’, ‘of’ in ‘a piece of bread’, ‘alarms’ in ‘alarms go off’, ‘strongly’ in ‘suggest strongly’ and ‘definitely’ in ‘definitely

true' in table 2.2 all represent a kind of grammatical feature, since there are morphological marks like '-s', 'of' or '-ly'. Therefore, in this sense these types of collocation are supposed to be classification of grammatical collocation. Grammatical category can be shown by category symbols such as S, NP and V (Richards et al., 2000: 202). According to this, the sentences 'Alarms go off' and 'Bees buzz', NP 'a piece of bread' even including 'ordinary people', and verbs 'break', 'crush' and 'suggest' are most likely to fit into grammatical category.

Meanwhile, the given examples "come to an agreement" and "alarms go off" by Benson et al. (1997: xxx-xxxii) are a little bit of inconsistency with the verb + noun / pronoun and noun + verb collocation structures listed. It is obvious that phrasal verbs such as "come to" and "go off" are included in the type of noun + verb and verb + collocations. Namely, the more appropriate type of verb + noun / pronoun and noun + verb collocations are supposed to change into verb / phrasal verb + noun / pronoun and noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation structures in the list of table 2.2. Some previous studies have already stated that noun + verb collocation includes verbs and phrasal verbs in the collocation study of English errors (Li, 2005: 135). Zhao (2005:281) cited some examples about phrasal verbs which are discussed in the type of verb + noun collocations. In whichever case, English verbs or phrasal verbs, morphological change of verb usually takes place in the sentence and thus can be grammatical collocation classification. From the examples 'alarms go off' and 'bees buzz' (Benson et al., 1997: xxxiii), it shows that phrasal verb 'go off' and verb 'buzz' are both intransitive. However, from the viewpoint of contrastive analysis between Chinese and English, there are some differences in terms of verb transitivity. In syntax, Chinese includes two grammatical patterns: SVO and SV structure. English subject – predicate structure includes patterns: noun + verb + noun and noun + verb structures (Li, 2005). However, in some cases, Chinese SV structure is equivalent to English noun + verb structure, that is,

Chinese intransitive verb is equivalent to English transitive verb. In other cases, English verb presents both transitive and intransitive verbs. Therefore, verb transitivity needs a further description in the types of noun + verb and verb + noun collocations between Chinese and English.

Another ambiguity in the type of noun + verb collocation given by Benson et al. (1997) is that the verb in the structure appears to make reference to act verb such as 'buzz' and 'go off'. However, English verb contains auxiliary verbs involving modal verbs which show grammatical function in a sentence. The auxiliary verb carries no lexical meaning which is linked to act verb and form part of the predicate of a sentence. In the study of collocation, focus is mainly on the collocation between two individual content words or one content word with another particle (preposition) regardless of auxiliary verb. Cowie (1987) stated that more than two words can intervene between the words which go together of the collocation phrases. So, noun + auxiliary verb + act verb can be incorporated into the type of noun + verb collocation between Chinese and English.

According to the type of lexical collocations listed in table 2.2 based on Benson et al. (1997: xxx-xxxiii), there are two types of verb + noun collocations. One is verb (usually transitive) denoting creation or activation + noun / pronoun (prepositional phrase) plus noun collocation. The other is verb meaning eradication and or nullification plus noun collocation (Benson et al., 1997: xxx-xxxii). However, in the study of classification of collocation, these two types are a blending. That is, there is no further distinct between verbs (usually transitive) denoting creation or activation and verbs eradication or nullification in the identification of the type of verb + noun collocation. Li (2005) considered two properties of verbs as the same one without any restriction for meaning of verb. Therefore, regarding this issue whether the verb is restricted to a certain denotation is left gap to the discussion in verb + noun collocation between



Chinese and English.

Grammatical collocation refers to the combination between a content word with a grammatical word such as preposition or a grammatical structure such as an infinitive and clause, which can be further divided into eight sub-categories (Benson et al., 1997: xvi and Wang, 2010:17):

**Table 2.3**

**Classification of English Grammatical Collocations**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. noun + preposition	blockade against; attitudes towards
2. noun + to-infinitive	a rule to follow
3. noun + that-clause	a proposal that
4. preposition + noun	by chance
5. adjective + preposition	fond of
6. adjective + to + infinitive	(be) essential to do
7. adjective + that-clause	(be) apologize that
8. another 19 kinds of English verbal phrases	Listed in detail in Benson et al. (1997)

According to table 2.3, English noun + preposition is one type of grammatical collocation, such as “the blockade against” (Benson et al., 1997: xvi). This can be applied into practice only if the preposition in this structure refers to prepositional phrase, such as “the blockade against enemy”. In this structure, the prepositional phrase functions as a post attributive modifier of the noun. But, all the Chinese attributive modifiers (mainly referring to noun and adjective in the present study) precede the head noun without morphological form in syntax and thus are a type of lexical collocation from the classification. This implies that English grammatical noun + prepositional phrase collocation such as “attitudes toward work” is equivalent to Chinese lexical noun

+ noun collocation 工作(work)态度(attitude).

Besides that, the present study argues that English noun + phrasal verb and phrasal verb + noun collocations fit into grammatical collocation, based on that, “A grammatical collocation is a phrase consisting of dominant word (noun, adjective, and verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or a clause” (Benson et al., 1997: xxx-xxxiii).

Originally, the purpose of the classification between lexical and grammatical collocations (Benson et al., 1997) may be to facilitate users to look up collocation of a word from the collocation dictionary. However, substantially, there is no doubt that collocation between two content words in syntax must follow the grammatical rule in any language. Vocabulary and grammar are organically related to each other (Lin, 1997:7). Any word contains knowledge of functional grammar (Huang and Liao, 1997:8), which includes three capabilities, namely, 1) functioning as a constituent in a sentence, 2) combination between one content word with another, 3) combination between a content word with a particle (or function word) (Huang and Liao, 1997:8). Without referring to syntax, the notion of collocations becomes vacuous (Asmaa, 2008:28). Therefore, noun + verb collocation has grammatical and lexical semantic aspects in English syntax. This is true of Chinese noun + verb collocation, which is referred to as syntactic and lexical semantic aspects from topic-comment structure. On the one hand, the selection between two words must follow rules from the classification of lexical collocation. Wang (2010:17) stated that English verb + noun collocation errors included wrong choices of words and some grammatical mistakes. This implies that English verb + noun collocation includes lexical and grammatical aspects in the error analysis. Collocations deal with how words combine into phrases, sentences and texts with each other (Benson et al.: 1997: ix). Thus, it is difficult to separate grammatical aspect from collocation in the study. Because of this, the collocation is supposed to be

considered from both lexical and grammatical aspects, specifically, from lexical collocations (lexical semantic restriction) and grammatical collocations (from morphology and syntax) in the contrastive analysis between Chinese and English.

### **2.7.3 Previous Studies on English Collocation**

Previous English collocation studies concentrated mainly on: (1) one type of collocation (Sun, 2006; Li, 2008 and Wang, 2011), (2) more than one type of collocation (Li, 2005; Mahmoud, 2005 and Tang, 2011). Both are related collocation between content words which seem to be lexical collocation type listed by Benson et al. (1997). However, in the identification of difficulties and errors, few studies embark on the task of identifying instances of categories of English collocations at the lexical and grammatical levels through manual searching which is very demanding and takes much longer than the automatic annotation.

More studies emphasized on verb + noun and / or adjective + noun collocations from the point of lexical semantic and selection restriction (Chu, 2008; Aurelia, 2006; Schmitt, 2008; Ersen, 2010 and Wang, 2010), which can be seen as the type of lexical collocation category. Some focused on noun + verb collocations from the standpoint of grammatical structure in syntax (Huang, 2001 and Zhang, 2009), which can put into the classification of grammatical collocation. In the linguistic system, the collocations of verb + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb, and verb + preposition were highlighted among Chinese learners of English (Qin, 2013:78). Others gave accounts of the English subject-predicate (Liu, 2005; Chai, 2008 and Huang, 2010) and Chinese topic-comment structures (Jin, 2008; Sun and Wang, 2007). This trend of CA-based study in selecting type of collocation between content words reflects that noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation, and adjective + noun collocation are very important in the study of collocation on the one hand, and that they are most likely to be problematic for learners

of English as a foreign language on the other. Among the previous studies, noun + noun collocation, verb + adverb and adverb + adjective + noun collocation are scarce, which suggests two possibilities. One is that these three types of collocation occur less frequently in the texts. The other is that they are least likely to be problematic for learners of English target language.

Meanwhile, few previous studies have investigated two classifications with all the seven categories of collocations to find out the areas of difficulty and establish levels of difficulty of collocation which is most likely and least likely to be problematic for learners of target language English.

English collocations studies outside China were carried out for a wide range of purposes, while the same studies within China primarily aimed at either simply to identify errors based on EA (Li, 2005; Shi, 2005; Sun and Wei, 2005) or to identify features of learner English (Sun, 2006). However, few studies within and outside China aimed to describe and contrast the MT Chinese and the TL English collocations in order to identify and predict the areas of difficulty and the level of difficulty encountered by the Chinese learners of English.

Outside China, some studies were designed to examine students' ability to collocate words correctly in English (Rotimi, 2004; Koya, 2005 and Mahmoud, 2005), or to investigate learners' receptive and productive knowledge of collocations (Caroli, 1998 and Koya, 2005), or to look into the relationship between the learners' English collocation knowledge and their overall language proficiency (Hsu, 2002; Koya, 2005 and Hossein, 2007). But, most of them focused on the description of features of target language English and features of learners' interlanguage regardless of their mother tongues by using EA. This is insufficient to make a profound analysis and work out the problems derived from interference of MT among learners of English.

In methodology, many of the studies related to English collocations were based on theoretical CA, providing a description of the features of both target language and mother tongue and differentiating the two languages (Rio, 2002; Xu, 2003; Liu, 2005 and Kong, 2005). Nevertheless, these studies did not systematically indicate the potential problems based on theoretical CA. Rio (2002) carried out a study to identify the difficulties Indonesian students might have in learning English collocations based on CA. However, Rio (2002) did not give a separate description of ML but a brief presentation of similarities and differences between English and mother tongue.

More studies investigating English collocation problems within and outside China adopted solely a weak claim of CA that is EA approach alone (Hsu, 2002; Wang and Good, 2008). Few studies were focused on both CA and EA (Timothy, 1991; Elyildirm, 1997 and Wang, 2011). Individual description of MT and TL systems, which is the basis for identifying the differences between MT and TL and difficult areas in CA in order to see what extent errors made by the students could be attribute to interlingual interference, has therefore been neglected in a number of previous studies of English collocations among learners (Liu, 2000; Rotimi, 2004; Kong, 2005 and Schmitt, 2008).

There have been some studies, which have adopted CA and EA in the research methodology in the investigation of English collocation errors both within and outside China (Huang, 2001; Rotimi, 2004; Chan, 2005; Li, 2005; Nesselhauf, 2005; Pu, 2005 and Wei, 2005). However, few studies applied both CA and EA into practice.

### **2.7.3.1 Studies on Collocations in One Area: Grammatical Structure in Syntax or Lexical Semantic Restriction**

More previous studies on English collocation have not provided an explicit type list for classification between lexical and grammatical collocations separately but focused on one area: either grammatical structure in syntax or lexical semantic and

selection restriction. Studies on morphology between Chinese and English in syntax are rare.

More CA-based studies on noun + verb collocation were undertaken from the point of structure in syntax (Xu, 2003 and Kong, 2005). Xu (2003) has given a theoretical account for the subject and topic according to the typology theory between Chinese, Japanese and Korean. Xu (2003) focused mainly on the issue whether initial position of subject is prominent among four languages regardless of predicate. Needless to say, the morphological change of verb in syntax together with the most common problems Chinese learners have with reference to English subject-predicate structures was discussed in Xu's (2003) study. Kong (2005) investigated the acquisition of English subjects in subject-predicate structures among the MT Chinese speakers and hypothesized the possible difficulties due to the MT Chinese transfer through an empirical study. However, Kong (2005) did not give a separate description of Chinese topic-comment and English subject-predicate structures in order to identify difficulties based on differences between two language structures. Meanwhile, Kong (2005) took more interest in how learners used grammatical 'feel' in an implicit way and in informal situations. However, the process of learning how to use grammatical rules on subject-predicate structure in an explicit way is far more difficult than the process of acquisition. The order of acquisition is stable while the order of learning is complex (Krashen, 1981).

Studies on collocation between modifiers and head were conducted more frequently from the point of lexical semantic restriction, such as adjective + noun collocation (Cui, 2010; Tang, 2010; Zhang and Chen, 2006) and adverb-related collocations (Yan, 2011). Studies on noun + noun collocation were carried out either in morphology (Sun, 2009) or in lexical semantic restriction (Zhao, 2004; Sun, 2009 and Wang, 2009). Other studies gave a general description between Chinese and English content words in lexical

semantic restriction based on CA (Li, 2006 and Zhao, 2011). Rare studies focused on both grammatical structure and lexical semantic and selection restriction (Lin, 2009 and Zheng, 2009).

Sun (2009) conducted a CA-based study on noun + noun collocation in grammatical form, involving differences between Chinese and English noun and adjective attributive modifiers. It is quite significant that Sun (2009) described English nouns in singular and plural forms as well as differences between Chinese and English in numbers of nouns which function as attributive modifiers. Tang (2004) made a CA on the position between Chinese and English adjective + noun collocations but with no further discussion on the issue whether one same word with different form such as 'greatest' as superlative of 'great' is treated as one word. Meanwhile, Sun (2009) and Tang (2004) did not take lexical restriction between modifiers and head noun into consideration.

Other studies made reference to the lexical, semantic and selection restriction between collocated words in the description of CA-based English and Chinese collocations, but ignored grammatical structure and morphological form of words in syntax. These studies include adjective + noun collocations (Li and Ren, 2006; Zhang and Chen, 2006), verb + noun collocation (Chu, 2008), attributive and adverbial modifiers (Yang, 2007), and adjective intensification (Huang, 2007; Wang and Hen, 2010).

Li (2006) provided a description of MT Chinese nouns, verbs and adjectives in lexical semantics which function as attributive modifiers of head nouns alone without making reference to TL English equivalents. Han (2006) made a general CA between Chinese and English equivalents on lexical semantic restriction from parallel words and partially semantic gap words. But, due to the absence of a systematic description of two languages in structure and morphology, Han (2006) could not conduct an in-depth study of collocation between Chinese and English. On the other hand, Li (2008) gave a general

description and made a contrastive analysis between Chinese and English equivalent words from the semantic field but did not consider functional grammatical use of these words. Chu (2008) examined the relationship between the English and Chinese verb + noun collocations. Based on Fillmore's Case Grammar and approached from the deep semantic case feature and case chains, Chu's (2008) analysis of the primary and metaphorical meaning of 'chi / eat - N' showed the polysemantic nature of the verb and the change of the noun meaning followed by the verb. However, Chu (2008) did not acknowledge the significance of different verb meanings in the learning of English verb + noun collocation. Zhao (2011) argued that underlying collocation problem facing Chinese learners might be caused by the differences in the denotation, collocation strength, and semantic prosody between equivalent Chinese and English words. However, Zhao (2011) did not provide similarities and differences between two languages from the formal structures.

Guan (1995) made a contrast between denotation and connotation of English and Chinese words, stating that there are many parallel words and partially semantic gap words (Guan, 1995; Wang, 2001 and Li, 2009), which were found to be 25.9% among all words that were investigated as well as around 2.5% percent of completely semantic gap words between Chinese and English, according to Li (2009:13). Li (2009) found that some of the English words are equivalent to Chinese in meaning which makes up 29.3% to 38% percent, some words are partially equivalent to each other (25.9%), and others are semantic gap (2.5%). The revelation drawn from Guan (1995) and Li (2009) is that words similar in meaning between Chinese and English are more than words dissimilar in semantics between the two languages, and thus the meaning of Chinese and English words may well be not most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English. But, the differences between English and Chinese from the semantic rule are very difficult to describe fully due to context, stylistic, and cross-culture factors. Xin and



Fang (2012:124) found that the meaning of a verb depends on the noun following this verb in a verb + noun collocation. This suggests that a verb draws meaning from its collocative context with noun after it. Collocation between a verb with different noun will carry different meaning.

Functional grammarians agree that there is a close relationship between grammatical functional use of a word and meaning (Halliday, 1961 and Bondarko, 1991). As a result, due to lack of the CA based on lexical restriction for semantic match in the studies (Xu, 2003; Kong, 2005 and Sun, 2009) and due to the lack of CA based on the grammatical structure in the studies (Han, 2006; Chu, 2008 and Li, 2008), they are not adequate enough to make an extensive study of CA between Chinese and English.

According to the methodology of CA, a description of two systems that are being contrasted should have been involved in the study. However, Zheng (2009) and Cui (2010) merely provided a theoretical description of one equivalent subsystem. Zheng (2009) described TL English adjective + noun collocation alone, while Cui (2010) simply provided description of MT Chinese adjective + noun collocation. Though their studies provided a detailed description of one equivalent language, Zheng (2009) and Cui's (2010) could not attain the ultimate goal of CA, that is, to identify the potential problems facing Chinese learners based on the CA.

### **2.7.3.2 Studies on Collocations in Two Areas: Grammatical Structure and Lexical Semantic Restriction**

In contrast to those studies which focused on one area, some studies covered two areas: grammatical structure and lexical semantic restriction. Lin (2010) made a CA from semantic restriction including overlapping words, parallel words, partially semantic gap words and collocation strength, and grammatical structure such as the position of attributive modifiers. Lin (2010) did CA from the viewpoint of both lexical semantics and

structure of equivalent Chinese and English words, namely, based on lexical and grammatical collocations, nevertheless, she did not focus on one specific type(s) of collocations based on the description of two equivalent language systems.

Liu (2005) described the initial position of subject in the subject-predicate structure through contrast of the subject among four languages involving English and Chinese in order to construct a Universal Grammar. It was discovered that learners had their own psychological, cognitive and semantic foundations. In Liu's (2005) study, two areas were taken into account. However, Liu (2005) did not pay a special attention to CA between MT Chinese and TL English subject-predicate structures. In the CA that morphology is not core grammar of Chinese was not involved.

Zheng (2009) described TL English adjective + noun collocation based on syntax and semantics. However, the objective of study can not be achieved of finding problems facing learners without reference to MT Chinese. Meanwhile, in the description of English based on grammatical structure, Zheng (2009) did not undertake a discussion on morphological change of adjective and noun which takes place in sentence.

Ahrens and Huang (2001) looked at the near synonym contrast of the verbs *fang* 放 'put' and *bai* 摆 'set' and found that conceptualizations of 'set' and 'put' in English and Chinese have different semantic and syntactic entailments in practice, arguing therefore that syntactic patterns of distribution can distinguish among the English synonym pairs. This analysis of English synonyms from the semantic and syntactic standpoints done by Ahrens and Huang (2001) is more constructive than other studies. In Ahrens and Huang's (2001) study, however, demonstration of synonymous errors was not provided.

## **2.8 Studies of English Collocation Errors in China**

Most studies on errors of English collocations in China were based on weak version of CA that is EA alone (Li, 2005; Zhang, 2005 and Huang, 2010). For example, Zhang (2005) conducted an empirical study on English collocation errors, but description was not given of both MT Chinese and TL English and CA between them in order to identify the difficulties encountered by Chinese learners of English collocations. Needless to say, a further discussion from lexical and grammatical classifications was given.

Large scale corpus has been adopted in most of the previous EA-based studies of English collocation errors in China, such as Chinese Learner English Corpus — CLEC (Pu, 2005; Li, 2005; Sun, 2006; Sun and Wei, 2005) and the Spoken and Written English Corpus of Chinese Learners (SWECCL) (Pan, 2010). Concordance lines of some KWIC as a tool of learning and teaching the TL English were also used in some of these studies. These corpus-based studies indicated that the multimedia CALL approach has been widely applied in the teaching of foreign languages in China (Sun, 2006; Yang and Sun, 2009). However, the detailed procedure of performing the CALL approach with concordance lines has not been provided for learners.

### **2.8.1 Types of English Collocation Errors from Previous Studies**

Previous studies which investigated five or six subcategories of English collocation errors by using EA alone have found that verb + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb and noun + noun collocation errors rank higher and a / numeral + quantifying noun, verb + adverb collocation errors have a lower percentage of occurrence among all English collocation errors (Hsu, 2002). However, an explicit type list of lexical and grammatical collocation classification was not presented and discussed in these studies. Hse (2002) discussed lexical mismatch and grammatical problems in the error analysis.

However, lack of the presentation of striking difference between Chinese and English in morphology results in the inadequate interpretation for MT Chinese interference. Meanwhile, Hse (2002) did not provide a report of the level of difficulty encountered by Chinese learners or indications of interlingual and intralingual nor other sources of errors. As a result, he failed to recommend diverse and proper strategies in the process of teaching and learning.

Tang (2006) identified collocation errors and found out that there were noun, adjective, verb and adverb mismatching among the Chinese learners of English collocations. This indicates that Tang (2006) focused on the content words in the study of collocation errors. In the error analysis, Tang (2006) argued that the lexical errors presented in the failure of semantic selection among four content words and grammatical breakdown of each in the sentence context. It seems that Tang (2006) detected the lexical errors based on the lexical meaning restriction and grammatical structure in the context, ignoring contrastive analysis side by side between Chinese and English. Contrastive linguistics was basically concerned with the linguistic structures (Klein, 1986), if the structural linguistics methods (like CA method) are used in the error analysis by Tang (2006), such as word formation including compounding or grammatical affixation or others in the morphological and syntactic levels, English linguistic features which are structurally different from Chinese can be identified overtly. And thus, based on the formal distinction between the MT Chinese and TL English, interlingual or intralingual errors can be undertaken more extensively. Tang (2006) argued that the misuse of synonyms between 'doubt' and 'suspicion' is due to the MT Chinese interference from the point of view of lexical semantic selection only. In fact, this error reflects to which degree the learner's internalization of the two TL words has attained rather than the MT interference. Unless any example presenting the formal structural distinction between the two languages is given besides the description of

lexical semantic selection, the illustration of interlingual errors can be proved.

Some other studies focused on one subtype such as verb + noun collocation errors (Den, 2004 and Wang, 2010) or adjective + noun collocation (Sun and Wei, 2005; Zhang and Chen, 2006). Den's (2004) study focused more on the presentation of Interlanguage (IL) produced by the Chinese learners in order to find difference between IL and TL delexicalized verb + noun collocation errors (such as 'make / do / have + noun) rather than in-depth explanation of the errors. Den (2004) analyzed the errors from the interlingual and intralingual sources, but, some issues remained unsolved. Den (2004) argued 'make a conclusion' was due to general verb effect, which seems to be confusing. It is self-evident that it should be subclassified into an error due to overgeneralization of the TL collocation rules listed by him, since the learner assumed that 'make' could be applied in any context based on the prior knowledge of the TL in 'make + noun' collocation.

In the presentation of the error types, Wang (2010:31) classified verb + noun collocation errors into wrong use of verb / noun and errors in the grammatical aspect. It is not clear, since the type of 'wrong use of verb / noun', virtually, seems to overlap with the type of 'misuse 1 / 2' (which suggests misuse of noun / verb in the expression). According to Wang (2010:37), 'misuse of word' refers to wrong use of the word in the context; therefore, it would be better to change 'misuse 1' into 'erroneous verb due to context in verb + noun collocation' or other alternative. Meanwhile, Wang (2010) did not provide to which degree wrong use or misuse of verb or noun contributed to the verb + noun collocation errors and what is the percentage between verb + noun collocation errors at lexical level and grammatical level. Nor did other researches (Wei, 2005; He, 2009 and Li and Liu, 2011).

Zhang (2007) studied English collocation errors from both the grammatical and semantic perspectives, and found that assumed synonymous errors, literal translation,

blends, simplification, addition, verb transitivity and so forth were accounted for English collocation errors. This implies that analysis of grammatical and lexical collocation errors were carried out. Assumed synonymous errors and literal translation are related to lexical selection restriction in semantics and verb transitivity is concerned with grammatical structure. However, Zhang (2007) did not make a list about error types from lexical match in semantic restriction and grammatical structure.

The findings in these EA-based studies revealed that MT interference is not the only factor at work and not all problems faced by the learner are linguistic in nature (Schmitt, 2008; Zughoul and Fattah, 2005; Wang and Han, 2010). Findings from these studies also indicate that learners of English go through a process of making and testing hypotheses about the TL English, and revealed how the relationship between the universal grammar (UG) and SLA is constructed. These previous studies have found that violation of the rules of English grammatical collocations and inadequate knowledge of English collocations was also other sources of collocation errors among learners of English. Unfortunately, their description of inadequate knowledge of English collocations is too general which is indeed referring to lexical semantic selection.

Zughoul and Fattah (2005) investigated verb + noun collocation problems in a sentence among Arabic students using EA and concluded that avoidance, literal translation from mother tongue, overgeneralization and analogy, assumed synonyms, and so forth and circumlocution were the major learning strategies used by Arabic learners of English. It is obvious that in their findings, some are related to lexical semantic selection such as literal translation and assumed synonyms, others to grammatical rules such as overgeneralization and analogy. However, Zughoul and Fattah (2005) did not differentiate the sources of the errors from these two collocation classifications nor from interlingual and intralingual clusters.

Even some study found that English collocation errors were due to violation of native speaking habits. Schmitt (2008) conducted a series of studies on English adjective + noun collocation problems among Russian learners of English. Schmitt (2008) discovered that the high percentage of all learner collocations were inappropriate collocations which were not used by the native speaker (NNS), and pointed out that poorer intuitions than native respondents regarding the frequency of collocations were responsible for English adjective + noun collocation errors. Namely, the poorer intuitions imply that Russian learners of TL English are not capable of following native speaker's speaking habits. However, Schmitt (2008) did not provide indications of interlingual and intralingual sources of adjective + noun collocation errors among Russian learners of English.

Li (2005) undertook a study of four types of collocation errors: noun + noun collocation, noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation, and adjective + noun collocation providing percentage for each subcategory of errors, but did not make a list of the hierarchy of errors. Qi (2011) found six subcategories of English collocation errors with percentage for each subcategory of errors, not setting the hierarchy of errors, either.

Few other studies have managed to identify more than seven subcategories of English collocations: noun + noun, noun + prepositional phrase, noun + verb / phrasal verb, verb / phrasal verb + noun, adjective + noun, verb + adverb, adverb + adjective + noun, and a / numeral + quantifying noun collocations.

Tang (2011) identified six categories of English collocation errors and reported the percentage of each type of errors, and established the hierarchy of collocation errors. Tang (2011) found that English verb + noun collocation errors had most frequent occurrence. Tang's (2011) finding is less convincing based merely on the number of errors without description and contrast between Chinese and English verb + noun and noun + verb collocations. English verb + noun collocation is indeed difficult in terms of

verb selection restriction in the context but is easy in the word order structure among Chinese learners of English. However, it is less difficult than English noun + verb collocation due to big difference between Chinese and English in surface and deep structure (making reference to chapter 4 and chapter 6). Li (2011), Wang and Qu (2009) found seven categories of English collocation errors. However, they neither reported six types of errors and set a hierarchy of errors nor indicated interlingual and intralingual errors.

Li (2005) found out that a disagreement between noun subject and predicative verb or predicative adjectives, and between the TL English inanimate noun and verb were prevalent noun + verb collocation errors. Huang (2010) found that fossilization exists in subject-verb agreement among the Chinese learners of English. However, none of the previous studies have reported all kinds of significant problems with English noun + verb collocation errors, covering disagreement between English subject and verb in numbers and in semantic prosody between English inanimate subject and verb from animate / inanimate subject and other types of noun + verb collocation errors. This is true in the case of the following studies also. No quantitative data have reported in the following studies with reference to English verb + noun collocation errors but for a general description of the collocation errors (Li, 2005; Lu, 2005; Wei, 2005 and Yang, 2005).

In the study of English verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors, Li (2005) just presented some examples without any further explanation of errors, and Yang (2005) and Wei (2005) did not provide any quantitative data to support their findings. Wei (2005) did not report the percentage of verb + noun collocation error occurrence in terms of source of errors from grammar and lexical semantics. Lu (2005) simply described the features of Chinese learners' interlanguage and features of equivalent English from the grammatical form. A further discussion on how to deal with the



problem was not given in these studies.

In the study of English noun + noun collocation or adjective + noun collocation or adverb + adjective collocation errors (Huang, 2007; Li, 2005; Sun, 2006 and Tang, 2004), no study on English attributive modifier errors has reported all sources of errors such as redundancy, ambiguity of adjective synonyms, English grammatical errors in noun + noun collocation. Needless to say, an individual type list of lexical and grammatical collocation classifications could be provided. Tang (2011) and Zhang and Chen (2006) investigated Chinese learners' adjective + noun collocations and found that Chinese learners had incomplete knowledge of English adjective + noun collocations. They, however, did not make a further interpretation that incomplete knowledge of adjectives implied semantic restriction for adjectives nor explain what caused errors in learning English adjective + noun collocations.

English collocation errors due to synonyms have been found to be one of the prevalent problems among Chinese learners of English. Chinese learners of English have difficulty in using English synonyms (Wang, 2011) and instructors have managed to work out the problem in the teaching but failed to find a more effective way than expected to do it. Meanwhile, there are arguments regarding the sources of English synonym errors. Tang (2004) argued that synonymous errors were due to ignorance of distinction between TL synonyms. Namely, it is intralingual cause that synonymous errors occurred. Wang (2008) and Chen (2011) claimed that synonymy errors in a certain subcategory of English collocation errors were caused by negative transfer from MT Chinese, communication strategies and overgeneralization. Wang and Yang (2007) argued that misuse of synonymous English words was due to interference from teacher's translation of English words and interference from manuals for varieties of tests which usually use bilingual (two) languages, and as a result, students ignored collocation meaning and stylistic meaning but try to understand the concept / meaning of a word.

Xiao and Tong (2005) made a contrastive study with the aim to find out how collocation behavior is different from semantic prosody between English and Chinese synonyms. Xiao and Tong's (2005) study implied that differences between Chinese and English in collocation behavior and semantic prosody are most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English.

Thus, the present study argues that it is necessary to have an investigation of English synonym errors in order to discover the true reason for English synonym errors committed by Chinese learners of English. Some studies attributed errors regarding English synonyms to a lack of collocation knowledge and lexical simplification or cognitive strategy (Tang, 2006; Chan, 2005 and Li, 2005).

The findings of these past studies of synonyms in the collocation suggest that semantic restriction between two lexical words was responsible for English collocation errors. This is true to the case of de-lexicalized verbs (Hsueh, 2005 and Wang, 2011) and phrasal verbs (Siyanova and Schmitt, 2007). De-lexicalized verbs have been reported by some EA studies as another prevalent English collocation problem (Hsueh, 2005; Liou, 2005 and Wang, 2011). However, apart from Hsueh (2005) who explained that the errors were due to a lack of proficiency and Wang (2011) who found that errors were caused by the MT Chinese interference, all other researchers did not give any further explanation of de-lexicalized verb errors from verb restriction.

Phrasal verbs were also found to be another problem facing learners of English verb + noun collocations. Siyanova and Schmitt (2007) discovered that more one-word verbs than multiple-word verbs frequently occurred in both written and spoken discourse, and they pointed out that many L2 learners experienced multiple-word verbs difficulties due to their non-transparent meanings at the surface level.

However, their studies did not make an in-depth exploration of the true cause of verb or phrasal verb errors made by the learners. In other words, no report provided

concerning which one contributed more to the occurrence of errors, lexical match for semantic selection restriction or grammatical structure in morphology and in syntax, particularly, in the analysis of collocation errors made by Chinese learners.

Meanwhile, in the explanation of errors, most studies neither reported the percentage of interlingual error occurrences nor provided an explicit account for the interlingual errors from the grammatical and the lexical semantic perspectives. The examples given by these studies were not presented juxtaposed from structure between Chinese and English based on CA method. For example, Li (2004) presented an analysis on the source of errors, arguing literal translation from MT Chinese and intralingual causes are accountable for six types of English collocation errors. However, without providing a report with reference to the percentage of interlingual and intralingual errors, Li (2004) could not summarize which is more responsible for errors between interlingual and intralingual errors. Tang (2004) found that L1 interference and due to lexical deficiency of English can account for English noun + noun collocation errors. That is, both interlingual and intralingual errors were responsible for English noun + noun collocation errors among the Chinese learners of English. However, the examples given by Tang (2004), such as 'body health' should have been identified as a typical interference error from Chinese noun + noun compound but actually not. In terms of synonym errors in verb + noun collocation errors, Tang (2004) argued that they were due to the ignorance of distinction between synonyms, but did not stress that the errors fall into the category of intralingual errors.

Shi (2005) found out that interlingual, intralingual and other factors influenced the learning English verb + noun collocation errors among Chinese learners without percentage of sources. Wei (2005) identified problems with English verb transitivity in verb + noun collocation errors but did not categorize English verb transitivity issue into interlingual or intralingual errors.

Li (2005) found out that the MT Chinese interfered with learners' English noun + noun collocation by contrast analysis between Chinese and English equivalents. However, the errors were not discussed from the subdivision of grammatical structure and semantics in Li's study.

Chen (2004) argued that different collocations were found to be in different semantic categories in English noun + noun collocation. But this remains unclear about true reason behind English noun + noun collocation errors.

Lu (2005) undertook a study of grammatical and lexical collocation errors among Chinese learners and found that inadequate grammatical and collocation knowledge was the main cause of incorrect combination of English words. This argument was insufficient to illustrate the source of the errors. Lu (2005:39) argued that a mixture of sources of errors was accountable for some incorrect combinations of English, which suggests an ambiguous explanation of the errors in terms of the source of errors.

Sun and Wei (2005) found that there were semantic imprecision, semantic confusion of polysemous adjectives of English, and non-native semantic prosody between adjective and head noun in the use of English adjective + noun collocation, and that Chinese learner lacked specific adjectives. However, Sun and Wei (2005) did not stress source of the errors at all.

Zhao (2005) focused on working out what transfer frequency of the total number of verb + noun collocation errors took place, and mentioned some unknown sources of errors. If a separate description of Chinese and English collocations systems and contrastive analysis between the two languages were given, there would be a possibility to discover whether those unknown causes of errors were interlingual or intralingual errors.

Wei (2005) demonstrated English verb + noun collocation errors from interlingual and intralingual areas, yet did not report percentage of two sources of errors. Neither did Wei (2005) subdivide interlingual errors into grammatical structure and lexical semantic errors and intralingual errors into grammatical structural errors and errors due to context.

Tang (2006) demonstrated errors with typical examples, arguing that errors related to nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs were traced to Chinese interference. Tang (2006) found that incomplete knowledge of TL was the major cause of English collocation errors, and that Chinese interference played an important role in the errors but without providing percentage of two sources of errors. So did Huang (2008), Qiu and Huang (2010), they did not indicate interlingual and intralingual causes of errors though they gave the percentage of six or seven subcategories of English collocation errors. Wang and Han (2010) argued that a lack of knowledge of the TL English, avoidance strategy, and improper vocabulary learning strategies were responsible for errors. But, Wang and Han (2010) did not indicate the percentage of occurrence of the sources of errors. Furthermore, Lu (2005) found that for Chinese EFL learners at a higher level of English, their incorrect use of English collocation were due to both intralingual and interlingual sources. However, for Chinese students at a lower level of English, their English collocation errors derived mainly from literal translation (Lu, 2005). Like Wang and Han (2010), Lu (2005) did not report percentage of interlingual and intralingual error occurrences. Whoever among these studies did not provided a clear-cut of source between lexical semantic selection and grammatical rules.

He (2009) reported six categories English collocation errors from Chinese Learner English Corpus and found verb + noun collocation errors had the highest percentage occurrence among all. However, the author undertook an in-depth study of neither interlingual and intralingual errors nor lexical and grammatical collocation

errors.

Li and Liu (2011) focused on interlingual and intralingual errors among Chinese learners of EFL. However, they failed to provide typical examples to demonstrate interlingual errors on verb + noun collocation, such as 'know of society'. The phrasal verb 'know of' does not exist in MT Chinese but shows the distinct feature of TL English. This indicates that the learner knew TL English but was unable to distinguish the synonym pairs between 'know of' and 'understand' and hence it should be identified as intralingual error as opposed to interlingual error. Li and Liu (2011) merely provided several examples on misspelling to report intralingual errors. This is an inconvincible demonstration on intralingual errors committed by Chinese learners. In fact, previous studies have provided evidence that there were many examples of intralingual errors like ignorance of English restriction rule due to the context (Tang, 2004; Li, 2005; Shi, 2005 and Sun, 2006).

Li (2011) interpreted English collocation errors in a general way, arguing that the occurrence of errors was due to social, cultural, and ethnic factors as well as learners' insufficient knowledge of English semantics and failure of application of cognitive strategy. However, these are general discussion on the source of errors. Li (2011) neither had a profound analysis from the structural differences and collocation restriction of words in pair between Chinese and English collocation systems nor provided specific instances to demonstrate occurrence of seven categories of errors or providing reports of number and percentage of errors.

Qi (2011) conducted an EA-based study on English collocations from the perspective of semantics and syntax, and found that verb + noun collocation error was the most common for learners among all categories of errors. However, Qi's (2011) further analysis of errors focused attention on noun + verb collocation errors rather than verb + noun collocation errors which had the highest percentage occurrence. Hence, an

untenable argument to support the result arose.

Huang (2010) found that most subject-verb disagreement among Chinese learners was the result of the negative learning strategies which included overgeneralization, simplification and avoidance. However, Huang (2010) did not imply that overgeneralization should be identified as one type of intralingual errors.

A universal explanation of confusion of synonyms in the previous study of English collocation errors among Chinese students has not been provided within China (Pan, 2010; Xiao and Tong, 2005). The data provided by Pan (2010) showed that Chinese learners shared similar semantic preferences with the native speakers but there were great differences in their underlying collocation patterns due to a lack of in-depth knowledge of lexis of TL among learners. Another explanation was that non-restriction rules of Chinese syntactic collocations interfered with the learning of English synonyms for Chinese EFL learners (Dai and Wei, 2003). Chan (2005) discovered that English synonymous errors were mainly caused by interlingual interference. Some other researchers (Hou, 2011; Qi and Huang, 2010) found that synonym errors of English were due to the wrong translation of the dictionary, e-dictionary or textbooks, and incomplete understanding of the meanings in the use of the different entries of a pair of synonym because many words between the two languages which may share the same lexical meaning but different syntactic function and collocation relations. The CA between English native speaker and Chinese learner corpora indicated that some errors of synonyms were most likely to be due to negative transfer, some were positive transfer and others were due to neural transfer of MT Chinese (Xiao and Tong, 2005). Wei (2005:372) argued that ambiguity of TL English synonyms was a type of intralingual errors due to falsely hypothesizing concepts in the process of internalization of the English language rules. Therefore, it is necessary to have a further exploration in this study to find out what is really behind English synonymous errors.

Qin (2013) investigated English adjective + noun collocation errors with stressing on the synonymous adjective choice. However, Qin (2013) did not provide the source of the errors. Zhou (2012) made a study of English verb + noun collocation by comparing and contrasting between Chinese learner language and English in using a few common verb such as 'improve', 'increase', and 'enhance' with their different noun collocates. Zhou (2012) reported the number of using a verb which was contrasted with the native English speakers by tabulation. However, Zhou (2012) drew conclusion without any description of features of Chinese and differences indicating MT Chinese interference, that interlingual source was responsible for verb + noun collocation errors. According to Xin and Fang's finding (2012:124) that the meaning of a verb depends on the noun following a verb in a verb + noun collocation, the selection of this group of synonyms by Chinese learners of English: 'improve', 'increase', and 'enhance' is up to the noun in the collocative context, rather than the MT Chinese interference as argued by Zhou (2012:67). Zhou (2012) described that intralingual source was also accounted for verb + noun collocation, but did not provide data with percentage to show how much interlingual and intralingual errors were found in his study. Nor reports about percentage of lexical collocation in terms of lexical misselection and grammatical rules were provided by Zhou (2012).

### **2.8.2 Pedagogical Implications Drawn from Previous Studies**

The pedagogical implications drawn from previous studies of English collocation errors have provided a great deal of strategies for learning and teaching English collocations. However, no specific procedure to present these useful approaches to the teaching English collocation and pattern has been provided.

Some studies in China have proposed that lexical chunks / collocation approach should be applied to English writing and intensive reading course which would help to



improve students' English (Zhao, 2009; Zhen, 2009 and Hou, 2011). Furthermore, identification of KWIC in concordance lines is viewed as a natural approach (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). Concordance lines of new words with their frequent collocates can be helpful to improve learners' collocation knowledge (Paul, 2005 and Asmaa, 2008:40). Corpora and corpus-inspired view of language and linguistics had been facilitative and instrumental in setting up and developing this approach to language learning. This data-driven learning and teaching has a great deal of strength (Nesselhauf, 2003). With the aid of corpus, learners can have direct exposure to chunks of English language and learn the use patterns of collocations. Through this approach, students can not only enhance their collocation knowledge and appropriate contextual use but also promote their language sensitivity (Song, Yang and Sun, 2009). For many students, this approach can be more motivating and interesting (Han, 2008). But, how to carry out this concordance lines approach in real classroom setting and what is students' feedback from this approach were not mentioned in these previous studies.

The learning strategies given in the previous studies include contextual strategy (Xiao and Tong, 2005), collocation strategies of learning English vocabulary (Hou, 2011; Özgül and Abdükadir, 2012) and incidental reading strategy (Gai, 2003; Cui, 2005; Han, 2009; Cao and Xiao, 2007). Reading extensively is one important activity which helps to enlarge students' vocabulary and encourage students (Rotimi, 2004 and Liu, 2007). Through reading, learners can have a better understanding of a word (He, 2010). Individual measure for each aspect of knowledge of vocabulary can be designed in order to assess students' depth of lexical competence (Jaen, 2007). Yet, a more effective approach to improve learners' TL English collocations is needed.

Regarding adoption of structural linguistics methods in the teaching of EFL, some practitioners suggested that the integration of structural grammatical approach into the communicative approach is possible (Chung, 2005: 35). But, how well grammatical

structural approach which focuses on structure can incorporate into communicative approach needs further exploration. The strong version of CA method as application of structural linguistics methods can predict errors and thus becomes useful in the teaching. However, some researches stated that structural grammar should be neglected in teaching English in formal classroom (Nho, 2005: 183), since Krashen (1981) claimed that language acquisition is carried out by natural exposure rather than formal instruction. Moreover, linguistic structures should be taught explicitly or implicitly has been an issue when communicative approach has been up-to-date since 1970's.

## **2.9 Summary**

In brief, CA which is based on behavioral theories and structural linguistics methods stresses the differences between two languages, and interference from the mother tongue as the source of difficulties for learning the target language. The results of contrast between the two languages are needed to identify target language (TL) difficulties and errors which occur in the learning process of the TL. CA can thus improve the awareness towards the language structures and differences as well as similarities between the two languages.

CA has three divisions, namely: the strong, the weak and the moderate versions (James, 1980). Both the strong and the weak versions are equally based on the assumption of L1 interference in L2 learning. They differ in that the strong version claims to be able to identify learners' errors before they are committed, on the basis of identifying in advance the differences between the two language systems. CA's findings have already recommended (Lado, 1957; Corder, 1967, 1971, 1974 and Choi, 1996) that learners' problem with target language can be identified for prevention of errors and there is a hierarchy of difficulty in learning any subsystem of a language. In the CA study of collocation among Chinese learners, more interest was taken in the weak claim of CA,

that is, error analysis (EA). The studies under strong version of CA were scarce. Contrastive studies between Chinese and English collocation tend to present similarities and differences. There was no identification of problems with English collocation which were least likely and most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners and thus set a rank of difficulty encountered by Chinese learners of English from the highest to the lowest level in the previous studies.

CA involves two methods — theoretical CA and applied CA popularly known as Error Analysis (EA). The former is aimed at identifying potential learning difficulties by analyzing the differences between the structures of MT and TL. The latter is aimed at identifying and explaining actual errors committed by the students. In fact, both approaches are useful in the explanation of errors in a TL. Few previous studies used both CA as EA as tools to investigate problems with English collocation among Chinese learners of English. However, the CA and EA have their own major limitation as CA can hardly predict the greatest difficulty in learners' error analysis, especially when the weak version of CA is adopted. In other words, the weak version of CA which is used to deal with learner's errors is an *a posteriori*, rather than to predict a *priori* like a strong version of CA would do. In addition, the major limitations of EA can be exposed by the fact that EA focuses on errors, not on avoidance of errors.

While many studies have recently been interested in English collocation errors, there has been still less work done on more types of English collocation errors and in particular with the percentage of the hierarchy of errors.

With reference to the question how MT affects the learning of TL, most previous EA-based studies argued that errors of English collocations were caused partly by mother tongue interference in meaning and structure and partly by the TL English as well as learning strategies (Tang, 2004 and Li, 2005). However, many such studies used EA without using CA methods to identify and explain errors.

As a result, the previous studies are unlikely to make an in-depth explanation of mother tongue interference and explore how the MT Chinese interferes the learning of the TL English. Nor did the previous studies interpret collocation errors in the lexical and grammatical levels from subcategory sources of errors, such as grammatical structure and context between TL and MT in general and word formation including compounds in morphology and syntax between Chinese and English in particular, based on the structural linguistics methodology.

This study will fill in the gap, as no a systematic study (which covers more types of English collocation errors) is available in the previous studies of English lexical and grammatical collocations among Mandarin Chinese learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

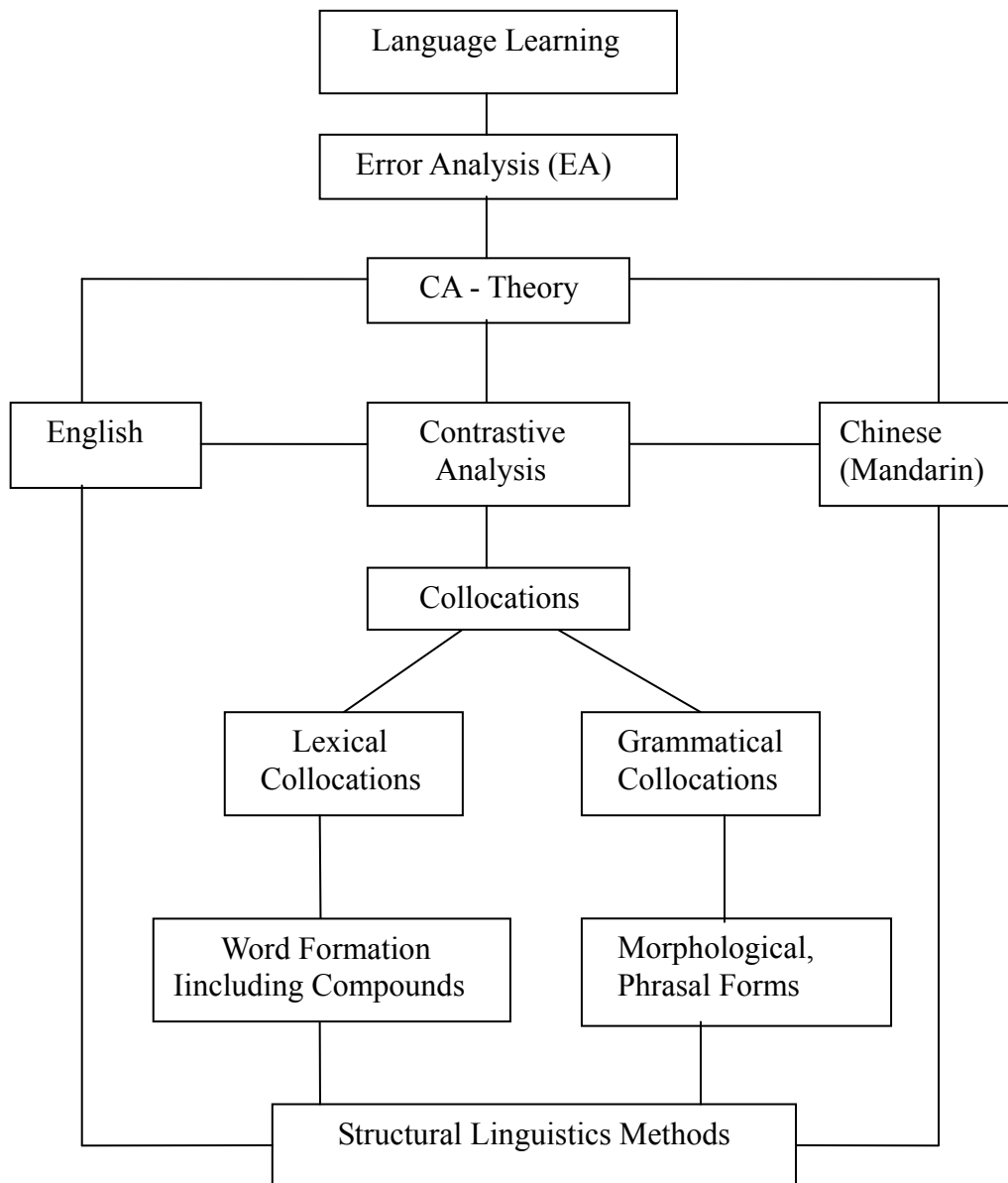
Chapters 4 and 5 will proceed with a detailed description of Chinese collocations followed by a description of English collocations and a contrastive analysis of Chinese and English collocations, which will provide the theoretical background for this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Theoretical Framework

This is a study of contrastive analysis between Chinese and English collocations and English collocation errors both at the lexical and grammatical levels among the Chinese learners of English based on the following theoretical framework.



**Figure 3.1 Theoretical Framework of this Study**

Shown as figure 3.1, the theoretical framework of this study presents contrastive analysis (CA) and error analysis (EA) of English and Chinese (Mandarin) collocations in the lexical and grammatical levels. Structural linguistics methodology is used with reference to the identification and explanation of those collocations by making use of the methods of word formation including compounds and so forth at the morphological and phrasal / sentence levels. The similarities and differences in the types of collocations identified from CA will be used in the process of error analysis (EA).

Within the framework, collocation is connected with CA theory and structural linguistics methods, which involves lexical and grammatical collocations. Lexical collocations between two content words are related to word formation including compounds such as types of noun + noun collocation ‘blood pressure’, adjective + noun collocation ‘black bird’, and verb + noun collocation ‘achieve success’. In contrast to lexical collocations, grammatical collocations between one content word and another particle are related to morphological forms at the phrasal and syntactic levels. In grammatical collocations, morphological form refers mainly to verbs, such as ‘succeeded’, ‘depends on’, and ‘comes’, and plural form of nouns such as ‘arts’ in ‘arts school’ in English. In Chinese, there are usually no such morphological forms. All these differences between English and Chinese collocations can be identified by using contrastive analysis (CA) on the one hand and can be used to explain TL English collocation errors due to MT interference in the error analysis (EA) on the other. Therefore, both CA and EA are based on the application of structural linguistics theory and methods. Structural linguistics methods, CA and EA construct a systematically theoretical underpinning and provide a research methodology for the present study among Chinese learners with particular reference to English language learning. The relationship between these theories and methods can be illustrated in detail as given below.

### **3.1.1 Contrastive Analysis and Collocations: Structural Linguistics Methods**

Contrastive analysis (CA) involves theoretical and applied analyses. Theoretical contrastive analysis (TCA) is aimed to identify the similarities and differences between two languages not only from the superficially grammatical surface but also from the deep semantic structure. But, the ultimate purpose of theoretical contrastive analysis is to discover the underlying mechanism and universal principle and features behind the surface similarities and differences. The theoretical contrastive analysis plays a role of remedy to prevent real problems from occurring in the process of learning. The findings obtained from the theoretical contrastive analysis are useful in the learning and teaching of the target language, on which learners and teachers can focus.

Contrastive studies reveal that it is indisputable that the mother tongue or first language plays an important factor in second language acquisition. This revelation is based on the strong claim of contrastive studies.

This study, based on the revelation from the behaviorist theory of language learning, follows the strong claim of CA (Fries, 1945; Lado, 1957; Politzer, 1967 and Corder, 1981) that language learning is a process of habits formation through imitation and reinforcement, and that errors committed by L2 learners are the result of differences between L1 and L2 structures and cultures. Thus, an independent description of L1 and L2 in CA is not an ignorable step in explaining errors since not only can it provide a sharp picture of the features in the two languages but also identifies differences between the two languages that are being contrasted.

Thus, under the theoretical contrastive analysis, the present study uses CA as a major method to have a description of features of Chinese and English collocations with focus on the differences between them in order to explain the potential problems encountered by the Chinese learners of English.

Classic methods in theoretical contrastive analysis (TCA) proposed by Fries (1945), Lado (1957), Corder (1967), Udo (1978) and James (1980) are used in this study. The theoretical CA approach used in this study is conducted as follows: *description* > *contrast* > *prediction*. In the description, the features of English and Chinese collocations are given. According to Lado (1957), the cultural factor of a L1 / MT contributes to the output of a L2 structure. Contrastive study between Chinese and English should be towards structure (Zhao, 1970). The present study is an attempt to focus on the structures of English and Chinese collocations. Therefore, in making contrast, similarities and differences between the English and Chinese collocations are presented side by side.

Revelation drawn from the previous studies is that an increasing number of studies were focused on the following types of collocations in the error analysis between MT and TL, which include two classifications: lexical collocations and grammatical collocations. A grammatical collocation is a morphological form / phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, and verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or a clause (Benson et al., 1997: xxx-xxxiii). Lexical collocations normally do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or clauses. (Benson et al., 1997: xxx-xxxiii).

Thus, based on this perception of lexical and grammatical collocations classifications (Benson et al., 1997), the present study believes that collocations need to follow semantic restriction between two words at lexical level and the rules at grammatical level. Any collocation, basically, is a lexical collocation because without a lexical form no collocation is virtually possible (like compounding or grammatical affixation). The classification of lexical collocations lays emphasis on lexical compounding behavior while classification of grammatical collocation is based on grammatical structure in morphology and syntax. In fact, any word is grammatical in syntax. Phrase is part of the syntactic structure and the focus is on the phrasal structural



relationship between words (Zhou and Zhang, 2003:56). Without referring to syntax, the notion of collocations makes no sense (Asmaa, 2008:28). Firth's view that the 'habits' of co-occurrence of words contains inherent meanings which simply fit into a structural or grammatical frame of collocation in the lexical level and grammatical relations. The words to be collocated are in an integrated unit of syntax and semantics (Zhou, 2012:64). Collocations are a reflection of where grammar and lexis meet, which are certainly within a syntactic structure (Shi, 2005: 25). Therefore, there is no doubt that collocations between two words in syntax must follow the grammatical structural rule in any language.

Types of lexical collocations established in the present study are shown in table 3.1 with examples given by the author (some are from the student essays collected from which data are collected) or from other previous studies (Benson et al., 1997;

**Table 3.1**

**Types of Lexical Collocations in Match for Semantic Restriction**

<b>Pattern</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. Noun + Noun Collocation	blood pressure; light bulb; finance director (Biber, et al., 1999)
2. Noun + Verb Collocation	They succeed (very much).
3. Verb + Noun Collocation	achieve success; do business (Wang, 2011:114) compose music (Benson et al, 1997: xxx)
4. Adjective + Noun Collocation	black bird; great man; heavy blow (Zhang and Chen, 2006: 257)
5. Verb + Adverb	study hard

In table 3.1, there are five types of lexical collocations in the form of lexical compounding, which is based on the theoretical framework proposed by the present study in figure 3.1. These five types of collocations between two content words are related to word formation including compounds such as types of noun + noun collocation ‘blood pressure’ and ‘finance director’ (Biber, et al., 1999), adjective + noun collocation ‘black bird’ and ‘heavy blow’ (Zhang and Chen, 2006: 257) and verb + noun ‘achieve success’ and ‘compose music’ (Benson et al, 1997: xxx).

The classification of lexical collocation is suitable for both Chinese and English collocations. For example, noun + noun collocation: *deng* (灯) ‘light’ + *pao* (泡) ‘bulb’ = 灯泡 ‘light bulb’, *caiwu* (财务) ‘finance’ + *zhuren* (主任) ‘director’ = 财务主任 ‘finance director’, noun + verb collocation: *tamen* (他们) ‘they’ + *chenggong* (成功) ‘succeed’ = 他们成功 ‘They succeed.’, and adjective + noun collocation: *heise* (黑色) ‘black’ + *niao* (鸟) ‘bird’ = 黑鸟 ‘black bird’. This structural linguistics methodology by making use of compounding in the classification of lexical collocation is significant to distinguishing it from those types of English grammatical collocations in morphology and syntax and also to making big difference from Chinese in the CA and EA. Chinese language is not morphology as its core grammar but more phrase structure or syntactic structure oriented. Lexical collocation is used to the identification and explanation of collocation in the CA between Chinese and English and in the error analysis. It puts stress on lexical compounding behavior and focuses on the match or compatibility for semantic restriction between two independent words, leaving the morphological form of words in English syntax alone. Furthermore, type of lexical collocation covers lexical and grammatical aspects, in which grammatical feature may be implicit such as ‘they succeed very much’ or ‘sometimes they succeed’. In these two examples, the subject ‘they’ and verb ‘succeed’ are matched at lexical level and also present subject-verb

agreement in person and number in syntax. According to present tense, subject 'they' and verb 'succeed' in these two examples need not carry any morphological form.

These five types of lexical collocation established in the current study in table 3.1 are different from seven types listed by Benson et al. (1997: xxx-xxxiii) which include: verb (transitive) denoting creation and / or activation + noun / pronoun (or prep. phrase), verb meaning eradication and / or nullification + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb, noun<sub>1</sub> + of + noun<sub>2</sub>, adverb + adjective and verb + adverb collocations. According to Benson et al (1997), the prepositional phrase, noun<sub>1</sub> + of + noun<sub>2</sub>, adverb + adjective are included in the type of lexical collocation classification shown in table 2.2, which are instead in the grammatical collocation type in the present study.

Types of grammatical collocations established in the present study include: noun + verb collocation, noun + phrasal verb collocation, noun + auxiliary + act verb, verb + noun, phrasal verb + noun collocation, noun + prepositional phrase collocation (where particle preposition is involved), adjective + noun (where adjective presents the superlative form '-est'), (morphological form '-ly' in) verb + adverb collocation and (preposition 'of' in) a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun, which are shown in table 3.2 below with examples given by the author or from the student essays collected from which data were collected or from other studies.

**Table 3.2****Types of English Grammatical Collocations in Morphology and Syntax**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. Noun + Verb Collocation	Problems occurred; Inspiration springs. Bombs explode. (Benson et al., 1997: xxxii)
2. Noun + Phrasal Verb Collocation	They pass for sisters; The lift broke down. Alarms go off. (Benson et al., 1997: xxxii)
3. Noun + Auxiliary Verb + Act Verb	He will succeed; You can succeed.
4. Verb + Noun Collocation	invented lamp; read books
5. Phrasal Verb + Noun Collocation	depend on diligence
6. Noun + Prepositional Phrase	attitude towards life
7. Noun + Noun Collocation	arts school
8. Adjective + Noun Collocation	greatest man warmest regards (Benson et al., 1997: xxx)
9. Verb + Adverb Collocation	do poorly
10. Phrasal Verb + Adverb	lay down gently
11. Adverb + Verb	slowly turned
12. Adverb + Phrasal Verb	largely depends on
13. Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation	extremely clever people
14. a + Quantifier + of + Uncountable Noun	a piece of cake
15. a + Measure Word + of + Countable Noun	a box of books
16. Numeral + of + Countable Noun	thousands of people

Table 3.2 above presents types of English grammatical collocations in morphological forms of English verbs: (a) past tense such as ‘invented’, ‘occurred’ and ‘broke’, single form of verb ‘springs’, plural forms of nouns such as ‘arts’ and ‘bombs’, the superlative of adjective ‘greatest’, suffix ‘-ly’ in adverbs ‘poorly’ and ‘extremely’; (b) grammatical concord between subject and predicate in person and number such as ‘inspiration springs’ and ‘they pass for sisters’; (c) one particle such as preposition in phrasal verbs ‘pass for’, ‘break down’ and ‘depend on’ and in noun phrases ‘attitude towards life’ and ‘a piece of cake’ as well as auxiliaries in ‘He will succeed’ and modal in ‘You can succeed’. The types (a), (b), (c) and auxiliaries all are referred to English grammatical category and thus the combination between two words needs to follow grammatical rules of collocation in phrase and syntax.

It must be pointed out that all types of grammatical collocation but the sixth type (noun + prepositional phrase collocation) listed in table 3.2 by the present study are treated as types of lexical collocation by Benson et al. (1997). The current study classifies the collocation with the purpose of contrastive analysis between Chinese and English collocation, and thus the established sixteen types of grammatical collocations listed in table 3.2 are also different from eight types given by Benson (1997: xvi-xxviii): noun + prep., noun + to + infinitive, noun + that + clause, prep. + noun, adjective + prep., adjective + to + infinitive, adjective + that + clause and verb + direct object + indirect object shown in table 2.3.

The following paragraphs will justify types of grammatical collocation classification established by the current study.

Noun + verb collocation is consistent with the subject - predicate relation in the sentence (Joseph, 2005). In Chinese, noun + verb collocation is related to two structures: grammatical structure and semantic structure. Grammatical structure refers to SVO and VO structures, whereas semantic structure refers to agent-verb-patient structure (Zhou

and Zhang, 2003:81). In Chinese, word formation including compounds is even called as a covert grammatical relationship, whereas SVO structure is an overt grammatical relationship (Zhou and Zhang, 2003:81). From a more complete sense, Chinese presents topic-comment structure at functionally pragmatic level and subject-predicate structure at the syntactic level (Xu, 2003). English exhibits subject – predicate structure in syntax including three patterns: noun + verb + noun, noun + verb, and noun + be + adjective (Li, 2005). Therefore, noun + verb collocation as well as verb + noun collocation is structurally grammatical collocation for both TL English and MT Chinese. For grammatical collocations, English words present morphological form according to their grammatical functions in a sentence, whereas Chinese usually has lexical compounding in the sentence.

In both Chinese and English noun + verb collocation structures, noun as subject functionally in syntax can usually be replaced by a pronoun, such as pronoun ‘they’ and ‘he’ in the place of noun shown as examples in table 3.2. Pronoun refers to a word which may replace a noun or noun phrase (Richards, et al., 2000: 371). In English grammar, subject is mainly composed of noun, pronoun, or noun phrase (NP) (Richards et al. 2000:453). Chinese subject includes not only noun and pronoun but also verb and adjective. Therefore, pronoun can be substitute for noun with reference to the type of noun + verb collocation shown as examples ‘they, he, you’ in table 3.1 and table 3.2.

English verb includes verb referring to action or state and auxiliary verb and so forth. The former is called act verb (Han, 2008), which is used as the only verb in a sentence (Richards et al., 2000: 36), such as ‘read’ in ‘students read books’ shown in table 3.2. The latter, that is, English auxiliary verb shows grammatical functions which includes modal verbs (like ‘can’ in ‘You can succeed’) and auxiliary (such as ‘will’ in ‘He will succeed’ which presents future tense), and other markers of grammatical categories such as aspect, person and number (Richards et al., 2000: 36). The present

study believes that English noun + auxiliary verb + act verb collocation can be incorporated into noun + verb collocation structure, such as ‘He will succeed.’ and ‘You can succeed’. This can be justified by Cowie (1987), Benson et al. (1997: ix) and Biber et al. (1999). Cowie (1987) stated that more than two words can intervene between the words which go together of the collocation phrases. Biber et al. (1999: 992) claimed that it is quite common that three-word bundles can be regarded as a type of extended collocation association. Benson et al. (1997: ix) even pointed out that the study of collocation can be carried out in a larger grammatical structure such as phrase or sentence or texts context.

On some occasion, English active voice is equivalent to Chinese active voice in syntactic structures, such as ‘they often *pass for* sisters’ is equivalent to Chinese ‘她们’ (they) + ‘被常常看做’ (are often regarded as) ‘同胞姐妹’ (sisters)’ = ‘they are often regarded as sisters’ in table 3.2. Because of this difference, noun + be + verb-ed structure which is related to passive voice is incorporated into the type of grammatical noun + phrasal verb collocation in the process of CA and EA shown in table 3.2.

On other occasion, Chinese intransitive verb such as ‘marry’ without linking to object is equivalent to English transitive verb ‘married’ which links to the object such as ‘Joan’ in ‘John married Joan’ 约翰与琼结婚了(John with Joan marry). Therefore, in some case, structurally, type of noun + verb (transitive) collocation is discussed in the type of verb + noun collocation in the error analysis. Some English verbs are characterized by both transitive verb and intransitive verb, such as verb ‘reach’. In ‘they reached their goal’, ‘reach’ is transitive verb and is processed in the type of verb + noun collocation. However, in ‘he reached across the table for the salt’, ‘reach’ is intransitive verb and thus is definitely entered the type of noun + verb collocation. However, Chinese equivalents of ‘reach’ in both cases are transitive verb: ‘达到目标’ (reach goal) and ‘伸手’ (reach hand). Therefore, in the CA between Chinese and English collocations and

in the process of error analysis of English collocation, some English noun + verb (intransitive) collocation is discussed in the type of verb (transitive) + noun collocation.

Noun + noun collocation in table 3.1 is listed as one type of lexical collocation in both Chinese and English coordinate compounding phrase. But, English noun + prepositional phrase as one type of grammatical collocation is equivalent to Chinese lexical noun + noun compound, such as ‘attitude towards life’ is similar to Chinese *shenghuo* (生活) ‘life’ + *taidu* (态度) ‘attitude’ = ‘life attitude’. Chinese noun + noun compounds / collocations are classified into lexical collocations, whereas English noun + noun compounds / collocations can be classified into both lexical collocation such as ‘light bulb’ and grammatical collocation such as ‘arts school’.

In the present study, the type of ‘a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun’ is a substitute for ‘noun<sub>1</sub> + of + noun<sub>2</sub>’ collocation given by Benson et al. (1997: xxxiii). According to the given example “a bouquet of flowers” by Benson et al. (1997: xxxiii), the noun<sub>1</sub> represents quantifying noun such as “bouquet”. When it comes to quantifying nouns, Chinese language has two types. One type is ‘a / one + quantifying noun + countable noun’ such as *yi* (一) ‘one’ + *zhang* (张) ‘sheet / piece’ + *zhuozizi* (桌子) ‘table’ = ‘a / one sheet / piece table’, which is equivalent to English ‘a table’. The other type is ‘a / one + quantifying noun + uncountable noun’ such as *yi* (一) ‘one’ + *zhang* (张) ‘sheet / piece’ + *zhi* (纸) ‘paper’ = ‘a / one sheet / piece paper’ which is equivalent to English ‘a sheet / piece of paper’. Meanwhile, article ‘a’ and numeral ‘one’ share the same meaning *yi* (一) in Chinese. Because of these differences, the type of noun<sub>1</sub> + of + noun<sub>2</sub> collocation (Benon et al., 1997: xxxiii) is replaced by the current study into ‘a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + (head) noun’ collocation in the CA and EA between Chinese and English.



In the collocation between verb and adverb, the position of adverb is flexible in English. Adverb can either follow or precede verb and hence verb + adverb and adverb + verb are both correct in English. However, Chinese adverb always precedes verb in which adjectives function as adverbs modifying the verbs in syntax. Therefore, both types are treated equally in the CA between Chinese and English collocations and in the analysis of English collocation errors in the present study.

As for adjective + noun collocation type, more than one form of the same adjective can collocate with the same noun such as 'great man' and 'greatest man'. In the present study, 'great man' is treated as one type of lexical collocation and 'greatest man' is one type of grammatical collocation because of morphological form '-est'. This is distinct from Benson et al. (1997: xxxii) who took 'warm' and 'warmest'; 'kind' and 'kindest' as one lexical item, and entered 'warm, warmest, kind, kindest regards' in the classification of lexical collocation.

In brief, from the perspective of structural linguistics, there are five types of lexical collocations (listed in table 3.1) and sixteen types of grammatical collocations (listed in table 3.2) established in the present study. The classification of lexical and grammatical collocations by making use of structural linguistic methodology is used mainly for the purpose of identification and explanation of collocation and collocation errors in the present study. However, all types of lexical and grammatical collocation classifications shown in table 3.1 and 3.2 are incorporated into three areas and seven types of collocation in the CA and EA (see table 3.3), which can make easier contrastive analysis. Three areas include noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation and modifiers. Seven types of collocations established by the present study including: noun + noun, noun + verb, verb + noun, adjective + noun, adverb + adjective + noun, verb + adverb, and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + noun collocation.

More importantly, lexical and grammatical collocations established in the present study between nodes and collocates depend on grammatical and semantic restrictions as well as semantic prosody. This is based on the structural linguistics theory that there was selection restriction between collocations of two words from the grammatical and semantic points of view, and also based on the semantic selection between a node and its collocates (Sinclair, 1966:415).

In the following, the present study will establish three criteria for judging acceptable English collocations with reference to Chinese collocation structure which is not morphology as its core grammar:

a) At lexical level, based on lexical compounding behavior and method, two independent words that tend to go together are matched in semantic selection or prosody, commonly used by native habits and have a more frequency occurrence;

b) At grammatical level, content words co-occurring carry morphological forms in terms of past tense of verb, single form of verb, plural form of countable noun, the suffix of adverb “-ly” as well as other affixations of words, and

c) At grammatical level, a certain content word precedes or follows a preposition or an auxiliary verb precedes an act verb.

If a type of collocation meets criterion a), it fits into lexical collocation classification. The classification of lexical collocations lays emphasis on lexical compounding behavior and method and focuses on the match or compatibility between two individual words. Meanwhile, lexical semantic selection between two individual words depends on native speakers’ speaking habits, which needs to conform to English expressions. Combination between two words usually has a high frequency occurrence in the texts. In this sense, type of lexical collocation is more oriented to compounding behavior and meaning at lexical level irrespective of grammatical features in morphology and syntax of words. This criterion for lexical collocation type is mainly used to distinguish it from

that of grammatical collocation at grammatical level, which is useful in the identification of collocation and English collocation errors.

If a type of collocation meets criteria a) and b), or a) and c) listed above, it fits into grammatical collocation classification. Grammatical collocation structure carries grammatical features in morphology and in syntax but is based on lexical match between two words co-occurring. It is evident that lexical match in semantic selection as a necessary prerequisite to any collocation must be involved in the classification of grammatical collocation. Lexical collocations precede grammatical collocations (Benson et al. 1997: xxxiv) in the study of collocation, which suggests that lexical match is essential to collocation. Although in the discussion of grammatical properties carried by a type of grammatical collocation, lexical semantic match between two words is left alone. Namely, whether two words such as the subject 'inspiration' and verb predicate 'spring' is matched in semantic restriction must be given priority. Only when two lexical words have been matched for meaning at lexical level, it can make sense to focus on the morphological form 'springs' in 'inspiration springs' at grammatical level.

Therefore, lexical collocation is different from grammatical collocation in terms of points of focus with reference to identification and explanation of collocations based on structural linguistics methods. The former is concerned with the lexical match for semantic restriction from compounding according to native speakers' habits between 'inspiration' and 'spring', 'art' and 'school', and 'do' and 'poor' in examples shown in table 3.2, irrespective of subject-verb concord in number or plural form of noun or others, while grammatical collocation is concerned with morphological form like '-s' in 'springs' and concord between 'inspiration' and 'springs' in number, also concerned with '-s' in 'arts' which collocates with 'school' in phrasal syntax according to native speaking habits, and '-ly' in 'poorly' which follows 'do' in syntactic structure. Anyway, Lexical collocation is used to the identification and explanation of collocation at lexical

level, while grammatical collocation is employed to the identification and explanation of collocation in morphology and syntax.

Furthermore, types of collocations established by the present study have nothing to do with where a pair of words is distributed in the sentence. For instance, ‘The guests are supposed to be dressed in sumptuous evening gowns to attend to a party’. In this example, though the phrasal verb + noun collocation ‘attend to party’ functions as adverbial outside independent sentence, nevertheless, it is treated as one type of verb + noun collocation, since lexical match between two words as well as grammatical features they carry in syntax is the focus of the study. Similarly, ‘sumptuous gowns’ is one type of adjective + noun collocation and ‘evening gowns’ is one type of noun + noun collocation.

The classification of lexical and grammatical collocations and three criteria for collocation are quite useful to the application of the identification of difficulties brought about by the differences between English and Chinese collocations. In particular, they are useful in the error analysis of English collocation in the current study.

The detailed steps of CA used in the present study are as follows:

- 1) Identification of similarities in order to explain the collocations which are least likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English from noun + noun collocation, noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation, adjective + noun collocation, verb + adverb collocation, adverb + adjective + noun collocation, until a + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation, based on the description of Chinese collocations in chapter 4 and English collocations in chapter 5.
- 2) Identification of differences in order to explain the collocations which are most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English: from noun + verb collocation to a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation in an

order of the types of collocation mentioned in step one, based on the description of Chinese collocations in chapter 4 and English collocations in chapter 5.

- 3) Subjective qualitative descriptions of the difficult areas and hierarchy of difficulty in the learning of English collocation for the Chinese learners is based on the assumption of CA that similarities between the two languages which are identified from step one will facilitate the learning and that differences identified from step two between two languages will inhibit the learning.

In order to provide a clearer picture of similarities and differences between Chinese and English collocation structures, four relevant tables are presented. Presentation in table 6.1, table 6.2, table 6.3 and table 6.4 is the lists of similarities and differences between Chinese and English collocation structures in three areas, which is used to be an indicative tool that the strong version of CA method is mainly used to explain and predict errors.

In fact, Chinese and English collocation structures go beyond the simple lists (including the lists of prediction of hierarchy of difficulties in three areas in section 6.8). Therefore, more additional description of similarities and differences between two systems are given in different sections of chapter 6.

### **3.1.2 Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis: Application of Structural Linguistics Methods**

CA theory includes contrastive analysis (CA) and error analysis (EA). The present study employed CA to describe and illustrate English and Chinese collocations and it is intended to demonstrate that the contrastive data can help to explain some of the English collocation errors committed by the Chinese learners and can address the question: “how MT Chinese collocation affects the learning of English collocations?”

This study also adopts the error analysis method, taking the viewpoint of cognitive psychology based error analysis (EA), which argues that L2 learning is a process of rule establishment and hypothesis testing about the L2 / target language (TL) rules, and that learner errors are natural products during TL acquisition because of interlingual and intralingual interference. Based on the EA theory, intralingual errors due to context and then pedagogical implications are discussed. Using EA, this study made an investigation of English collocations by collecting data from an empirical study of students' essays and is intended to identify errors which will not occur in the CA. In the investigation of different types of English collocation problems, CA methodology between MT and TL was made use of in the identification and explanation of English collocation errors. EA methodology between TL and learners' language is useful to explain the English collocation errors. It can make it sufficient to explain English collocation errors by using the syntactic and semantic rules (Li, 2004:44). The steps of EA method constructed by scholars (Corder, 1967; Cook, 1993; Choi, 1996 and James, 1998) are followed in this study. That is: (1) subject choosing, (2) identification of errors, (3) classification of errors, (4) interpretation of errors, (5) frequency of errors, (6) hierarchy of difficulties and (7) pedagogical implications. The criterion for choosing the subjects for this study is based on the principles proposed by Tono (2002) and Choi (1996), and the present study mainly follows Choi's (1996) criteria which consist of the following:

- i) Age
- ii) Linguistic homogeneity and
- iii) Level of proficiency that is more or less equivalent

In the error analysis, interlingual errors are based on the differences between Chinese and English collocations from CA, whereas intralingual errors are based on the four subcategories, namely, 1. overgeneralization; 2. Ignorance of TL restrictions of TL rules; 3. falsely hypothesizing concept of TL word or phrase and 4. Incomplete

application of TL word (Richards, 1970: 9-22).

Numbers and percentage distributions of the collocation error occurrences are treated as two parameters in making a quantitative analysis of errors, which would form the basis for the construction of the hierarchy of difficulties encountered by the Chinese students in learning English collocations.

More importantly, blending the methods of CA into EA is employed to investigate TL problems in the present study, which is substantial, for it puts the theoretical possibility of combination of CA with EA (Corder, 1967; Timothy, 1991 and Choi, 1996) into use.

The integrated method by blending CA into EA methods can be justified by the methods of contrastive linguistics, which is revealed from the model constructed by Gast (2012). According to Gast (2012), the methods of contrastive linguistics include analysis of single language(s) and contrastive analysis of L1 and L2 and its significance in language teaching (especially second language teaching), translation and so on. CA mainly focuses on the structural linguistics methods as well as language use based ones, whereas EA focuses on the language teaching-learning methods (LTLM). Based on CA, difficulties due to the interference of mother tongue (MT) can be predicted and materials needed for use in the learning-teaching – teaching process can be developed. This kind of teaching-learning based method would help to interpret, easily understand and reproduce relevant materials and also would be very much useful for producing remedial materials.

So, according to this theoretical analysis in terms of blending the methods of CA and EA, the present study of collocations starts from the lexical level which mainly deals with words including compounds and extended further:

Lexical: words (including compounds)

Morphological: inflected form, derivational form

Phrase: occurrence of words and grammatical forms together in an order.

This kind of method can be used to learn and use the expression system, comprehend and understand the intended meaning in a much more effective way.

Descriptions of the Chinese (L1 / MT) and the English (L2 / TL) are needed (especially, descriptions of the two languages for more adequate and descriptive grammatical studies) in order to make an adequate, well formalized contrastive study in terms of structure.

On the other hand, those findings with reference to the description of interference from MT based on the differences between the two languages from CA provide profound and extensive data, since CA covers as many least likely and most likely difficulties as possible found among different subjects on different levels of the target language. However, CA requires empirical validation which can only derive support from the observation and intuition of the researchers. Yet, EA is complementary to CA, for EA can provide experimental data to confirm or disprove the findings by CA.

Therefore, CA and EA are interdependent and the blending methods of CA into EA are basic, more rational and needed for effective LTLM (language teaching-learning methods) and material production. It becomes essential to apply both CA and EA approaches to discover, evaluate and amend the Chinese learners' errors.

## **3.2 Data for the Study**

This section includes data collection and data processing.

### **3.2.1 Data Collection**

The following sections present data collection, the subjects and instrument used.

#### **3.2.1.1 The Subjects**



The subjects are 117 native speakers of Mandarin Chinese. They are all university students from Tongji University, aged 18 to 20 years, and consist of 80 males and 37 females, all majoring in science. They are from different parts of mainland China and are about to finish the first academic year of university study after graduating from high school study.

Mandarin Chinese, used officially in China by the government, the media and the domain of education, is their native language. Students have learned Mandarin Chinese since they entered primary schools, and it is one of the compulsory courses taught throughout their schooling.

All the subjects have started learning English from the primary school. As the curriculum is unified, they have similar number of years of English learning experience from primary school through senior high school in China. They have also had the same experience of English during their first-year of study at the present university. They all received classroom instruction in EFL for a period of thirteen years. None of them have any experience studying abroad. They all passed the College English Test (CET) band – 4, with a higher than the national average score of 590. Among them, the highest is 660, and the lowest is 597.

### **3.2.1.2 Instrument**

The data was collected from one writing task administered during the classroom hours. The justification for choosing of genre – an argumentative essay was based on two criteria: one follows Granger (1990) who uses the written learner argumentative essays as learner corpus. The International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) constructed by Granger (1990) consists mainly of argumentative essays produced by the university undergraduates in English who are advanced EFL learners with different mother tongues. Each essay is accompanied by a 'learner profile' which gives information about the essay

(topic, writing conditions, and etc) and the learner (native language, age, sex, educational background, etc) in ICLE (Granger, 1990). The other justification for the selection of argumentative essay was that it is usually given to students in examinations and assignments throughout their academic years.

The subjects were asked to write under timed conditions on the topic, “*Success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration*”. The subjects were required to give their views on this in 200 words in order that as a big error data size as possible would be obtained even though it requires 120 words in a standard test across China. Dictionaries were not provided for them. No permission was given for discussion in class during the test. The administrator did not offer any information about the content of essay. The time given was 60 minutes since duration of a standardized test for essay writing in China is half an hour of the total testing time (120 minutes).

### **3.2.2 Data Processing**

The researcher set about identifying the errors after processing the students’ essays. At this preliminary stage, the written texts were scrutinized to detect the errors for the present study. This process of detecting errors involved reconstructing what the learner was attempting to say by inferring the learner’s intentions from the interpretation of the whole context of situation (Corder, 1973:274).

The present study defines the word “error” following the principle where typical errors were identified and processed. It is generally acknowledged that patterns of collocation which have a history of recurrence in a language become part of the language’s standard linguistic repertoire and users do not stop to think about them when they encounter them in the text. But, it must be pointed out that unlike grammatical statements, statements about collocations are made in terms of what is typical or untypical rather than what is admissible and inadmissible Baker (2011:55).

Meanwhile, those inappropriate uses of a word in a type of collocation are also taken into consideration in the present study. Baker (2011:55) pointed out that there exists a middle ground between completely acceptable collocations (especially lexical collocations) and erroneous collocations which may be judged as ‘non-nativelike or stylistically non-appropriate’. Such ‘non-nativelike’ or ‘non-appropriate’ collocations identified were also counted as erroneous collocations in the error analysis of the present study. After all, collocation lays emphasis on the semantic restriction rule at lexical level and on the restrictive rule in morphology and syntax at grammatical level. A non-appropriate collocation is likely to violate the restrictive collocation rule either at lexical level or at grammatical level.

According to Cook (1993:22), “The recognition of an error and its reconstruction are subjective processes; the error is not a clear-cut objective ‘fact’ but is established by a process of analysis and deduction.” In order to establish validity and reliability in the performance data (Mahammad, 1998) errors of English collocations made by the subjects were determined by using certain procedures: use of a learner corpus, English native speaker corpus and dictionaries.

The error identification requires manual searching and manual annotation after the researcher extracted all the examples of English collocation errors present in the data. Manual searching was seen as the most appropriate strategy for error identification.

Before the manual identification of errors, 117 student essays were coded at random. For example, the student essay will be coded as T which refers to Text, as T1, T2, ... T117.

The English native speaker corpus used for correct form of errors in this study is the British National Corpus (BNC). As the LOB and BROWN corpora, which were established in the 60s, may have collocations that were outdated, the BNC set up in 1990s was a better alternative. Dictionaries, such as BBI Dictionary by Benson et al. (1997),

Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Learners of English (Lea et al. 2002), and Oxford Advanced English Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary (2004) were used to check the correct form of collocations. Two college English teachers in China were also invited to identify errors.

There were approximately 24,130 English words in total collected from the 117 student essays. Although identification and tallying of correct form of collocation errors was a time-consuming task, it was done manually with much caution.

Two EFL instructors helped to identify and underline all the possible collocation errors in the essays of the subjects and the researcher detected and checked all the underlined errors in the data and made correction by consulting the English native speaker corpus and dictionaries.

### **3.3 Sample Analysis**

The data for this study is analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively in the process of error analysis (EA). The analysis of errors is conducted based on two broad categories: interlingual and intralingual errors. Under each category, there is an attempt to classify the errors into subcategories with specific reference to the sources of errors.

In the classification of English collocation errors, the criteria for judging English collocation errors was based on the inappropriate semantic selection of words and violation of English restrictive collocation rules between two content words as well as those grammatical rules in TL English. There are seven types of collocation established in the present study, which are involved in the three areas shown below in table 3.3:

**Table 3.3****Areas and Types as well as Classifications of Collocations Established by the Present Study**

<b>Area of Collocation</b>	<b>Type of Collocation</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Classification of Collocation</b>
1. Noun + Verb Collocation	(1) Noun + Verb		
	1a) Noun + Verb	They succeed.	Lexical
	1b) Noun + Verb	The sun rises; Problems occurred.	Grammatical
	1c) Noun + Phrasal Verb	The car broke down.	Grammatical
	1d) Noun + Auxiliary + Act Verb	It will succeed.	Grammatical
2. Verb + Noun Collocation	(2) Verb + Noun Collocation		
	2a) Verb + Noun	achieve success	Lexical
	2b) Verb + Noun	made machine	Grammatical
	2c) Phrasal Verb + Noun	work out problems	Grammatical
3. Modifiers + Head	(3) Noun + Noun Collocation		
	3a) Noun + Noun	light bulb	Lexical
	3b) Noun + Noun	arts school; school activities	Grammatical
	3c) Noun + PP	attitude towards life	Grammatical
	(4) Adjective + Noun Collocation		
	4a) Adjective + Noun	ordinary people	Lexical
	4b) Adjective + Noun	greatest man	Grammatical

(5) Verb + Adverb Collocation		
5a) Verb + Adverb	work hard	Lexical
5b) Verb + Adverb	do poorly	Grammatical
5c) Adverb + Verb	slowly turned	Grammatical
5d) Adverb + Phrasal Verb	unhappily looked around	Grammatical
(6) Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation		
	definitely true story	Grammatical
(7) a / Numeral + Quantifier + (of) + Noun		
7a) a + Quantifier + of +	a piece of bread	Grammatical
Uncountable Noun		
7b) a + Measure Words + of +	a box of books	Grammatical
Countable Noun		
7c) Numeral + Countable Noun	two books	Grammatical

As shown in table 3.3 above, there are three areas of collocation: noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation and modifiers. Noun + verb collocation can be furtherly divided into: noun + single verb, noun + phrasal verb and noun + auxiliary + act verb / phrasal verb. Verb + noun collocation includes verb + noun and phrasal verb + noun collocations. The modifiers fatherly fall into: noun + noun, noun + prepositional phrase, adjective + noun, adverb + adjective + noun, verb + adverb (two types), adverb + verb, adverb + phrasal verb, a + quantifying noun + of + (head) noun and numeral + quantifying noun + of + (head) noun collocations. Among these three areas with reference to types of collocations established by the present study, both lexical and grammatical collocations classifications are involved.

Table 3.3 presents the types of collocation that are established by the present study. To facilitate the statistical computation in the EA, the types of collocation was narrowed down to seven clusters in the present study. Type 1 includes four categories from 1a to 1d. Errors relevant to these four categories were counted and entered into type noun + verb collocation. Likewise, errors in categories 2a to 2c were counted and entered into type verb + noun collocation...until errors in categories 7a to 7c were counted and entered into type a / numeral + quantifier + of + noun collocation. Based on this cluster analysis of data in terms of types of collocation, all figures and tabulations in the error analysis (EA) in chapter 7 were constructed.

Besides, software-based tools play an additional function such as MyFinder and WordSmith in the present study. MyFinder is used more frequently to identify and list all types / classifications of collocation errors, sources of collocation errors, and so forth. All types of collocation errors is marked by the present study from n + n collocation errors (including noun + prep. phrase), n + v (including noun + phrasal verb and noun + auxiliary verb + act verb), v / phrasal v + n, v + adv., adv. + adj. + n collocation errors to ‘a / numeral + quantifying n + of + n’ collocation errors. Sources of collocation errors are marked by the current study from interlingual, intralingual errors to circumlocution errors.

Equivalent KWIC (Key Word in the Context) in a certain subtype of collocations between learners (LC) and the English native speaker corpora (BNC) were contrasted with concordance lines using WordSmith Tool. Lists of “concordances” via computer display the two languages juxtaposed help the researcher to determine the frequent units in a language (MT / TL) and then examine their correspondences in the other language (TL). The node word selected in a certain type of collocation is searched within the span of 5 to the left and right of that node (for instance, shown as concordance line in ‘ultimate + success’ collocation in chapter 7).

The selected examples from Appendix A / B / C / D / E / F / G are presented in three columns. Enter the code of student essay in the left column, learner English (LC) in the middle column, and correct form of English in the right column.

The quantitative analysis involves the report of number and percentage of error occurrences, the report of number and percentage of interlingual and intralingual error occurrences as well as the report of number and percentage of errors occurrences from lexical and grammatical collocation classifications. The tabulation and figure were used in the statistical analysis.

The steps of error analysis (EA) and the manual identification of instances of English collocation errors in the data are followed by a process of English collocation error coding. The identification and collection of errors start from the grammatical errors due to MT Chinese interference since they are overt. Classify the following errors into interlingual errors: the grammatical errors due to Chinese non-morphological form in word formation of compound, Chinese non-phrasal verb, and violation of English grammatical concord in person and number, or Chinese non-copular “be” in syntax. Then move on to the grammatical errors due to intralingual cause. Finally, focus on the analysis of other subcategories making reference to sources of errors. Intralingual errors were based on the classification by Richards’s (1970): overgeneralization, ignorance of TL restrictions of TL rules, false hypothesizing concept of TL word or phrase and incomplete application of TL word.

The EA method was performed as follows:

- 1) Code 117 students’ essays at random. For example, the student essay will be coded as T which refers to Text, i.e. the first student essay is represented by T1, and the second student essay is numbered as T2, until the 117<sup>th</sup> student essay was coded as T117.



- 2) Mark the types of English collocation errors identified in this study with codes n + n, n + v, v + n, adj. + n, v + adv., adv. + adj. + n, and a + quantifying noun + of + n., among 117 students' essay, and interlingual errors with codes inter. and intralingual with intra.
- 3) The presentation of data is organized mainly based on interlingual and intralingual errors. Under each category, there is an attempt to classify the errors into subcategories with specific reference to the sources of errors.

The following is the detailed steps to collect and sort out as well as enter the data (noun + noun collocation, for instance) with reference to different sources:

- Step 3a: The identification of noun + noun collocation errors is making reference to the property of Chinese on grammatical collocation classification. As has already been described previously, Chinese noun + noun collocation *shenghuo* (生活) + *taidu* (态度) = (生活态度) 'life attitude' is equivalent to English 'attitude towards life'. Therefore, the presentation of interlingual English noun + prepositional phrase collocation errors is entered in the type of English noun + noun collocation errors.

Since English grammatical collocation errors due to Chinese are overt, which are easy to be found, the interlingual errors were identified, collected and gave a statistics marked by item '1. Interlingual Errors in the Grammatical Structure: Chinese Coordinate NPs Interference to English Noun + PPs (1 text in total)', which can be presented below in tabulation (as a model of presentation of errors) The following is table as a model how errors are counted and sorted into the types of collocation errors, which used tabulation.

Interlingual Errors due to Chinese Coordinate NPs Interference to English Noun + PPs

Text	LC	Correct form
T 14	the world scientist	the scientist in the world

The above table presents number of students' essays (T14) in the left column, learner's language 'the world scientists' in the middle and the correct TL expressions 'the scientists in the world' in the right column.

- Step 3b: Then presentation of the other sub-classification of interlingual errors marked by item '1.2. Errors due to Negative Transfer of Chinese Connotations' below:

#### 1.2 Interlingual Errors found in the Semantic Field: Negative Transfer of Chinese Connotations (one text only)

A tabulation is used as below:

#### Interlingual Errors due to Negative Transfer from Chinese Connotation

Text	LC	Correct form
T82	sunlight of success	the best hope of success

- 4) Enter the data composed of all interlingual noun + noun collocation errors due to Chinese grammatical structure influence into the view columns in SPSS package and compute the sum of numbers of the errors automatically. Finally, put the result into the bracket of the subtitles of the tables. The subtitle of each table is the source of that type of errors.

In fact, if there is very few number of errors, manual counting is enough to do statistics like the counting of interlingual verb + adverb collocation errors. But in the case of noun + verb or verb + noun collocation errors, SPSS package tool is adopted to perform statistics.

5) Having processed the interlingual noun + noun collocation errors, the next presentation is on the intralingual noun + noun errors due to context and from the grammatical structure. Collect, sort out and enter all intralingual errors in the different tables by making different sources of errors, which are carried out in the similar steps to interlingual errors. Finally, give a sum of separate interlingual, intralingual and circumlocution errors as well as total number of noun + noun collocation errors.

The detailed steps of statistics are presented below:

- Step 5a: Enter the whole data into the view columns in SPSS package tool.
- Step 5b: Compute the data using SPSS tool automatically with reference to number and percentage of each intralingual source of n + n collocation errors.
- Step 5c: Then move on to the presentation of errors due to circumlocution, which are given in the third table.
- Step 5d: Enter and compute the total numbers of noun + noun collocation errors from interlingual and intralingual sources as well as errors due to circumlocution and enter them in the last table (which is on the top of page in Appendix D). Enter the name of the category of errors in the left column, statistical data of the total number of that category of noun + noun collocation errors in the right column.

It takes the order similar to noun + noun collocation errors to collect, enter and compute automatically the number and percentage of the rest subcategories of English collocations errors one by one and enter them in different tables in the presentation of errors. The rest of types of English collocation errors include: noun + verb (including n. + phrasal v., n. + auxiliary + v.), verb + noun (including phrasal v. + n.), adjective + noun, verb + adverb (including adv. + v., phrasal v. + adv., adv. + phrasal v.), adverb + adjective + noun, a + quantifying noun + of + head noun and numeral + quantifying

noun + of + head noun collocation errors.

All types established in the current study were identified and enter them as data in the appendices A to G. English noun + verb collocation errors were enter in Appendix A, verb + noun collocation errors in Appendix B, adjective + noun collocation errors in Appendix C, noun + noun phrase errors in Appendix D, a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + noun collocation errors in Appendix E, adverb + adjective + noun collocation errors in Appendix F, enter English verb + adverb collocation errors in Appendix G. Selected examples for presentation of data in this study were from these appendices.

Any word with misspelling is negligible in the identification of collocations errors in the present study. As for other problems in the case where English native speaker judges fail to reach a consensus on the ideal correction of errors and both native and non-native judges may not arrive at an agreement on the causes of some of the errors, the researcher turned to dictionaries and the British National Corpus to work out the problems.

In dealing with errors in the structure subject-verb-object collocation, if the mismatch happens between subject and verb but without problem with verb-object part, then this error is noun + verb collocation counting. If no problem with subject-verb collocation but mismatch takes place between verb and object, then this error is verb + noun collocation one.

Thanks to the new technology, corpus linguistics has attracted the attention of linguists in the last decade. Studies in collocations through corpus of the world and China are gradually becoming popular. One of the advantages obtained from corpus studies was the frequency of collocations (Koya, 2005 and Durran, 2008). Teachers need not rely any more on native speakers' intuition about which combinations are wrong, but have access to corpus to check the high frequency of certain subtypes of collocations.

Accordingly, the present study also takes into consideration the high frequency of words in a subtype of collocations when determining certain collocation errors found in the data.

The percentage distributions of further classification of error occurrences were also figured out. They included percentages between intralingual errors due to context and grammatical structure, between violation of lexical and grammatical collocations, between interlingual errors from the grammatical structure and the semantic selection of words, and between interlingual errors and intralingual errors from the grammatical structure. In order to work out exactly how much each source of error subcategory accountable for English collocation errors, the manual job was done in this case.

### **3.4 Summary**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study, in which the types and classification of collocation are given. Based on structural linguistic methodology, lexical and grammatical classifications of collocation as well as types of collocation are described in great detail.

Theoretical CA is thought of as essential in the study of EA. Accordingly, both TL English and MT Chinese collocations are described and contrasted in this study, which forms an important theoretical underpinning for this study. The study also believes that the blending of CA into EA would be an effective approach to identify the errors made by Chinese learners of English in EA. CA can undertake a theoretical contrastive analysis between MT Chinese and English collocations. In the contrastive analysis, errors due to interference of MT can be solved and explained based on the similarities and differences identified from CA which can not be done by EA in terms of interlingual errors.

This chapter also gives an account of how qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data were made based on interlingual and intralingual error classifications and

subclassifications regarding other sources of errors. The data collection and processing as well as sample analysis are also discussed throughout the chapter.

In order to identify similarities and differences which is in line with research question one (RQ1): “What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and English collocation systems?” and ultimately to identify the areas of difficulty and the level of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations as well as to identify the reasons for interlingual errors which is in agreement with research question three (RQ3): “What are the areas of difficulty involving the influence of the mother tongue and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by Chinese learners in the use of English collocations from the perspective of (a) Contrastive Analysis and (b) Error Analysis?” Chapter 6 will undertake a contrastive study from the perspective of CA, and chapter 7 will carry out an error analysis from the perspective of EA to identify the collocation errors of English made by the Chinese learners, which conforms to research question two (RQ2): “What are the types of collocation errors that are most frequently made by Chinese learners of English?” and also to identify all possible sources of errors.

## CHAPTER 4

### CHINESE COLLOCATIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the Chinese collocations, which forms lexical and grammatical basis of the theoretical CA approach used in this study. CA consists of two orders: descriptions of L1 and L2 and contrast of the two languages. Therefore, a description of the mother tongue (which will henceforth be referred to as MT) Chinese collocation in this chapter is a necessary step before contrasting with the target language (which will henceforth be referred to as TL) equivalent. In the description of Chinese collocations in the following sections, most examples below are given by the author and some are by other studies.

Collocation between two Chinese content words is functionally under syntax. Collocation is under semantic-grammatical category (Lin, 1990:8). Huang and Liao (1997:8) stated that lexis contains the knowledge of functional grammar, which includes three capabilities: 1) functioning as a constituent in a sentence; 2) combination between two content words and 3) combination between a content word with a particle word (or function word). The second capability is similar to classification of lexical collocation and the third capability is equivalent to grammatical collocation (Benson, et al. 1997: xv-xxx). Thus, the description by examples below about types of Chinese collocations is not only concerned about word formation including compound and so forth at lexical level but also about the grammatical structure.

#### 4.2 Chinese Noun + Noun Collocations

Chinese noun + noun collocation is one type of noun phrase. In a simple endocentric Noun Phrase (NP), there are normally two parts with one modifying the other

– the head. In Chinese, the modifying part can be of various types: i) a noun or a noun phrase (NP), ii) an adjective or an adjective phrase (AP) and iii) a verb or a verb phrase (VP). In whichever case, Chinese attributive modifiers always precede the head noun.

For example, the endocentric NP “his latest novel, which sells well” is rendered in Mandarin as follows:

#### An endocentric NP in Chinese

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
tade	na bu	zuixin	chuban de	feichang	Changxiao	xiaoshuo
					de	
he De	that CLS	latest	publish De	very	good sell De	novel
他的	那部	最新	出版的	非常	畅销的	小说

Chinese endocentric NP involves the following rules:

- a) Adjective + Noun / NP. For example, 白纸 (blank paper), 大房子 (big room)
- b) Adjective + De + Noun / NP. For example, 美丽的女孩儿 (pretty girl)
- c) Noun + Noun / NP. For example, 塑料袋 (plastic bag)
- d) Noun + De (的) + Noun / NP. For example, 奶奶的话 (grandmother’s words)
- e) Complicated attributive modifiers + De + Noun / NP. For example, 前任的总理 (the former minister)

In Mandarin Chinese, an endocentric NP is often marked by the presence of the auxiliary particle ‘de / 的 / De’, Noun 1 + De + Noun 2 collocation, but in some cases, this particle can be deleted.



(A)	(B)
Noun 1 + Noun 2 Collocations	Noun 1 + De + Noun 2 Collocations
Chinese: zhuo bu	Chinese: zhuozi de bu
桌 布	桌子 的 布
table cloth	table De cloth
English: table cloth	English: cloth used for covering a table

Noun 1 serves as a determiner in both cases (A) and (B) above. The case in (B) emphasizes the fact that the cloth is used for covering table rather than for other purposes. Example (A), however, does not carry this meaning.

In certain cases, whether the particle ‘De’ in endocentric NP is present or not makes no difference:

#### Example 1

Chinese: yanjiu lingyu	Chinese: yanjiu de lingyu
研究 领域	研究 的 领域
study field	study De field
English: the field of study	English: the field of study

#### Example 2

Chinese: chuangye jingshen	Chinese: chuangye de jingshen
创 业 精 神	创 业 的 精 神
enterprising spirit	enterprising De spirit
English: enterprising spirit	English: enterprising spirit

In the above examples 1 and 2, the attributives (Noun 1) are VPs, after adding the particle ‘De’, they turn into nominal endocentric phrases. Semantically, there is no difference between ‘Noun 1 and Noun 2’ and ‘Noun 1 + De + Noun 2’. However, the

omission of the particle De does not mean that it can be generalized into a universal rule. The use of De signals whether it is a coordinate NP or endocentric NP. This can be illustrated by comparing columns (A) and (B) below:

(A) Noun + Noun Coordinate (B) Endocentric NP

Collocation

Noun 1 + Noun 2 Collocations

Noun 1 + De + Noun 2 Collocations

Example 1

Chinese: baba mama

Chinese: baba de mama

爸爸 妈妈

爸爸 的 妈妈

father mother

father De 妈妈

English: father and mother

English: father's mother

Example 2

Chinese: Beijing daxue

Chinese: Beijing de daxue

北京 大学

北京 的 大学

Beijing university

Beijing De university

English: Beijing university

English: University in Beijing

The NP in column A in example 1 refers to parents, whereas the NP in column B refers to father's mother. In example 2, the NP in column A refers to one of the most prestigious comprehensive universities in Beijing. In contrast, the NP in column B refers to a certain university in Beijing.

In the following example, the case (A) is coordinating NP, and the case (B) is endocentric. N1 refers to attributive noun and N2 refers to head noun.

(A)

Noun 1 + Noun 2 Collocations

Chinese: shouji ziliao

收集 资料

collect material

English: to collect material

(B)

Noun 1 + De + Noun 2 Collocations

Chinese: shouji de ziliao

收集 的 资料

collect De material

English: collected material

However, in the following cases, the particle De is compulsory. The examples show different relationships between noun1 and noun2. They are Noun 1 + De + Noun 2 collocations:

(a) Noun 1 embodies noun 2:

Example 1

Chinese: li ming de lianpang

李明 的 脸庞

Li Ming De face

English: Li Ming's face

Example 2

Chinese: sun li de shencai

孙 丽 的 身 材

Sun Li De figure

English: Sun Li's figure

(b) Noun 1 contains noun 2. This involves physical, psychological, facial features:

Example 1

Chinese: liuhuan de leishui

刘欢 的 泪水

Liuhuan De tear

English: Liu Huan's tears

Example 2

Chinese: wangli de xiguan

王 丽 的 习 惯

Wang Li De habit

English: Wang Li's habits

(b) Noun1 possesses noun 2:

Example 1

Chinese: nv er de zhaopian  
 女儿 的 照片  
 daughter De photo

English: daughter's photo

Example 2

Chinese: Liulin de qiye  
 刘琳 的 企业  
 Liu Lin De enterprise

English: Liu Lin's enterprise

(d) Noun 1 creates noun 2:

Example 1

Chinese: zhangtao de sanwen  
 张 涛 的 散 文  
 Zhang Tao De prose

English: Zhang Tao's prose

Example 2

Chinese: yanyan de zuowen  
 燕 燕 的 作 文  
 Yan Yan De essay

English: Yan Yan's essay

(e) Noun1 and noun 2 have some relationship or noun1 is in a state of noun 2 :

Example 1

Chinese: guohui de airen  
 郭 辉 的 爱 人  
 Guo Hui De spouse

English: Guo Hui's spouse

Example 2

Chinese: yangying de qingkuang  
 杨 英 的 情 况  
 Yang Ying De background

English: Yang Ying's background

(f) Noun 1 annotates to a constituent

Chinese: ji yi  
 机 翼  
 plane wing

English: the wing of the plane

Modifiers in Chinese can be of various types, which can be a noun or an NP, an adjective or an adjective phrase (AP), a verb or a verb phrase (VP) or even a numeral classifier.

(a) Verb Phrase + De + Noun 2 Collocation

Example 1

Chinese: ti gao ting li de fangfa  
提 高 听 力 的 方 法  
lift high listen force De method

English: approach to improve the listening skill

(b) Numeral Classifier (will henceforth be referred to as CLS) + Noun 2 Collocation

Chinese classifiers usually occur between a head noun and a numeral or a demonstrative. Chinese nouns require numeral classifiers, “a word that is inserted between a number and the substantial to which the numeral refers, also between a demonstrative and a noun” (Quine, 1969:150).

Example 1

Chinese: liang tou niu  
两 头 牛  
two CLS cattle  
English: two cows

Example 2

Chinese: san di shui  
三 滴 水  
three CLS water  
English: three drops of water

Example 3

Chinese: disan ben xiang bu  
第 三 本 相 簿  
third CLS photo book  
English: The third photo album

Example 4

Chinese: na tiao mao jin  
那 条 毛 巾  
That CLS hair towel  
English: that towel

### 4.3 Chinese Noun + Verb Collocations

Chinese noun + verb collocation is treated as topic-comment structure in this study. Broadly speaking, Chinese syntax is semantic and governed by topic-comment

structure. Topic is a term for the part of a sentence which names the person, thing, or idea about which something is said (the comment) in describing the information structure of sentences. According to Crystal (1991:344), the topic of a sentence is the entity (person, thing) about which something is said, whereas the further statement made about this entity is the comment. The topic often coincides with the subject of a sentence (e.g. *A student / is going to the classroom*), but it needs not (e.g. *There is the doorkeeper / who gave you a key*), and, even when it is a subject, it need not come first in a sentence (e.g. *Wanglin my name is*). The topic is sometimes referred to as the psychological subject (Crystal, 1991: 345). The following are examples of Chinese topic-comment structures (in which the example with no reference implies that it is given by the author):

Example 1

Chinese:	huang ping	wo	yijing	Jian	guo	Le
	黄 平	我	已经	见	过	了。
	huangping	I	already	see	aspect	Particle.
	(Topic)	(Comment)				

English: Huangping, I have already seen (her).

Example 2

Chinese:	wode	xiao	sunzi	ta	hen	tiaopi
	我的	小	孙子	他	很	调皮。
	my	small	grandson	he	very	naughty.
	(Topic)		(Comment)			

English: My little grandson is very naughty.

### Example 3

Chinese: najian wuzi nimen zao gai fenshua le  
那间 屋子 你们 早 该 粉刷 了。  
That room you soon should paint p.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: You should have painted the room.

### Example 4

Chinese: yingyu zhei men yuyan xue hui ta ke bu rongyi  
英 语 这 门 语言, 学 会 它 可 不 容易。  
English this CLS language learn it can not easy.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: It is by no means easy to learn the English language.

*huangpin* in example (1), *my little grandson* in example (2), *that room* in example (3) and *English* in example (4) are topics in the sentences, while *I* in example (1), *he* in example (2), *you* in example (3) and *language* in example (4) are thought of as comments in the sentences.

The features of the Chinese topic-comment sentences can be presented by the examples in the sections below, which involve Chinese topics and Chinese comments.

#### 4.3.1 Chinese Topics

(i) The topic may be of any word class or any structure:

(a) Nouns as topics

### Example 1

Chinese: can kao shu hen youyong  
参 考 书 很 有 用。  
reference book very useful.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: The reference books are useful.

### Example 2

Chinese: dongji keyi huabing  
冬 季 可 以 滑 冰。  
winter can skate.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: We can go for skating in Winter.

### Example 3

Chinese: zhe jiaoshi neng rongna yibai ren  
这 教 室 能 容 纳 100 人。  
this classroom can accommodate 100 people.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: 100 people can be accommodated in this classroom.

Topic is a time noun in (2) and a place noun in (3).

(b) Adjectives as topic



Example 1

Chinese: qin kuai shi hao de  
勤 快 是 好 的。  
diligent is good p.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: Being diligent is good.

(c) Verbal phrases as topic

Chinese: zuo renheshi yinggai renzhen.  
做 事 应 该 认 真。  
do things should conscientious.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: One should be conscientious when doing anything.

(d) Clauses as topic

Chinese: ta lai bulai shangke guanxi zhongda  
他/她 来 不来 上 课 关 系 重 大。  
he/she come not upward relationship heavy big.  
come class  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: It matters if he / she does not attend the class.

(ii) The topic a definite or indefinite reference

Example 1

Chinese: shubao yinggai fang zai zher.  
书 包 应 该 放 在 这 儿。  
bag should put at Here.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: The bag should be placed here.

Example 2

Chinese: yi ge ren buneng bujiang daoli  
一 个 人 不 能 不 讲 道 理。  
One CLS person not able not talk reason.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: A person must be reasonable.

(Yip, et al., 1997:111)

(iii) The topic may be agentive or recipient / patient

Example 1

Chinese bailin zai xie wenzhang  
摆琳 在 写 文 章。  
bailin in write article.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: Bai Lin is writing the article.

The topic 'Bai Lin' in example 1 is an agentive noun.

### Example 2

Chinese: yifu xi hao le  
衣服 洗 好了。  
cloth wash good p.  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: Cloth washes well.

The topic 'cloth' in example 2 is a recipient noun.

Despite being no subject in topic-prominent Chinese, agent-patient relation is found in a Chinese sentence.

### Example 1

Chinese: xiao nan hai dai zhu le mao  
小 男 孩 逮 住 了 猫。  
boy little male kid (child) catch live p. cat  
(Agent Topic) (Comment)

English: The little boy

### Example 2

Chinese: liang zhi mao dou zhua zhule.  
两 只 猫 都 逮 住 了。  
two CLS cat all catch live p.  
(Patient Topic) (Comment)

English: All the two cats were caught.  
(Passive voice)

Chinese verb 逮住 in (1) is an active voice with an agent topic / subject 小男孩 'little boy', while Chinese verb 逮住 in example (2) is passive voice with a patient topic / subject 两只猫 'two cats'. The Chinese verb "zhuazhu / 逮住" in both cases is unmarked.

On some occasions, agentive subjects are omitted:

Example 1

Chinese: zuowan zhuazhu le liangzhi mao  
昨 晚 逮 住 了 两 只 猫。  
last night catch p two-CLS cat.

English: Three cats were caught last night.

In example 1, the agent is omitted, instead, the time NP ‘last night’ takes its position.

Example 2

Chinese: zhuozi dixia daizhu le liang zhi mao  
桌 子 底 下 逮 住 了 两 只 猫。  
table under catch p two CLS cat.

English: Two cats were caught from under the table.

In example 2, the agent is omitted, of which position is taken by the NP ‘under the table’.

(iv) The comment can be an adjective phrase, or it can contain the verbs “shi” or “you”

Example 1

Chinese: jin tian shi wo de shengri  
今 天 是 我 的 生 日。  
today is I p birthday  
(Topic) (Comment)

English: Today is my birthday.

### Example 2

Chinese:    mei ge    ren            dou    you    yi        ge        mingzi  
              每 个 人            都    有    一        个        名 字。  
              each    person    all    have   one    CLS   name.  
              (Topic)                (comment)

English:    Every person has a name.

(Yip, et al., 1997:111)

### 4.3.2 Chinese Subject – Predicate Structures

Chinese involves both topic-comment and subject-predicate structures. Topic and subject belong to different grammatical categories (Xu, 2003). From the functional grammar, Chinese presents topic-comment structure, while from the syntactic grammar, Chinese exhibits subject-predicate structure. Yip and Don (1997:109) said that “Chinese sentences may be broken down into two broad categories: subject-predicate and topic-comment.” Richards et al. (2000:482) state that “The concept of topic and comment is not identical with subject predicate.” “Subject-predicate (主题-述题) refers to the grammatical structure of a sentence. The topic-comment (主词-述词) refers to the information structure of sentences” (Richards et al., 2000:482). The transformation of a subject – predicate structure into a topic – comment one is whether or not there is an aspect marker or the sentence particle *le* in Chinese. For example,

Chinese:    huangping        wo    yijing    jian    guo    le  
              黄 平            我    已经    见    过    了。  
              zhangsan        I        already    see    p        p.  
              (Topic)                (Comment)

English:    Huangpin, I have already seen (her).

The features of Chinese subject-predicate structures can be explained as given below:

#### **4.3.2.1 Chinese Subjects**

Chinese content words can often function as subjects, including noun, pronoun, verb, and adjectives. In most cases, noun and pronoun often function as subjects in Chinese, without any restriction. Many phrases such as noun phrases, verb phrases, and adjective phrases can also serve as subjects in Chinese sentences. Subjects consist of not only typical subject materials such as noun elements, but also verb (including adjectival) constituents and adjective phrases (Hua, 2001). From the point of view of grammatical structure, there is subject-predicate structure (and verb + object structure), while from the semantic structure, there are agent subject and patient subject. Grammatical and semantic structures co-exist in a Chinese syntactic structure (Zhou and Zhang, 2003:81). The following are the examples given by the author on the Chinese subjects.

##### **4.3.2.1.1 Noun as Subjects**

(a) The subject is a pronoun

Chinese:	ta	chi	le	fan
	他 / 她	吃	了	饭。
	He / she	eat	p	meal.
English:	He / She ate the meal.			

(b) The subject is often a noun or pronoun representing the agent or patient of the action:

### Example 1

Chinese:    dajia                dou        dai        le        zidian  
              大家                都        带        了        字典。  
              everybody        all        carry        p        dictionary.  
  
(Agent                (Predicate)  
Subject)

English:    Everybody carried dictionaries with them.

### Example 2

Chinese:    zidian                dajia                dou        dai        le  
              字典                大家                都        带        了。  
              dictionary        everybody        all        carry        p.  
  
(Patient Subject) (Predicate)

English:    Dictionaries were carried by everybody.

### Example 3

Chinese:    tamen                shoudao                le        you jian  
              他们                收 到                了        邮 件。  
              they                receive                p        mail.  
  
(Agent Subject) (Predicate)

English:    They received quite a lot of mails.'

### Example 4

Chinese:    youjian                tamen                shoudao                le  
              邮 件                他们                收 到                了。  
              mails                they                receive                p.  
  
(Patient Subject) (Predicate)

English:    Mails were received by them.

(c) The subject is a time noun

Chinese	zhongwu	hen	re
	中 午	很	热。
	noon	very	hot.
	(Subject)	(Predicate)	

English: It is very hot at noon.

(d) The subject is a location noun

Chinese:	jiaowai	hen	ganjing
	郊 外	很	干 净。
	suburb	very	clean.
	(Subject)	(predicate)	

English: It is clean in the suburb.

(e) The subject must be of definite reference:

Example 1

Chinese:	ta	zai	xi	yifu
	她/他	在	洗	衣服。
	she / he	at / in	wash	cloth.
	(Subject)	(Predicate)		

English: She / He is washing clothes.

Example 2

Chinese:	jiao shou	zou jin	le	jiaoshi
	教 授	走 进 了		教 室。
	professor	come into	p	classroom.
	(Subject)	(Predicate)		

English: The professor came into the classroom.



A noun at the beginning of such a sentence, even if unqualified by a demonstrative (this, that), will have definite reference (e.g. *laoshi* ‘the teacher’) (Yip, et al., 1997:109). A personal pronoun is naturally of definite reference, and a pronoun like *dajia* (大家) refers to ‘everybody of a definite group’.

#### 4.3.2.1.2 Verbs as Subjects\*

In the case of verbs as subjects, a verb functions as a noun in the sentence.

(a) The subject is a verb form

Example 1	Example 2
Chinese: shuo      bi      zuo   rongyi	qu      shi   zhengque   de
说      比      做   容 易。	去      是   正 确   的。
say      than   do   easy	go      is   right   p.
(Subject) (Predicate)	(Subject) (Predicate)
English: Saying is easier than doing.	Going is correct.

(b) The subject is a VO VP

Example 1
Chinese: zu   yi   jian   wuzi   xuyao      jiu bai   yuan
租   一   间   屋 子   需 要      九 百   元。
rent one CLS room need / require 900.
(Subject) (Predicate)
English: One requires \$900 to rent a room.

---

\* Verb functions (denoting verbal noun meaning) as a noun in the sentence.

(c) The subject is a coordinate VP

Example 1

Chinese: gongzuo xiu xi dou zhongyao  
工 作 休 息 都 重 要。  
work rest both important.  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English Working and having rest are both important.

(d) The subject is VC VP

Chinese: xue de hao mei yong  
学 得 好 没 用。  
study DE good no / not use.  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English: There is no use in doing well at school.

(e) The subject is endocentric VP

Chinese: chu qu chi neng sheng shi  
出 去 吃 能 省 时。  
out go eat can save time.  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English: By eating out, (one) can save time.

(f) The subject is SV VP

Chinese: na hui jia kan hui yingxiang jia ren  
拿 回 家 看 会 影 响 家 人。  
take back home see can affect / effect family member  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English: Taking it back to have a look will affect families

(g) The subject is overlapping verbs

Example 1

Chinese: jiao jiao shu bu rong yi  
教 教 书 不 容 易。  
teach teach book not easy.  
(Subject) (Predicate)  
English: Teaching is far from an easy job.

Example 2

Chinese: shang shang wang shang yanjing  
上 上 网 伤 眼 睛。  
up up net hurt eye.  
(Subject) (Predicate)  
English: Surfing the internet can hurt your eyes.

Example 3

Chinese: xiang xiang mei guanxi  
想 想 没 关 系。  
think think not matter.  
(Subject) (Predicate)  
English: After thinking it over, (I) feel it doesn't matter.

#### 4.3.2.1.3 Adjectives as Subjects\*

In this case, an adjective functions as a noun.

---

\* Adjective functions as a noun in the sentence.

(a) The subject is an adjective

Chinese: xingfu      buneng   mai      mai  
幸 福      不 能   买      卖。  
happy      can't   buy      sell.  
(subject)      (Predicate)

English: Happiness can't be bought and sold.

(b) The subject is a coordinate adjective phrase

Chinese: xin ying    bie zhi    shi    ren    er    mu    yi    xin  
新 颖    别 致    使    人    耳    目    一    新。  
new      unique    make    people    ear    eye    one    new.  
(Subject)                      (Predicate)

English: Being new and unique makes people have a pleasant change of atmosphere.

(c) The subject is an endocentric adjective phrase

Chinese: tai    kua zhang      ye    bu    hao  
太    夸 张      也    不    好。  
too   exaggerate      also   not    good.  
(Subject)                      (Predicate)

English: Too much exaggeration is also not good.

(d) The subject is an adjective complement or an adjective phrase

Chinese: kuai    yidian    bu    yaojin  
快    一 点    不    要 紧  
fast    one-bit    not    matter.  
(Subject)                      (Predicate)

English: Being a bit fast does not matter.

(e) Prepositional Phrase as Subjects

Chinese: yanzhe he an shi yi tiao xiao jing  
 沿着 河 岸 是 一 条 小 径。  
 along river bank is one CLS small alley.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: There is a path along the river.

#### 4.3.2.2 Chinese Predicates

Mandarin Chinese predicates are usually composed of not only verbs and VPs, but also of adjectives or adjective phrases (APs), which “depend on whether there are features of comment predicates” (Xu, 2003:15). Moreover, adjectives or adjective phrases do not have to follow a linking verb to serve as predicates. This is in contrast with English in which adjectives or APs can never stand alone as predicates. In Mandarin, nouns, interrogative pronouns, numbers, and the number + CLS phrase can also function as predicates.

(a) The predicate verb is an act verb. Aspect markers are therefore almost always present in subject- predicate sentences.

##### Example 1

Chinese: ta he le yi bei ka fei  
 他 喝 了 一 杯 咖啡。  
 he drink p one mw coffee.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: He had a cup of coffee.

### Example 2

Chinese: tamen            zheng    zai    tanhua  
          他们            正        在        谈 话。  
          They            right    at        talk.  
          (Subject)        (Predicate)

English: They are talking right now.

- (b) It may be a sentence with a passive marker (e.g. *bei*, *rang*, and *jiao*) or with *ba* (implying intentional manipulation or unintentional intervention):

### Example 1

Chinese: wuzi            bei    nong    de    hen    luan.  
          屋子            被    弄        得    很    乱。  
          room            by    handle p    very    mess.  
          (Subject)        (Predicate)

English: The room has been made very untidy.

### Example 2

Chinese: tamen            ba    chezi    ting    zai    le    lu    bian  
          他们            把    车子    停    在    了    路    边。  
          they            by    car    stop    at    p    road-side.  
          (Subject)        (Predicate)

English: They parked their car by the side of the road.

- (c) Verbs / VPs as Predicates:

Chinese: ta chi le fan  
 他 吃 了 饭。  
 he eat p rice / meal.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: He ate the meal.

In example 1, the verb ‘吃’ (eat) together with its object ‘饭’ (meal) which form a patient object phrase / VP functions as a predicate.

(d) Subject-Predicate Phrase as Predicate:

Chinese: naxie cankaoshu wo hai meiyou duwan  
 那些 参考书 我 还 没有 读完。  
 those reference I still not read finish.  
 book  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: I have not finished those reference books yet.

(e) Adjectives / APs as Predicates

Example 1

Chinese: chuntian de jiaobu jin le  
 春天 的 脚步 近 了  
 spring De foot step near p.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: It is close to Spring.

## Example 2

Chinese:   xia tian           re       de       hen  
          夏 天           热       得       很。  
          summer         hot     DE     very.  
          (Subject)       (Predicate)

English:   The summer is very hot.

In examples 1 and 2, Chinese adjectives “close” and “hot” function as verb serving as predicate in the sentence. In example 2, an adjective in Chinese can function as a predicate, normally be modified by degree adverbs. The major difference between adjectives and verbs lies in the fact that adjectives do not need to be preceded by a linking verb nor take objects.

(f) Chinese ‘*Pianzheng Cizu* / (Nominal) Endocentric Phrase (偏正词组) as Predicates:

In Chinese, exocentric phrase refers to a word group consisting of a modifier and the word it modifies.

Chinese:   wangli   de   wuzi           hen youmei  
          王 丽 的 舞姿           很 优美。  
          wangli De   dance pose   very beautiful.  
          (Subject)                   (Predicate)

English:   Wangli dances well.

In this example, the nominal phrase *hen youmei* (很优美) ‘very beautiful’ serves as a predicate.

(g) Noun as Predicate

In Chinese, the noun or NP which serves as a predicate is usually those nouns referring to time, weather, location, and so on.



### Example 1

Chinese:	jintian	xingqi er
	今天	星 期二。
	Today	Tuesday.
	(Subject)	(Time as Predicate)

English: Today is Tuesday.

### Example 2

Chinese:	wanshang	da feng
	晚上	大风 (Lan, 2002:187)。
	night	big wind.
	(Subject)	(Weather as Predicate)

English: It is windy at night.

### Example 3

Chinese:	lihao	Shanghai ren
	李浩	上海人。
	lihao	shanghai person.
	(Subject)	( Location as Predicate)

English: Liao is from Shanghai.

### (g) Numbers as Predicate

Chinese	wo	san shi
	我	三十。
	I	thirty.
	(Subject)	(Predicate)

English: I am thirty.

### (h) Numeral Classifier (which is referred to as CLS) phrase as Predicate

Chinese: zhe tiao xianglian yiqianerbai yuan  
 这 条 项 链 一 千 二 百 元。  
 this CLS necklace 1,200 dallar.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: This necklace costs \$1,200.

(j) Chinese contains grammatical passive voice and logical patient-verb passive voice. The patient relationship between subject and predicate can be presented as follows. In Chinese, passive voice can be expressed by ‘bei / 被’, otherwise ambiguity arises.

#### Example 1

Chinese: ta zai kaidao  
 他 在 开 刀。  
 he in operate.  
 (Subject) (Predciate)

English: He is operating.

In example 1, there are two possibilities: *Doctor is operating on a patient*. Or *Patient is operated*. So, in order to avoid the semantic ambiguity, the verb “接受receive” has to be inserted between the subject “he” and predicate “operate”. The Chinese equivalent in example 1 should be turned to *ta zhengzai jieshou kaidao* (他正在接受开刀) ‘He is receiving an operation’.

#### Example 2

Chinese: beizi da po le  
 杯 子 打 破 了。  
 glass beat broken p.  
 (Subject) (Predicate)

English: Glass is broken.

In example 2, although the particle “be / 被” is not involved in the sentence, ambiguity does not arise, which is acceptable by the Chinese culture.

In Chinese, passive voice can also be expressed by using *keyi* (可以), *shi* (是), *shou* (受) and so forth.

#### Example 1

Chinese: zhe shui keyi he ma  
这 水 可以 喝 吗?  
this water may drink p.  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English: Can the water be drunk?

#### Example 2

Chinese: zhe suo daxue shi yijiusaner nian jianli le  
这 所 大学 是 一九三二 年 建立 的。  
this CLS university is 1932 year found p.  
(Subject) (Predicate)

English: The university was founded in 1932.

### 4.3.3 The Relationship between Chinese Topic and Subject

Topic and subject belong to different categories. The difference between Chinese topic and Chinese subject lies in to what extent they are grammaticallized (Shao, 2005:87). Topic as such is not an independent syntactic composition but functionally, it plays a role of syntactic composition, which is essentially a notion at the pragmatic level and formally transformed into a grammatical feature at the syntactic / grammar level (Xu, 2003). Subject is juxtaposed at the same level as predicate, object and other compositions syntactically. In the example below, there are two subjects. The topic “wang laoban / 王老板 / boss Wang” can be regarded as a bigger subject and “pengyou/朋友/friend/ can be taken as a smaller subject:

### Example 1

Chinese: 王 老板 朋友 很 多。

wang boss friend very many.

(Topic) (Comment)

(At pragmatic level) (Functionally)

(Subject) (Subject)

(At grammatical level) (Syntactic composition)

English: Wang, the boss, has many friends.

To sum up, it seems that in Chinese, words in any parts of speech can act as the subject or predicate in a sentence. Any word combination in a Chinese structure is acceptable as long as it is logical. Positive and negative words, concrete and abstract words, as well as inanimate and animate words can occur together. This has been demonstrated by the examples given in this section. In a syntactic construction, those compositions with feature of topic are often subjects or other compositions such as prepositional phrases (PPs). While topic is termed from the perspective of pragmatics, subject is termed from the perspective of grammatical syntax. Generally speaking, topic-comment structure is more suitable for Chinese than subject-predicate structure (Pan, 1997:215).

#### 4.4 Chinese Verb + Noun Collocations

The verb + noun collocation is referred to as “verb + object phrase (VO VP)” in this study, for “the principles in the construction of sentences in Mandarin Chinese are the same as those in the construction of Mandarin phrases” (Hua, 2001:127). The verb is normally a transitive verb. Transitive verbs are those that can take objects, while intransitive verbs do not. But in Mandarin the case is somewhat different. There are at least two types of transitive verbs as far as the requirement of an object is concerned. Examples for the two types of verbs are:

Transitive Verbs	Intransitive Verbs
(A)	(B)
xie (写)	fei (飞)
write	fly
zhi (治)	shui (睡)
rule / govern	sleep
caiqu (采取)	xuexi (学习)
take	study

Column (A) contains transitive verbs that must take an object, whereas Column (B) contains intransitive verbs whose objects can be deleted.

#### 4.4.1 Intransitive Verb + Noun Collocations

There exist intransitive verbs in Mandarin that require an object. In each of the examples below, the verb is intransitive, yet an object is attached to the verb. The structure is that of Verb + Noun Collocation:

	Example 1	Example 2
Chinese:	qu    dong jing	san    bu
	去    东 京	散    步
	go    Tokyo	scatter    step
English:	go to Tokyo	take a walk
	Example 3	Example 4
Chinese:	shang    jiao shi	guo    lai    yi    ge    ren
	上    教 室	过    来    一    个    人
	go    classroom	pass    come    one    CLS    person.
English:	go to classroom	A person passes by

In other cases, the verb is not followed by its patient (受事者), but by, for example, a cause, instrument, place, aim, manner, metonymy, and so forth.

(a) Cause

Chinese: pao      bing      hao  
泡      病      号  
dunk    sick      number  
English: shun work on pretence of illness

(b) Instrument

Chinese: chi      da      wan  
吃      大      碗  
eat      big      bowl  
English: using a big bowl for eating

(c) Place

Chinese: chi      shitang  
吃      食堂  
eat      cafeteria  
English: have one's meals in the cafeteria

(d) Purpose

Chinese: mai      xi      piao  
买      戏      票  
buy      theater      tickets  
English: line up to buy (theatre) tickets

(e) Agent

Chinese: ken              laozu  
啃              老族  
eat              old generation  
English: The young who are largely financially supported by their parent.

(f) Metonymy

Chinese:	zuo	chuzu
	坐	出租
	sit	taxi
English:	take a taxi	

Certain structures are popular in the Chinese language. The context in which these phrases are used can enlighten the reader or the listener. Here are some popular expressions using the verb ‘da’:

Example 1

Chinese:	da	diannaoh	youxi
	打	电 脑	游 戏
	hit	computer	game
English:	play the computer games		

Example 2

Chinese:	da	pingpang
	打	乒 乓
	hit	pingpang
English:	play pingpang	

Example 3

Chinese:	da	dianhua
	打	电 话
	hit	phone
English:	make a phone call	

Although the objects in the VO VPs structures are mostly nouns and pronouns, they can also be verbs, adjectives and clauses functioning as nouns.

#### 4.4.2 Transitive Verb + Noun Collocations

##### (a) Verbs as object

###### Example 1

Chinese: xiang tiaowu  
想 跳舞  
want jump dance

English: want to dance

###### Example 2

Chinese: xihuan xie  
喜欢 写  
like write

English: like to write

##### (b) Adjectives as object

###### Example 1

Chinese: xihuan qingjing  
喜欢 清静  
like quiet

English: like the quiet

###### Example 2

Chinese: ai piaoliang  
爱 漂亮  
love beautiful

English: love beauty

From the perspective of Case Grammar, the NP linking to the verb shown as (a) and (b) in Chinese, it is known as Post-verb Category (Wang, 2007).

#### 4.5 Adjective + Noun Collocations

In the section on noun + noun collocations, it has been mentioned that modifiers in Chinese can be of various types. They can be a noun or an NP, an adjective or an AP, a verb or a VP, even a numeral classifier. In this section, the focus is on the adjective + noun collocations.



Example 1

Chinese: nong cha  
 浓 茶  
 dense tea  
 English: strong tea

Example 2

Chinese: putong ren  
 普通 人  
 ordinary people (person)  
 English: ordinary people

The combination between adjectives and their collocated noun form ‘*pianzheng cizu* / nominal endocentric phrase (偏正词组)’ is a Chinese rhetorical device (see definition of terms in chapter 1). The most productive construction is the endocentric one, where the head follows the modifier(s). Most of the disyllabic compound noun have nouns as the head.

Example 1

Chinese: xin de xie  
 新 的 鞋  
 new De shoe

English: ‘new shoes’ as opposed to  
 ‘old shoes’

Example 2

Chinese: lanse de niuzai  
 蓝色 的 牛仔  
 blue De cowboy

English: blue jeans (a kind of jeans)

In these two examples, the particle ‘De’ is optional. For more examples:

Example 3

Chinese: weilai (De) shijie  
 未来 (的) 世界  
 future p world

English: futuristic world

Example 4

Chinese: zhineng (De) qiche  
 智能 (的) 汽车  
 intelligent p car

English: smart cars

#### 4.6 Verb + Adverb Collocations

There are at least four types of verb phrase (VPs) in Chinese: the coordinate VP, endocentric VP, the verb + object type (VO) and the verb + complement type (VC).

Endocentric VPs are composed of two parts: the modifier and the head. The head is typically a verb, while the modifier can be (1) an adjective, (2) an adverb, (3) a noun denoting place or time, and so forth. The verb + object type and the verb + complement type (VC) will be described in the sections of verb + noun collocation. The following sections on Chinese verb + adverb collocation will focus on the description of endocentric VPs.

(a) Adjectives as adverbs

In Mandarin, adjectives play an important role in modifying verbs and VPs (Hua, 2001:134). It implies that the adjectives function as adverbs modifying the verbs in Mandarin Chinese.

	Example 1	Example 2
Chinese:	jidong de shuo	renzhen de xue
	激动 地 说	认真 地 学
	excite DE say	serious DE study
English:	say excitedly	study hard

(b) Adverbial Phrase + Verb Collocation

Another type of collocation in syntax is the structure: adverbial phrase + verb.

	Example 1	Example 2
Chinese:	ju jing hui hui de ting	bu gu yiqie de pao
	聚精会神 地 听	不 顾 一 切 地 跑
	pay-attention DE listen	no-care everything DE run
English:	listen attentively	run without any care

### Example 3

Chinese: da ren si de shuo  
大人 似 地 说  
adult air DE speak  
English: speak like an adult

## 4.7 Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocations

There are three types of adjective phrases: adjective + adjective, adverb + adjective, and adjective + complement adjective phrases (APs). The adverb + adjective collocation is an adjectival phrase which functions mostly as an attributive modifying a noun phrase (Biber, 1999).

### 4.7.1 Adjective + Adjective Collocations

This type of adjective phrases (APs) shares similar features with coordinate NPs and VPs. Their basic elements and the adjectives can often be strung together without having any intervening conjunctions. However, it is more common for APs contrasted with NPs and VPs which do not require a conjunction. Normally, these non-conjunction APs have two disyllabic adjectives that are customarily conjoined (Hua, 2001:144). Below are a few examples of adjective + adjective collocation.

Adjective 1 + Adjective 2 Collocations:

	Example 1	Example 2
Chinese:	ganjing zhengjie de fangjian	wennuan shu shi de fangjian
	干 净 整 洁 的 房 间	温 暖 舒 适 的 房 间
	clean neat De room	warm cozy De room
English:	clean and tidy room	warm and cozy room

#### 4.7.2 Adverb + Adjective Collocations

An Adverb + Adjective collocation consists of an adverbial element and an adjective, with the former always preceding and modifying the latter as the head of the phrase. In the following examples, the adverb is typical. Following an adverbial, the structural particle ‘DE’ is sometimes used but is optional, and is mostly restricted to certain disyllabic adverbs, such as ‘*jiqui*/ 极其 / extremely’.

Adverb + Adjective Collocation:

Example 1

Chinese: ji            (de)    zhai  
          极其        (地)    窄  
          extreme (DE) narrow  
English: extremely narrow

But when being followed by Noun in (2), the particle ‘DE’ is obligatory:

Adverb + Adjective + Noun collocation.

Example 2

Chinese: ji            qian    de    shui  
          极        浅        的    水  
          extreme shallow De water  
English: extremely shallow water

#### 4.8 Measure Words

Chinese measure words are usually represented by common nouns. The following are two examples of measure words:

### Example 1

Chinese: yi kache xigua  
一 卡车 西瓜  
one truck-mw watermelon

English: a truckload of watermelon

### Example 2

Chinese: yi lian bukaixin  
一 脸 不开心  
one face-mw not happy

English: a look of displeasure

While there are dozens of measure words, the vast majority of words generally use ‘ge / 个’ and many others such as ‘条 / tiao’ for long, thin objects or animals (e.g. ropes, snakes or fish), ‘把 / ba’ for objects with handles (e.g. knives, umbrellas) ‘张 / zhang’ for paper or paper-derived objects.

If a noun is preceded by both a demonstrative and a number, the demonstrative comes first.

### Example 3

#### Measure Word

ge Chinese: zhe ge ren  
这 个 人  
this mw person  
English: this person

#### Example 4

ge	Chinese:	na	ge	ren
		那	个	人
		that	mw	person
	English:	that person		

If an adjective modifies the head noun, it comes after the measure word and before the head noun as a demonstrative structure: number – measure word (a noun) – adjective – head noun.

#### Example 5

Measure Word	Chinese:	na	zhi	bai	mao
zhi		那	只	白	猫
		that	mw	white	cat
	English:	the white cat			

In Chinese, measure words are associated with classifiers. The former is more of a content word, while the latter is more of a function word. Chinese measure words are semantically substantive and thus allow to add numeral quantification and adjectival modification to the noun (Her and Hsieh, 2010:546). Chinese classifiers, however, are semantically null, which are bound morphemes and do not have any meaning by themselves and thus resist numeral quantification and adjectival modification to the noun.

Example 6				Example 7			
Chinese	yi	tong	yu	Chinese:	yi	tiao	yu
Measure				Classifier			
word							
tong	一	桶	鱼	zhi	一	条	鱼
	one	bucket	fish		One / a	CLS	fish
English:	a bucket of fish			English:	a fish		

In example 6, the measure word 桶 ‘bucket’ as a common noun provides additional information to the phrase, indicating that the fish are inside the bucket and mass the bucketful quantity, while in example 7, the classifier 条 does not offer any additional semantic property to the noun 鱼 ‘fish’. In examples 1 and 2, the character ‘一’ can refer to ‘one’ or ‘a’ which refers to numeral.

Example 8 below shares similar property with example 6, and example 9 below is similar to example 8:

Example 8				Example 9			
Chinese:	yi	xiang	shu	Chinese:	yi	ben	shu
Measure				Classifier			
word							
箱	一	箱	书	本	一	本	书
	one	box	book		one	CLS	book
English:	a box of books			English:	a book		

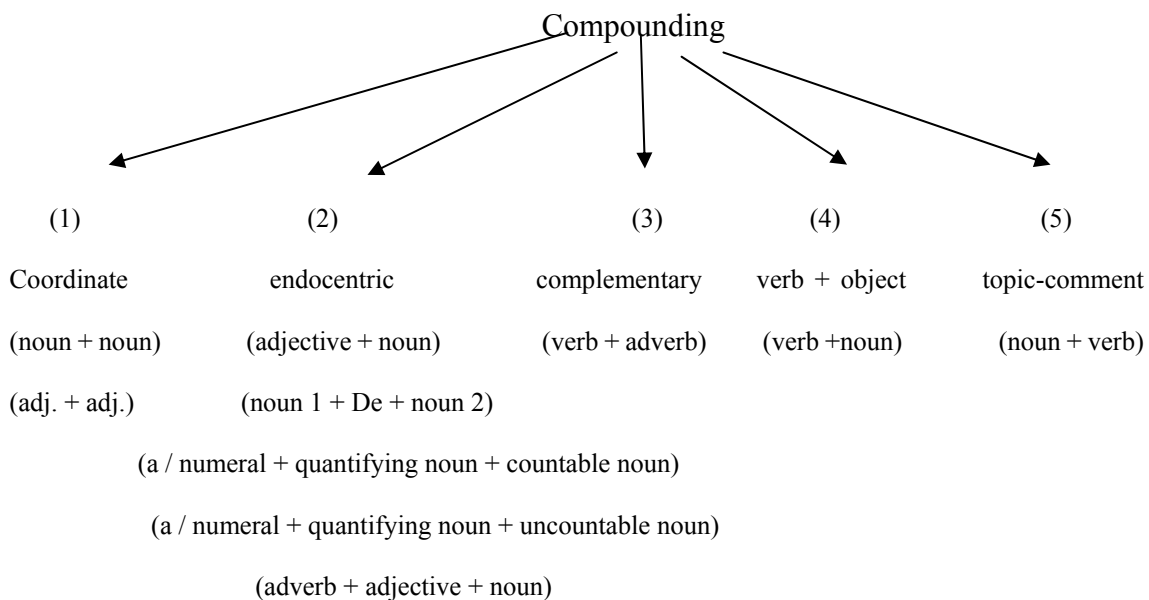
In example 8, 箱 ‘box’ is a measure word, while in example 9 本 ‘ben’ is a classifier (Her and Hsieh, 2010).

More importantly, whichever a measure word or a classifier (referring to ‘quantifying noun’ in the present study) is usually inserted between ‘a’ or numeral like

‘one’ and countable or uncountable nouns in Chinese. In other words, it is commonly used structures in Chinese that: ‘a / one (numeral) + 本(quantifying noun) + book (countable noun)’, ‘two / million (numeral) + 名(quantifying noun) + traveler’ (countable noun) and ‘a / one (numeral) + piece (quantifying noun) + paper (uncountable noun).

#### 4.9 Summary

This chapter describes Chinese collocations / compounds, which includes Chinese noun + noun, noun + verb, verb + noun adjective + noun, verb + adverb, adverb + adjective + noun and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocations. The relationships between these types of Chinese collocations and Chinese compounding, Chinese noun phrase (NPs), Chinese verb phrases (VPs), Chinese adjective phrases (APs), Chinese topic-comment and Chinese subject-predicate structures are established, which are represented as given below:



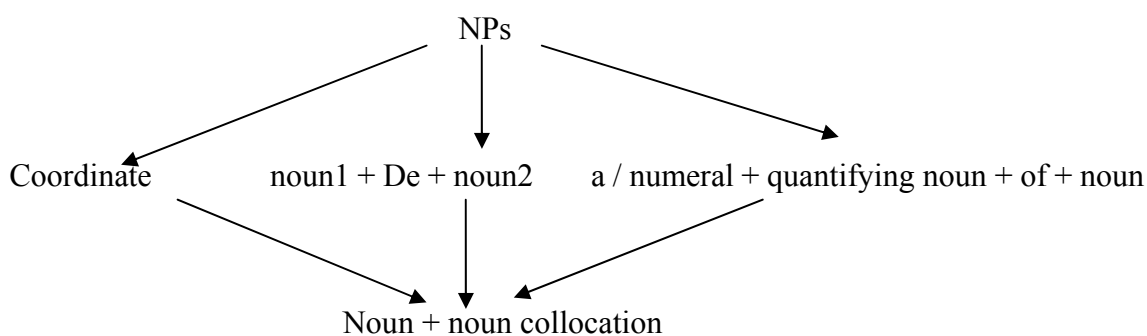
**Figure 4.1 Chinese Compounding and Collocations**

Figure 4.1 displays that there are six types of word formation including compounds in Chinese. They are: (1) coordinate, (2) endocentric, (3) complementary, (4) verb + object, (5) topic-comment structure. Coordinate compounding involves noun +



noun and adjective + adjective collocations. In the case of endocentric compounding, it includes adjective + noun, noun 1 + De + noun 2, a / numeral + quantifying noun + countable noun, a / numeral + quantifying noun + uncountable noun, and adverb + adjective collocations. Complementary compounding refers to verb + adverb collocation, verb + object compounding refers to verb + noun collocation, and topic-comment compounding refers to noun + verb collocation.

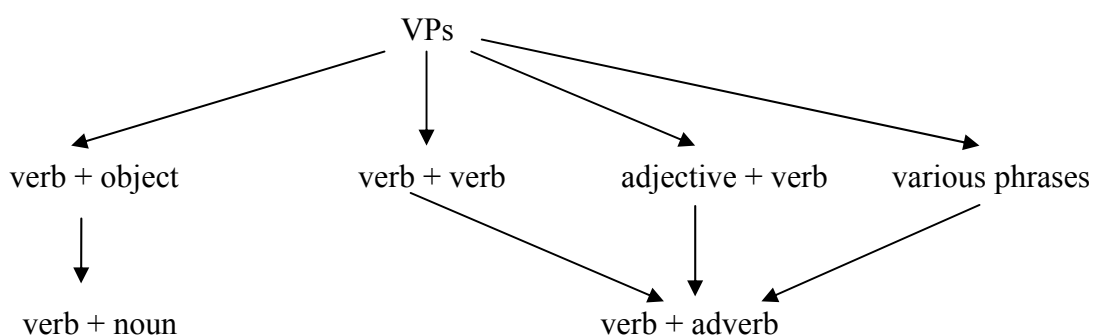
The relationship between Chinese noun phrases and collocations is shown below:



**Figure 4.2 Chinese Noun Phrase and Collocations**

Figure 4.2 shows that Chinese noun phrases (NPs) include coordinate, noun 1 + De + noun 2, and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + noun compounding. All the compoundings are attributed to noun + noun collocation.

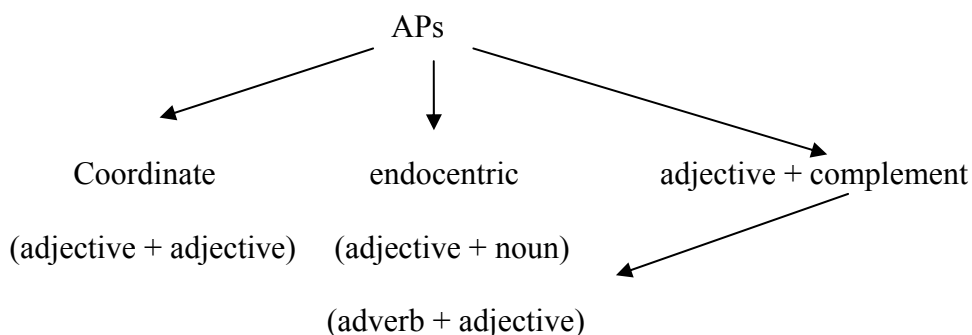
The relationship between Chinese verb phrases (VPs) and collocations is shown as figure 4.3 below:



**Figure 4.3 Chinese Verb Phrases and Collocations**

Figure 4.3 shows that Chinese verb phrases (VPs) include verb + object, verb + verb, adjective + verb and various phrasal compoundings. Verb + object refers to verb + noun collocation, while the rest are all attributed to verb + adverb collocation.

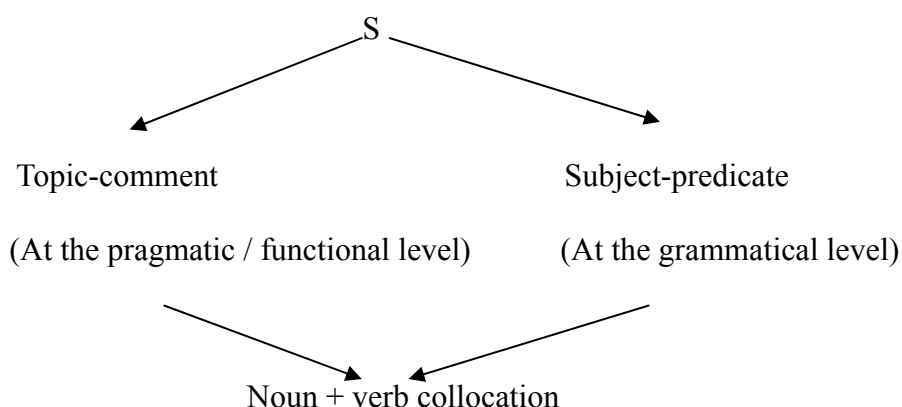
The relationship between Chinese adjective phrases (APs) and Chinese collocations is shown as figure 4.4 below:



**Figure 4.4 Chinese Adjective Phrases and Collocations**

Figure 4.4 shows that Chinese adjective phrases (APs) contain three types of compounding — coordinate, endocentric and adjective + complement compoundings. Among them, coordinate compounding includes adjective + adjective collocation, endocentric includes adjective + noun, and adverb + adjective adverb + adjective collocations. Adjective + complement compounding refers to adverb + adjective collocation.

The relationship between the Chinese topic – comment / subject – predicate structures and Chinese grammatical collocations is indicated as follows:



**Figure 4.5 Chinese Topic – Comment / Subject - Predicate and Collocations**

Figure 4.5 shows that Chinese noun + verb collocation includes two structures. They are topic-comment structure at the pragmatic level and subject-predicate structure at the grammatical level.

## CHAPTER 5

### ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of English collocations, which is necessary in order to carry out the contrastive analysis (CA) between Chinese and English collocations and to see what extent errors made by the students could be attributed to interlingual interference. In the description of English collocations, more examples were provided by the author from the data collected of this study.

#### 5.2 English Collocations

English collocations refer to restricted co-occurrence of two words at both lexical and grammatical levels. Chomsky (1965) argued that reoccurrence restrictions of words are based on semantic selection, for instance, the word “eat” takes an animate subject and “drink” takes a certain type of liquid as an object. Sinclair (1966) examines how strong the partnership of each constituent in a collocation is in terms of their frequencies of co-occurrence in large quantities of text. He suggests that the solution is to restrict the collocating items to a span of fixed constituents on either side of the specified main word (the node) whose patterning is being investigated.

However, without referring to syntax, the notion of collocations makes no sense (Asmaa, 2008:28). Börjars and Vincent (2005) proposed the lexical functional grammar between structure position and grammatical relation. Therefore, English collocation is a conventional syntagmatic association of a string of lexical items which co-occur in a grammatical construct with mutual expectancy greater than chances as realization of non-idiomatic meaning in texts (Wei, 2002: 100).

Restricted collocation of English is determined by register, frequency and its relationship with free combinations and fixed phrases. Constituents of English word-combinations can be shown as follows (Aisenstadt, 1979:53-54):

Fixed phrases / idioms → restricted collocations → free combinations

Restricted collocations are in the middle between fixed and free combinations, which differ from idioms or fixed combinations by semantic transparency, where their meanings reflect the meaning of their constituent parts. Restricted collocations on the other hand, differ from idioms in commutability restrictions by grammatical and semantic valence and are from free combinations in commutability restrictions (Aisenstadt, 1979 and Koya, 2005).

English collocations contain fixed and loose combinations. Fixed combination with fixed structure and meaning which are termed idioms (Rio, 2002:59), consist of several lexical items which are frozen expressions and whose meanings are sometimes hardly derivable from their component words (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992). The two elements in two-word fixed collocations are not completely freely combined, but one of them semantically determines the other one (Hausmann, 1999). In contrast, collocates in loose collocations are freely combined such as ‘analyze / study / witness a murder’ and ‘practice / study law’ (Rio, 2002:59).

English collocations include classifications of lexical collocations and grammatical collocations. Lexical collocation needs to meet criterion that two combined content words are matched in semantic selection or restriction or prosody without any morphological form or / and function words preceding or following the dominant word (referring to content word), which include types in the present study: noun + noun, noun + verb, verb + noun, adjective + noun collocation / compounds (exclusive of the morphological form such as ‘-er’ or ‘-est’ of adjectives) and verb + adverb (such as ‘study hard’).

Grammatical collocation needs to meet any one of the following two criteria:

a) Two combined words are matched in semantic selection or restriction or prosody and content words present morphological forms in terms of past tense of verb, single form of verb, auxiliary, plural form of countable noun, superlative of adjective, and

b) Two combined words are matched in semantic selection or restriction or prosody in which content word precedes or follows a preposition.

Grammatical collocation includes noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, noun + prepositional phrase collocation, noun + auxiliary verb + act verb collocation, adverb + verb collocation, adverb + adjective + noun collocation and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocations, and so forth.

The following are the examples of categories given by the author and other studies.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Noun + Verb                 | They succeed; Night falls.                     |
| 2. Noun + Phrasal Verb:        | Kids gave in finally.                          |
| 3. Noun + Auxiliary + Verb:    | He can succeed.<br>The operation will succeed. |
| 4. Verb + Noun:                | realize your dream                             |
| 5. Phrasal Verb + Noun:        | depends on effort                              |
| 6. Adjective + Noun:           | warm greeting; kindest person                  |
| 7. Verb + Adverb:              | do poorly                                      |
| 8. Phrasal Verb + Adverb       | Turned around sharply                          |
| 9. Adverb + Verb               | slowly turned                                  |
| 10. Adverb + Phrasal Verb      | unhappily looked around                        |
| 11. Adverb + Adjective + Noun: | definitely right                               |

12. 'a' + Quantifying Noun + of + a piece of cake

Uncountable Noun:

13. 'a' + Measure Word + of + a box of books

Countable Noun

14. Numeral + of + Countable Noun      thousands of people

15. Noun + Noun:      film star; school activities

16. Noun + Prepositional Phrase:      the key to success

Among these types of collocations, the types of lexical collocations are based on word formation including compounds such as 'film star', 'realize your dream' and 'warm greeting'. Grammatical collocations are based on morphological forms in syntax such as '-ly' in 'poorly / strongly / definitely / finally', '-s' in 'falls', past tense 'gave', superlative 'est' in 'kindest' and prepositions 'to' in 'key to success', 'of' in 'a piece of cake' and 'in' in 'gave in'. Besides, structure with auxiliary verb in syntax is also involved in the classification of grammatical collocations. Auxiliary verb is a kind of functional word which is linked to act verb to form predicate in the sentence. According to Benson et al. (1997), collocation where a particle such as modal, aspect or tense of verb, and so forth is involved is attributed to grammatical collocation. Meanwhile, English modal such as 'can' and auxiliary 'will' have past tense 'could' and 'would' which are not involved in Chinese. Therefore, in the presentation of type of collocation, noun + auxiliary + act verb under noun + verb collocation is one type of grammatical collocation. Although one type of grammatical collocation includes collocation between one content word and a particle, it does not refer to one between auxiliary verb + act verb collocation. Auxiliary + act verb is treated as one unit in the presentation of type of collocation in the present study.

Collocations between noun and verb / phrasal verb are not only related to grammatical structure in morphology and syntax in terms of agreement between noun

and verb in person and number but also to semantic selection as well as restrictive rules. Therefore, in view of its complication, the description of English collocation starts with the category of noun + verb collocation shown in the sections below. After description of noun + verb / phrasal verb and verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, the focus will be on the English attributive modifiers (noun / adjective + noun collocation) since many proposed types of collocation in the present study are concerned with attributive modifiers.

### 5.2.1 English Noun + Verb Collocations

English noun + verb collocation is concerned with subject – predicate structure of English sentence, which is consistent with the subject - predicate relation in the sentence (Joseph, 2005). Subject and predicate are two underlying constituents of a grammatically complete English sentence (Anne, 1997:55). Therefore, English noun + verb collocation is involved in the grammatical collocation.

An English sentence is composed of a noun phrase (NP) followed by a verb phrase (VP) (Frank, 1992). Examples 1 – 7:

NP	VP
(1) She	looks after the children during the day.
(2) Science	has brought about many changes in our lives.
(3) It	sits on the side of a hill.
(4) Its small square eyes	stare meaningfully.
(5) The hat	fits me.
(6) It	wakes up.
(7) The trend	continues.

These sentences are typical of English statements in that the initial division is between a noun phrase and a verb phrase. In the above examples, the initial noun phrases

function as the subjects. The fact that the subject comes first in the sentence is also typical of English language. Furthermore, it is almost obligatory and overt for English sentences to have a subject which is governed by a Subject-Predicate-Object structure in form (Liu, 2005).

### **5.2.1.1 English Subject**

In English grammar, subject is mainly composed of noun, pronoun, or noun phrase (NP), which can be shown by the examples below:

- i) Typically precedes the main verb in a sentence and is closest to it.
- ii) Determines concord
- iii) Refers to something about which a statement or assertion is made in the rest of the sentence. (Richards et al. 2000:453)

Richards et al. (2000:482) remarked that, “subject-predicate refers to the grammatical structure of a sentence” which therefore suggests that the noun subject must meet two sets of principles: one is syntactic and the other is semantic, and there are grammatical as well as semantic agreement between the subject and the predicate. The grammatical meaning of noun subject and verb predicate in an English sentence is “actor” and “action”. The other principle is the “syntagmatic” and “paradigmatic” relations. Richards et al. (2000:463) stated that “syntagmatic” refers to a linear relation between words, clauses, and the rest and “paradigmatic” refers to the relation with words that could be substituted for it in the sentence. The syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations constructed by a word with other words embody both syntactic and semantic relations. Richards’ et al. (2000) statement about syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations suggests that the noun representing the subject cannot be replaced arbitrarily by any noun on the paradigmatic level, regardless of its restriction of syntagmatic relation in which collocations are involved.



On rare occasions, the English adjectives can serve as subjects but with the attached article ‘the’:

Example 1

The young in spirit enjoy life.

(Subject)

Example 2

The deceased was a good friend of him.

(Subject)

(Richards, et al., 2000)

At times, the English verbs / verb phrases (VPs) can serve as subjects. It mainly includes infinitive participle and gerund form.

Example 1

To go swimming on a hot day is a good habit.

(Subject)

Example 2

Taking a walk regularly is a good way to improve physical condition.

(Subject)

Although English subjects are obligatory, agents do not always serve as subjects, and patients do not always serve as objects, either. There are four kinds of subjects in English.

Example 1

*We* cancelled the meeting.

(Agent subject)

Example 2

The *meeting* was cancelled.

(Patient subject)

Example 3

*It* is nice to meet you.

(Logical subject)

Example 4

The *story* is very interesting.

(Theme subject)

If an English adjective takes the position of subject, it must be changed morphologically. For example, “happy” cannot be used as a subject but changed into the

noun form “happiness” in the sentence ‘Happiness will not fall from the heaven’ (Chen, 2008:15).

To sum up, there is a subject and the subject takes the preverbal position, which can be seen from examples given above as shown by ‘it’, ‘we’, ‘meeting’, ‘story’ and ‘happiness’.

In English there are passive constructions. The passive construction has the effect of promoting an object Noun Phrase (NP) to subject position and demoting the original subject-agent. In this case, the agent does not play a prominent role in the presentation of information, unless the focus is on the agent (with the “by” phrase), and it is marked by passive form of a predicate verb, that is “be + v-ed” or “get / become + v – ed”. English passive voice can be presented in the following cases:

(a) Agentive subjects are unknown or not necessary to be informed.

Example 1

These washing machines are made in China.

Example 2

The doctor was immediately sent for.

(b) Agent is self-evident in the context.

She told me that her boss had fired her. No reason had been assigned.

(c) Due to some needs for ripeness and appropriateness of speech

Some things have been said here tonight that ought not to have been spoken.

(d) Agent is less important than patient or is stressed.

An old man was knocked down by a car.

(e) To keep coherence in the text and balance of sentence

#### Example 1

Some kind of plastics can be forced through machines which separate them into long, thin strings, called “fibers”, and these fibers can be made into cloth.

#### Example 2

I was astonished that she was promised to offer him a job.

On some occasions, prepositional phrases (PP) in English may have nominal function, which serves as subjects at surface level (Quirk and Leech, 1985). Such PPs usually refer to those denoting time, place, distance, number, price nouns, and so forth:

#### Example 1

*On Tuesday* will be fine.

#### Example 2

*Between six and seven* may be convenient.

#### Example 3

*Over the fence* is out of bonds.

#### Example 4

*From Shanghai to Suzhou* is about an hour drive.

Examples 1 and 2 show that, in formal grammatical structure, time prepositional phrases serve as the subjects of the sentences while in example 3 place prepositional phrase plays subject role and in example 4 distance prepositional phrase is used as subject.

### **5.2.1.2 English Predicate**

The predicate is one major constituent in English sentence, which is composed of verb, phrasal verb or any other verb phrase (VP). As part of the sentence, English predicate contains the verb, phrasal verb, or verb group. The verb group may include objects, complements, or adverbials, or a phrasal verb which is usually defined as a

structure that consists of verb proper and a morphologically invariable particle that function as a single unit both lexically and syntactically (Darwin and Gary, 1999; Quirk and Leech, 1985). From the classification of collocation, the noun + verb collocation is a grammatical collocation, in which English predicates depend on verbs or VPs with tense and voice, which falls into one of the three types according to the part of speech which occur in it (Richards, et al., 2000).

(a) Intransitive verb

(b) Transitive verb with its object, which, like the subject, must be a noun.

(c) The ‘verb to be’ with its complement, which must either be an adjective, or a noun.

Examples below are given by the author from the data.

Example 1

He *said* modestly.

Example 2

He still *held on*.

Example 3

He had a dream.

Example 4

It *lights up* the way.

Example 5

Success is 1% inspiration.

Example 6

The saying is true.

In the above examples 1 and 2, intransitive verb and phrasal verb without objects are the predicates of the subjects, while in examples 3 and 4, transitive verb and phrasal verb are the predicates of the subjects with the objects, and in examples 5 and 6, there are predicative noun and predicative adjective in the ‘verb to be’ with its complement

structure.

The meaning of the word “transitive” can be understood, when the verb is looked at in relation to the subject, and the presence or absence of the direct and indirect objects. A verb which carries both the direct and indirect objects is known as a bi-transitive verb, that which carries only the direct object is called a transitive verb, and that which does not carry the direct object is known as an intransitive or non-transitive verb. For example, in the clause 'We gave the money to him', 'We' is the subject, 'the money' is the direct object and 'her' is the indirect object):

We	gave	the money	to	her.
(Subject)	(Verb)	(Direct Object)		(Indirect Object)

The class of intransitive verbs is the only class which combines directly with nouns to form sentences. The class of transitive verbs combines with nouns and with no other class to form predicates. ‘Be’ is the copula class, since it combines with both nouns and the class of adjectives.

Some English verbs are characterized by both transitive verb and intransitive verb, such as verb 'reach' and phrasal verb ‘give up’. Examples below 1 – 3 are given by the author.

Example 1

to *reach* their goal

In example 1, the verb 'reach' is a transitive verb.

Example 2

I *reached* across the table for the salt.

But, in example 2, the verb 'reach' is an intransitive verb.

Example 3

You ought to give up smoking.

In example 3, the phrasal verb 'give up' is a transitive phrasal verb.

#### Example 4

They *gave up* without fights (Li, 1997:625)

However, in example 4, the phrasal verb 'give up' is an intransitive phrasal verb.

In English, the predicate verb may be causative or dative or factitive verb is defined as “a verb which shows that someone or something brings about or causes an action or a state....Causative verbs are always transitive.” (Richards, et al., 2000:60)

#### Example 1

Peter        killed the rabbit.

(Subject) (Predicate)

(Richards, et al., 2000:60)

In example 1, “killed” is a causative verb. In the following example, however, “died” is not a causative verb.

#### Example 2

The rabbit    died.

(Subject)    (Predicate)

(Richards, et al., 2000:60)

According to Richards et al. (2000:121), “The dative generally marks the indirect object of a verb.”

#### Example 3

She        gave        me                    a present.

(Subject) (Predicate) (Indirect Object) (Direct Object)

In example 3, *gei* 给 “give” is a dative verb, and “me” is an indirect object and “present” is a direct object.

On the other hand, from the classification of grammatical collocation, English verbs play an essential part in the construction of passive voice in syntax with a

morphological change. According to the transitive rules from active to passive voice, the verb in the passive voice sentence changes to 'be + V-ed + by' structure.

English passive voice contains two types - syntactic and notional passive voice. Syntactic passive voice is marked where most transitive verbs are involved, shown as 'be + past participle of transitive verb.

#### Example 1

The article was published last year.

In example 1, morphological change takes place as past tense of verb 'published'.

Notional passive voice is unmarked, which is active in present morphological form but passive in meaning. For example below:

#### Example 2

The book sells well.

#### Example 3

The essay reads smoothly.

#### Example 4

My new pen writes well.

In examples 2 to 4, verbs 'sells', 'reads', and 'writes' present a morphological form of present tense denoting active voice at surface grammatical level. However, 'be sold', 'be read', and 'be written' implied a morphological form of past participle of verbs with 'be', denoting passive voice from deep semantic structure.

English has a tendency to use nouns contrasted with verbs (Guo, 2003: 231).

#### Example 1

It is essential that society examine these arguments and then decide on what is and what is not acceptable before it *gets out control*.

### Example 2

Schools and some hospitals, households are already publicized as ‘beef free’ and this is *on the increase* causing a fall in the demand for beef in the U.K.

English subject and predicate must conform to grammatical concord and principle of proximity. In Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan’s words (1999:192), “There is normally agreement between subject-verb concord and pronominal reference, i.e. between the number of the verb form followed by the subject and the number of pronouns and determiners co-referent with the subject.” Grammatical concord refers to a morphological agreement between the English subject and the verb or predicative in terms of person and number. Principle of proximity refers that the English verbs are consistent with the subjects adjacent to them in the sentence. The following examples show all these grammatical features.

### Example 1

She has two teaching hours.

### Example 2

They have two teaching hours.

In example 1, the English singular form of verb ‘has’ is in agreement with the subject ‘she’, and in example 2, the verb ‘have’ keeps agreement with the subject ‘they’.

English verbs not only occur as part of the predicate in a sentence but also carry grammatical categories. Auxiliary verbs as one type of such grammatical function words involve modal verb and others. Modal verb or other auxiliaries plus act verb / phrasal verb establish the predicate of a sentence. Examples 5 and 6 below will show this.

### Example 3

He can succeed.

### Example 4

You will succeed.



In example 3 modal verb ‘can’ and in example 4 the auxiliary verb ‘will’ showing present future tense along with act verb ‘succeed’ form the predicate of the sentence.

All the examples given above describe grammatical features of English noun + verb collocations. According to the content of collocations and classification of English attributive modifiers, the sections below will move on to English noun / adjective + noun collocations and some others.

### **5.2.2 English Noun / Adjective + Noun Collocations**

The type of English noun + noun collocation refers that a noun can modify other nouns, which can be named coordinate NP. The first noun used in this way is usually referred to as noun modifiers and as a way of identifying a particular type of person or thing (Maxwell and Clandfield, 2004), a conspicuous trait of English (Juhasz, et al. 2003:228). For instance, a *chocolate* cake, the *football* player, a *pen* knife, *hospital* zone, *gasoline* buggy, *teachers* college, *Development Company*, *cough* remedy, a *nickel* coin, a *photo* album, a *bus* stop. Examples like these are often referred to as compound nouns, with the first noun identifying a particular type in relation to the group of people or things described by the second noun (Maxwell and Clandfield, 2004). Noun + noun compounding is a very productive word-formation process in English (Katamba, 1994:74 and Plag, 2003:145).

The analysis of combinations of nouns modifying other nouns will be carried out with a wider framework. According to the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (Biber, et al., 1999:590-594), the noun + noun collocation contains “only content words, with no function words to show the logical relation between the two parts.” As a result, noun + noun collocations require addressees to infer the intended logical relationship between the modifying noun and the head noun, as demonstrated by the following:

#### **(a) Composition**

- (1) Head noun is made from modifier noun: *metal* seat – seat made from metal; *plastic* beaker – beaker made from plastic.
- (2) Head noun consists of modifier noun: *word* classes – classes consist of word, *tomato* sauce – sauce consists of tomato.

**(b) Purpose**

- (1) Head noun is for the purpose of modifier noun: *worship* services – services for the purpose of worship, *search* procedure – procedure for the purpose of search.
- (2) Head noun is used for modifier: *war* fund – fund used for war; *safety* device – device used for safety.

**(c) Identity**

Head noun has the same referent as modifier noun: *men* workers – workers who are men; *consultant* cardiologist – a cardiologist who is a consultant; *grant* aid – an aid which is a grant.

**(d) Content**

- (1) Head noun is about modifier noun: *currency* crisis – crisis relating to currency, *market* report – a report about market, *sports* diary – a diary about sports.
- (2) Head noun deals with modifier noun: *intelligence* bureau – a bureau dealing with intelligence.

**(e) Source**

Head noun is from modifier noun: *crop* yield – yield that comes from a crop; *farmyard* manure – manure that comes from farmyard, *court* messenger – a messenger who is from a court.

**(f) Objective Type**

- (1) Modifier noun is the object of the process described in head noun, or of the action performed by the agent described in head noun: *waste disposal* – waste is proposed by X; *egg production* – X produces eggs; *taxi driver* – the driver drives the taxi, *computer users* – the computer is used by X.
- (2) Head noun is the object of the process described in modifier noun: *discharge water* – water that has been discharged, *substitute forms* – form that has been substituted.

**(g) Subjective Type**

- (1) Modifier noun is the subject of the process described in head noun: *leaf appearance*, *eye movement*
- (2) Head noun is nominalized from an intransitive verb: *child development* - children develop
- (3) Head noun is the subject of the process described in modifier noun: *labor force* – a force that labors / is engaged in labor.

**(h) Time**

Head noun is found at the time given by modifier noun: *summer conditions*, *Sunday school*.

**(i) Location Type**

- (a) Head noun is found or takes place at the location given by modifier noun: *Paris conference*, *world literature*; *tunnel trains*, *industry sources*.
- (b) Modifier noun is found at the location given by head noun: *notice board* – a board where notices are found; *job centre* – a centre where jobs are found, *staff room* – a room where staff are found.

**(j) Institution**

Head noun identifies an institution for modifier noun: *insurance companies* - companies for (selling) insurance, *ski club* – club for gathering ski players.

### (k) Specialization

Modifier noun identifies an area of specialization for the person or occupation given in head noun (animate): *finance* director – director who specializes in finance; *Education* Secretary – *Secretary in charge of education*; *football* fans – fans who are crazy about football.

There are also other noun + noun collocations expressing a range of meaning relations that do not fit neatly into any of the above categories:

<b>Noun + Noun Collocations</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>computation</i> times	time required for computation
<i>voice</i> communication	communication using voice
<i>media</i> events	events reported by the media
<i>confidence</i> trick	trick based on gaining one's confidence
<i>jet</i> streams	streams coming from a jet (Biber, et al., 1999)

Plural nouns have a much more restricted distribution than singular nouns as predmodifiers, such as *affairs*, *arts*, *relations*, *resources*, *savings*, *services*, *skills*, *standards*, and so forth retain the plural form when used in modification.

There are other features of nouns as attributive modifiers, as demonstrated by the following:

(a) A wavelength – a kind of wave length / a length of waves – a section of waves, a match box – the box containing match may be filled nothing / a box of match – the box is filled with matches.

(b) While functioning as modifiers, *man* and *woman* are formally determined by their head nouns: a man doctor / men doctors; a woman teacher / women teachers / police.

(c) The mark -'s is up to the relationship between the modifier nouns and head nouns: the *man* doctor – that male doctor; the *man's* doctor – the doctor treating the man; the *guest*

professor – the professor who is invited by a university to give students lessons as a part-timer / the *guest*'s request – the request from the guest.

(d) Singular forms of nouns are equivalent to case forms of plural forms: worker participation / the workers' participation; student life / the students' life.

(e) The products of animals as noun modifiers are usually represented by case mark -'s: cow's milk, a bird's egg. But, the products of dead animals as modifiers mostly they do not need such markers: *fox* fur, a *lamb* chop.

(f) There are three types of morphological formations in the English modifier nouns:

Concatenation: firelight, a toothpick, a shoemaker

Hyphenated: a tree-top, a wagon-wheel

Disconnect type: a city center, a steam boat, riot police

Some are acceptable in two or three types of forms: woodshed / wood-shed / wood shed, headmaster / head-master / head master.

All the above examples are given for the description of English nouns occurring as attributive modifiers. The following sections explain English adjective + noun collocation type, where adjectives occur as attributive modifiers.

In English, in most cases, adjectives serve as a modifier of a noun. In other words, attributive adjectives modify nominal expressions, preceding the head noun. Around 80% of the words in the discourse of spoken and written English are chosen according to the co-selection principle as opposed to purely syntagmatic and grammatical factors (Sinclair, 2000:197). Adjective + noun collocation is among the most common realization of this lexical co-selection. In the most cases, attributive adjectives modify common nouns, as in the following examples (given by the author).

Example 1

It is a **bad** habit.

## Example 2

This is a **useful** book.

In some cases, different adjectives can collocate with the same noun. For example, *strong / weak tea, kind / kindest / best regards, and tender / golden age.*

In other situations, multiple adjectives can be modifiers before a head noun. So, the order of them is: those modifiers which reflect the nature of head noun's feature are the closest to the head noun. And according to Quirk (et al, 1985) by combining the concept – semantic description with iconicity theory as well as with syntactic analysis, the order of the modifiers before a head noun in English should be: definite article + subjective modifiers + objective modifiers + head noun. For example,

### Example 1

the	lovely	fat new American	friend
(Article)	(Subjective adjective)	(Objective adjectives)	(Head noun)

In example 1, “the” is the definite article, “lovely” refers to subjective cognitive adjective, and “fat new American” refers to objective cognitive adjectives which show the nature of the English feature, and accordingly the closest to the head noun “friend”.

### Example 2

the	famous	delicious Italian pepperoni	pizza
(Article)	(Subjective adjective)	(Objective adjective)	(Head noun)

In example 2, “the” is the definite article, “famous” refers to subjective and cognitive adjective, and “delicious Italian pepperoni” refers to objective and cognitive adjectives which are the closest to the head noun “pizza”.

In English, there is a small class of combinations with restrictive modification in which an adjective post-modifies the head noun termed postposed nominal adjectives in English, such as *alone, present, here, there, alive, and else, involved, concerned, smarter.*

The following examples were provided by the author.

Example 1

All the people **present** burst into laughing.

Example 2

The house **here** is for sale.

Example 3

The people **there** have a lot of money.

Example 4

He is the most powerful person **alive**.

Apart from their primary use in attributive role, adjectives can occur in a range of other syntactic role including postposed nominal adjectives which means that an adjective follows rather than precedes the head noun. Postposed nominal adjectives are especially prevalent with indefinite pronoun heads, such as *no one*, *anything*, and *somebody* (with examples given by the author).

Example 1

The shelf **close to** the window is mine.

Example 2

There is somebody **important** to his study.

In the following several cases, adjectives also follow rather than precede the head nouns:

(a) Historically speaking, fixed phrases stemming from French, such as *heir apparent* / *presumptive*, *attorney general*, *solicitor general*, and *court martial*.

(b) Adjectives denoting ‘election’, such as *elected*, *designated*, *dowager*, and *emeritus*.

(c) The adjective denoting ‘temperature’, such as *Celsius*, *Fahrenheit*, *Centigrade*, and *Kelvin* (with examples given by the author).

According to the weather report, it is around 42 degree **Celsius** today.

(d) Some adjectives denoting note of music, rise and fall:

The next note to get your attention is F **sharp**, that is in the violins.

(e) When an adjective begins with a prefix a-, that adjective positions after noun.

Example 1

There lies a bridge **across** the river.

Example 2

She is a person **alive** at the small village.

(f) Some English adjectives often describe size and age can occur immediately after a noun that indicates a unit of measurement or quantity.

Example 1

The water at the river has been several feet **deep**.

Example 2

The table is two feet **wide**.

Some adjectives and nouns having modifiers also follow nouns.

Example 1

A book **less** interesting would be easy to find.

Example 2

The only manual **useful** is in your drawer.

Some adjectives ending in suffix –able or –ible often follow nouns, for example, a person *responsible* for it. But ‘possible’ is an exception, which mostly precedes rather than follows nouns.

Some English adjectives only usually occur in the predicative position as complements of be or other link verbs, of which number is limited. According to Biber et al. (1999:516), semantically, the most frequent predicative adjectives of conversation tend to be evaluative and emotive, which involve *able, sure, right, good, nice, true, wrong, bad, fine, funny, difficult, happy, full, glad, possible, ready, aware, likely, unable,*



*important, available, better, essential*, and so forth. This indicates that predicative adjectives involve ones with prefix a-, such as *asleep, alive, alone, ashamed, awake, aware*.

Example 1

She felt afraid. But not, for example, an *afraid* girl.

Example 2

I like being alone. But not, for example, I like being an *alone* person.

Example 3

The baby is asleep. But not, for example, the *asleep* baby.

English attributive adjectives differ from predicative adjectives lies in the fact that the former are generally those which identify something as being of a particular type and are often referred to as classifying adjectives. For instance, we can talk about a financial decision where *financial* distinguishes this from other types of decision, for instance, medical, political (Biber et al., 1999:516).

English nouns and adjectives both can be modifiers but there are some similarities and differences between them in terms of attributive modifiers. A contrast between nouns and adjectives as attributive modifiers will be made in the following sections.

### **5.2.3 Contrast of Noun and Adjective Attributive Modifiers**

In English attributive modifiers, some nouns and adjectives share the same function when they occur in the phrase. For example, ‘an affluence society’ is equal to ‘an affluent society’, *atom* weapons / *atomic* weapons; *environment* protection / *environmental* protection; *grammar* points / *grammatical* points; *marriage* age / *marriageable* age; *psychology* research / *psychological* research; a *danger* zone / *dangerous* corner; a *wool* sweater / *woolen* blanket.

In the case of ‘riot police’ and ‘riotous police’, however, both share the same grammar but different sense of the words. The former means that a police whose job is to prevent riot while the latter means that those policemen who tend to be trouble-makers.

Some English modifier nouns are different from the conjugate (same root) adjective:

a *gold* ring — a ring made of gold / *golden* hours — happy hours, a history lesson — a lesson about history / a historic meeting — a meeting which is important in history, a *beauty* spot — a scenery spot, where there is natural surroundings, especially, in beautiful and open country / a *beautiful* country — a country which is beautiful not only in scenery but also in building constructions and history.

The following sections will focus on English noun phrases with prepositional phrase (PP) which can be attributive modifiers in the nominal phrase since it is relevant to the noun + noun collocation in this study.

#### **5.2.4 English Head Noun + Prepositional Phrases Grammatical Collocation**

In English not only nouns and adjectives but also prepositional phrases (which will henceforth be referred to as PPs) can serve as modifiers of nouns. English head noun + prepositional phrase collocation is a grammatical collocation. This is based on the classification of grammatical collocation that is combination between content word and another particle involving preposition (Benson, et al., 1997).

English prepositional phrases (PPs) are by far the most common type of postmodifier in English, which make up 65% - 80% of all postmodifiers in all registers (Biber, et al., 1999:606 - 634). The PPs *of*, *in*, *for*, *on*, *to*, and *with* account for 90% of all PPs as postmodifiers in English (Biber, et al., 1999: 635). For example,

Boat **with the blue sail**, pen **next to the telephone**, car **beside the fence**, answers **to complex questions**. These PPs are usually positioned behind the head nouns

as the post attributive modifiers in grammatical structure.

The majority of postmodifying PPs begin with the *of*-phrases from the point of view of grammatical structure, which have a range of uses in expressing a close semantic relationship between the head noun and the noun phrase below in which there are parallels with noun and adjective premodification (Biber, et. al., 1999:636): facades **of Portland stone** (= stone facades), the color **of chocolate** (= chocolate color)

*In*-Phrases in grammatical structure also represent a number of meanings, ranging from physical location to various logical relations (ibid.): the mess **in his bedroom**, the third largest trucking firm **in the Midwest**, the longest touchdown **in the history of the school**, the co-chairman's faith **in the project**.

In the grammatical level, PPs beginning with *for*, *on*, *to*, or *with* are less common than that of *in*, but they still represent a range of meanings: a school **for disabled children**, the search **for new solution**, limitation **on unit size**, a lot **on the Sunset Strip**, their first trip **to Scotland**, a legal right **to compensation**, the man **with the megaphone**, solids **with low melting points**.

Some adjectives can follow indefinite verb phrases. For example, a problem difficult **to solve**, a man easy **to persuade**, children reluctant **to obey**, customers unwilling **to pay**.

English noun / adjective + noun collocations have been elaborated by the examples given above. The following sections will move on to the English adverbs and adverbial modifiers.

### 5.2.5 Position of the English Adverb

Adverbs can be put in different positions in sentences. There are three main positions but have a lot of exceptions (Biber, et al., 1999). The three main positions of adverbs in English sentences are:

(a) Adverb at the beginning of a sentence

**Unfortunately**, we could not see Mount Snowdon.

(b) Adverb in the middle of a sentence

The children **often** ride their bikes.

(c) Adverb at the end of a sentence

Andy reads a comic every **afternoon**.

In fact, the adverb is quite flexible and can be found in all positions:

He turned the dial *slowly*.

He *slowly* turned the dial.

*Slowly* he turned the dial.

When modifying adverbs are used alongside particle adverbs intransitively (as particle adverbs usually are), the adverbs can appear in any positions:

He unhappily looked around.

He looked *unhappily* around.

He looked around *unhappily*.

The particle adverb here is "round" and the modifying adverb is "unhappily". "Round" is a particle because it is not inflected. "Unhappily" is a modifying adverb because it modifies the verb "look".

With a transitive particle verb, the following structures are used:

He *cheerfully* *picked* the book up.

He *picked up* the book *cheerfully*. (not \**picked* *cheerfully* up the book)

He *picked* the book *up* *cheerfully*.

Prepositional verbs (PVs) are different from transitive particle verbs, because they allow adverbs to appear between the verb and the preposition:

He *cheerfully* *looked after* the children.

He *looked after* the children *cheerfully*.

He *looked cheerfully after* the children.

According to Francis (1967:117), the verb + adverb combination is the structure used for an important class of idioms in English, often called separable verbs. These consist of a verb, usually monosyllabic, and an adverb from the group that also functions as preposition (up, out, over, etc.). For example,

The police *broke up* the riot.

The police *broke* the riot *up*.

The police *broke* it *up*.

A direct object can be inserted between the verb and the adverb. This transformation is optional if the object is a noun or nominal phrase such as ‘broke the riot up’ but obligatory if the object is a pronoun such as ‘broke it up’.

### 5.2.6 English Verb + Adverb Collocations

Most commonly, the modifying adverb in English is a scaling device as an intensifier. It adds emphasis to the words they modify (Quirk and Leech, 1985:449). An adverb usually modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb, for example,

Verb + Adverb: The pianist played *skillfully*.

*miss badly*, *rain heavily*, *appreciate sincerely*, and *argue heatedly*.

Adverb + adjective: *seriously* ill, *very* proud, *extremely* quiet, *quite* concerned

adverb + adverb: She plays **quite** beautifully.

He spoke *extremely quickly*.

Adverbs can be classified into simple adverbs, adverbs derived by suffixation, adverbs with the same form as adjectives, adverb intensifiers, adverbial equivalents on the basis of their use and function. Among them, only adverbs derived by suffixation and adverbs with the same form as adjectives are considered in the study of verb + adverb collocation. Intensifiers add emphasis to the words they modify, for example, “seriously

ill”, which will be described in the adverb + adjective collocation in the subsequent section.

Some adverbs can be used either as adverbs or as adjectives. In other words, in some cases, an adverb has the same form as the adjective. For example,

#### Example 1

*Fast* guys tire, a basketball coach once said of his own high-rise team, but big guys do not shrink.

*Fast* is an adjective in example 1, while in example 2 below:

#### Example 2

One looter, a woman who did not run fast enough, was shot dead.

*Fast* is an adverb in example 2.

Another group of adverbs has two accepted forms: *close / closely*, *deep / deeply*, *firm / firmly*, *hard / hardly*, *high / highly*, *late / lately*, *near / nearly*, *slow / slowly*, *tight / tightly*, and so forth. For example,

#### Example 1

Adjective: Their expectations were particularly *high*.

Adverbs: The birds can fly *high*.

He was *highly* praised for his work.

#### Example 2

Adjective: The dog is *dead*.

Adverbs: He is *dead* tired.

This book is *deadly* dull.

#### Example 3

Adjective: It is a *fair* fight.

Adverbs: You must play *fair*.

He did *fairly* (moderately) well in his examination.

The suffix *-ly* is preferred in formal usage. However, not all words that end in *-ly* are adverbs. For example, *lovely*, *jolly*, *daily*, *monthly*, *weekly*, *yearly*, and so forth are adjectives.

There is an exception in the case of a modifier following one of the copular verbs (be, become, feel, grow, taste). These words are related to the subject and are therefore adjectives rather than adverbs.

The train was *slow*.

He became *silent*.

He felt *bad*.

The tree grew *straight*.

English adverb will vary from style to style. Academic prose makes more frequent use of the amplifiers *entirely*, *extremely*, *fully*, *highly*, and *strongly*. For example,

Example 1

Her supervisor strongly suggests that she should rewrite chapter two of her thesis.

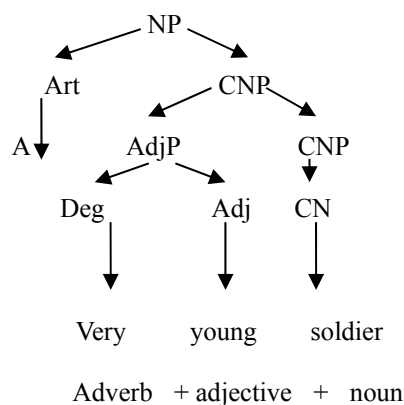
Example 2

Indeed it is *extremely* difficult to establish any truly satisfactory system of defining the limits of these functions.

According to the classification, adverb + adjective + noun collocation is also involved in the English adverbial modifiers. Hence, sections below will be focused on this type of English collocation in relation to adverb.

### **5.2.7 English Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocations**

The following diagram explains the analysis of adverb + adjective + noun combinations.



**Figure 5.1 English Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation**

As it is shown above, it is grammatically and semantically acceptable that the English adverb “very” usually modifies an adjective “young” and both together modify a head noun “soldier”. The most frequently used adverb in English is “very\*”, and many other adverbs also mean “very”. For example, the meaning of most adverbs in this combination is “very”: *deeply absorbed, closely acquainted, hopelessly addicted*, and so forth. On the other hand, in practice, only two adverbs post-modify adjectives, i.e. “enough” and “indeed”, as in ‘His salary wasn’t high enough’ and ‘She spoke very clearly indeed’. Therefore, it is important to know how to distinguish these two adverbs in written text.

In addition, the English adverb ‘statistically’ was reported to appear 17 times in the combination with ‘significant’ in the texts of Health Science Corpus (HS Corpus) (Jordi, Vicent, Coperias and Jose, 1998). In addition, some adverbs were found to collocate better with certain adjectives. This is the case with the adverb ‘generally’. The following are the examples of the collocation with ‘generally + adjective’ in the HS corpus:

*generally more sympathetic* to the patient

*generally knowledgeable* about AIDS

*generally more liberal* attitudes with

*generally unavailable* in administrative



An interesting observation was made regarding adverbs like ‘relatively’ and ‘significantly’. It was found that numerous constructions with the adverbs ‘relatively’ and ‘significantly’ could combine with a wide range of adjectives, such as ‘few,’ ‘good,’ ‘high’, ‘infrequent’, ‘large,’ ‘little’.

There were up to 25 different uses of these adverbs in the HS corpus. (Jordi, et al., 1998)

*relatively little* research

*relatively good* fit

*relatively large* value of the association

*relatively few* studies have assessed

*relatively inexpensive*

*relatively infrequent* use of pain medication

*relatively small* sample

*significantly greater* reductions

*significantly less likely* to identify

Some examples of adverb + adjective collocations are: ‘gravely compassionate’ (grave and compassionate) and ‘calmly reasonable’ (calm and reasonable). These types of expressions could be found in literary texts rather than in scientific papers.

In most cases, adverb + adjective pairs in conversation have a single type of modifier, i.e. a degree adverb, such as quite, real, really, too, pretty, and very. These single type of adverbs can modify adjectives bad, good, and nice, which are vague or informal words (Biber, et al., 1999:545).

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\* The particle ‘very’ in English occurs as an intensifier before an adjective or adverb. For example,

*very* young (adj.), run *very* fast (adv.).

The adverb + adjective collocation can also function as a predicate after the copular verbs such as get, become, and turn:

*He became deadly pale.*

In English, some adverbs can co-occur with those commendatory words, some can collocate with those derogatory words, and some adverbs can go together with both commendatory and derogatory words. For example, in most cases, the English adverbs ‘totally’ and ‘utterly’ can collocate more with derogatory words than commendatory words. But on rare occasions, ‘utterly’ also can collocate with ‘reliable’ and ‘secure’ which are commendatory adjectives, and can also collocate with ‘alien’ and ‘different’ which carry neither commendatory nor derogatory meaning (Huang, 2007). In the case of ‘terribly’ and ‘awfully’ they can modify those commendatory adjectives, such as ‘terribly lucky’, ‘terribly important’, and ‘awfully nice’, and can also modify other adjectives such as ‘terribly sorry’ and ‘awfully cold’ (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1998).

In the above sections, English attributive and adverbial modifiers which contain English noun / adjective + noun and verb + adverb categories of collocations have been described. Sections below will turn to a description of another type of collocation – English verb + noun collocation.

### **5.2.8 English Verb + Noun collocations**

English verb + noun collocations contain two types. One refers to transitive verb + noun / pronoun / prepositional phrase collocation in which the transitive verb denotes creation or activation. For example, the verbs in the collocations ‘come up with an idea’ denote creation, and the verbs in the collocation “launch a missile” denote activation. The other refers to eradication and nullification collocations. For example, *reject an appeal*, *revoke a license*, *annul a marriage*, and *withdraw an offer* (Rio, 2002:60). Some verbs

denoting similar meaning and that can be used with a large number of nouns are considered as free combinations. For example, the verb “destroy” can combine with nouns denoting physical objects: *village, school, document*, and so forth. The verb in this pattern may be either transitive or one denoting creation or activation (Benson, Benson and Ilson, 1997). Thus, from the perspective of transitivity, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation is uncontroversial to be a grammatical collocation.

Besides that, English noun + verb collocation must follow restrictive rule semantically. The restriction of the verb + noun collocation is consistent with explanation regarding the verb “carry” which has the meaning of supporting the weight of something or taking something from one place to another. It can collocate freely with any noun, for example, *carry a book / bag / chair*. These are free combinations. However, when “carry” has the meaning of “convincing or “winning an argument” as in *carry conviction* and *carry weight*, it is a constituent of restricted collocations. They are also in line with Howarth’s (1998b) categorization of the nature of restricted collocations.

English is characterized by single causative verb, such as *make* is a complex transitive verb involving three types of object + complement construction: adjective structures (make something possible), verb structures (make somebody realize something) and noun structures (make somebody a star) (Altenberg and Granger, 2001).

The following sections will describe English a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation, which is one category of collocations that being described.

### **5.2.9 English a / Numeral + Quantifying Noun + of + Noun Collocations**

English noun / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun is viewed as one of grammatical collocations in the present study. English has countable and uncountable nouns as the head noun. Countable nouns can be counted, and have singular and plural forms, such as *a book*, and *twenty books*, where ‘a’ and ‘twenty’ refers to ‘numerals’.

There is another type of phrase with countable head nouns, such as ‘two sets of books’ and ‘a group of girls’. Uncountable head nouns cannot be counted and are invariable.

In this type of collocation, English numerals suggest cardinal numbers – one, two, three and so forth. Quantifying nouns denote large quantities – “a load of cars, lots of books, a great many books” for countable nouns, and uncountable nouns – “a lot of milk, a good deal of milk” (Biber, et al., 1999:259), and quantifying nouns denote shape.

### **5.3 Summary**

This chapter provides a description of English collocations, which involve (1) noun + noun lexical and grammatical collocations, head noun + prepositional phrase grammatical collocation, (2) noun + verb / phrasal verb (i.e. subject – predicate) lexical and grammatical collocations, (3) verb / phrasal verb + noun lexical and grammatical collocations, (4) adjective + noun lexical and grammatical collocation, (5) verb + adverb grammatical collocation, (6) adverb + adjective + noun grammatical collocation and (7) a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun grammatical collocation.

Noun + noun, adjective + noun, and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocations are, virtually, attributed to the class of attributive modifiers in nominal phrases (NPs), while verb + adverb and adverb + adjective collocations are two types of adverbial modifiers or intensification. Noun + verb collocation is equal to subject – verb agreement, while verb + noun collocation is concerned with verb + object structure. Two items in any one of subcategories of English collocations must follow the restriction rules of semantic selection.

From the classification of grammatical collocation, some of the types of English collocation have a typical feature of grammatical aspect in morphology, such as plural form of a noun, past tense of a verb, passive voice marker ‘be’, prepositional phrase, agreement between subject and verb in noun + verb collocation and phrasal verb.

Grammatically, subject or noun in English noun + verb collocation comes first in an English sentence, which is obligatory. In addition, there are some restriction rules of English syntactic choice between a noun as a subject and a predicative adjective which follows copula 'be' in noun + verb collocation in syntax. In syntax, the English language also features phrasal verbs and bi-transitive verbs. Transitive verb or phrasal verbs alone can follow object. That is, transitive verb / phrasal verb + noun or pronoun is acceptable in English. There are similarities and differences between noun and adjective modifiers of a head noun. Some adjective modifiers have to be postmodifiers in adjective + noun collocation grammatically. Prepositional phrases (PPs) are the most common type of postmodifiers in English from in the grammatical level. Some simple adverbs can be used either as adverbs or as adjectives.

This chapter along with chapter 4 provides the theory of collocations needed for this research. Chapters 4 and 5 are also two important steps in the contrastive analysis method. So, the next chapter (chapter 6) will proceed with the contrastive analysis of English and Chinese collocations.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH

#### AND CHINESE COLLOCATIONS

##### 6.1 Introduction

In chapters 4 and 5, descriptions of Chinese and English collocations have been presented. In order to identify the kinds of English collocations that are likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English which is in agreement with research question two (RQ3): “What are the difficult areas and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners of English from the perspective of CA?” In this chapter, CA will be used to make a contrast between English and Chinese collocations to identify all those similarities and differences between them, which is consistent with research question one (RQ1): “What are the similarities and differences between Chinese and English collocations?”

The advantage of being able to identify potential areas of difficulty has pedagogical implications in the teaching of English collocations to the Chinese learners. Such a contrast between Chinese and English collocations based on CA has not been done before.

##### 6.2 Overview

Contrastive analysis (CA) is the basis for identifying the similarities and differences between the L1 and L2. CA throws light on the understanding of structures of languages grammatically and semantically. The degree of collocations and collocation habits of both the Chinese and English were determined by features and culture of each language (Qu, 2003). CA is a preventive measure for errors with which potential errors can be explained and avoided (Choi, 1996 and He, 2009). CA theory states that the

similarities between MT and TL can result in positive transfer and facilitate TL learning, and conversely, the differences between them which cause negative transfer of an MT can inhibit learning of the TL (Lado, 1957 and James, 1980). These findings suggest that highlighting similarities and differences between L2 and L1 to the learners will be useful in the learning of the TL.

Lado (1957:2) states the relationship between difference and difficulty in a simplistic way, suggesting a positive relationship: the greater the differences of distance between L1 and L2, the greater the difficulty encountered by learners in learning TL, i.e. distance = difficulty. Corder (1992) makes a claim that more the distance there is linguistically from the learner's L1 to L2, the longer it takes for him or her to learn the language.

Following the principles proposed by Lado (1957) and Corder (1992), this chapter will first look at those English collocations which are similar to Chinese collocations and therefore, least likely to be problematic and then present those English collocations which are most likely to be problematic for learners due to the differences between the two languages. In other words, CA is used not just for the purpose of highlighting the similarities and differences between English and Chinese collocations but also employed as a tool to identify what kind of English collocations are likely to cause problems for the Chinese learners.

There are similarities between Chinese and English collocations which will be least likely to cause problems for the Chinese learners of English. There are differences between the two languages. In syntax, the Chinese grammatical forms mainly depend on word order rather than any morphological change like English (Gan and Qin, 1993:2). Therefore, differences between English and Chinese in word formation including compounds and morphological forms and so forth in linguistic structure will be most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English collocations.

### **6.3 Similarities between Chinese and English Collocations based on the Contrastive Analysis**

Table 6.1 below shows the types of English collocations / compounds which are almost identical to those found in the Chinese language. Examples in table 6.1 are drawn from the data meant for this study or provided by the author. These examples illustrate the similarity of each of the types of collocations or compounds between Chinese and English. Based on these similarities between the two languages, least likely problems will be identified in the following four types of collocations or compounds among the Chinese learners of English.



**Table 6.1****Similarities between Chinese and English Lexical Collocations / Compounds**

<b>Type of Collocation / Compound</b>	<b>Example</b>		
	<b>Chinese</b>		<b>English</b>
Noun + Noun Collocation	电影	明星	film star
	film	star	
Noun + Noun Compound	空	港	airport
	air	port	
Noun + Verb Compound	地	震	
	earth	quake	earthquake
	日	出	
	sun	rise	sunrise
Verb + Noun Collocation	实现	梦想	
	realize	dream	realize dream
	认为	它 好	
	think	it good	think it good
Verb + Noun Compound	闪	光	
	flash	light	flashlight
Adjective + Noun Collocation	国内	市场	
	domestic	market	domestic market
Adjective + Noun Compound	黑	板	
	black	board	blackboard

Table 6.1 shows Chinese collocations which are structurally similar to those in English. For example, Chinese noun + noun collocation ‘电影明星’ is similar to ‘film star’, Chinese noun + noun compound ‘空港’ is similar to ‘airport’, Chinese noun + verb compounds ‘地震’ and ‘日出’ are equal to ‘earthquake’ and ‘sunrise’, Chinese verb + noun collocations ‘实现梦想’ and ‘认为它好’ are equivalent to ‘realize dream’ and ‘think it good’, Chinese verb + noun compound ‘闪光’ is identical to ‘flashlight’. Chinese adjective + noun collocation ‘国内市场’ is identical to English ‘domestic market’ and Chinese adjective + noun compound ‘黑板’ is similar to English ‘blackboard’. Therefore, according to CA theory, these collocations / compounds are least likely to cause problems to Chinese learners of English.

Therefore, based on these similarities in lexical compounds or collocations, it is least likely for the Chinese learners to encounter problems in these types of collocations or compounds shown in table 6.1.

Noun + auxiliary verb + act verb collocation outside table 6.1 is a type of grammatical collocation established by the present study. This collocation is also the least likely problematic for Chinese learners, for both equivalents are similar to each other. For instance,

Chinese: 我们能够成功。

We can succeed.

English: We can succeed.

In this example, the modal ‘can’ is a mark of grammatical collocation classification in the present study. This is an exception by comparing with examples given in table 6.1. However, Chinese ‘我们能够成功’ is equivalent to English ‘we can succeed’ and thus is also unlikely for Chinese learners to feel difficulty.

## 6.4 Differences between Chinese and English Noun + Verb Collocations and Prediction of Problems

English syntax is grammatical while Chinese syntax is semantic. English sentence is governed by formal logic with a Subject – Verb – Object (SVO) structure (Yang, 2000:73). Chinese sentence is governed by a topic-comment structure. Subjects in Chinese sentence can be a gap in initial position, whereas subject of English is prominent (Xu, 2003). The relationship between subject and predicate in topic-prominent Chinese language may be even looser than that in the subject-prominent English language (Chen, 2008). The examples in table 6.2 below indicate the significant differences between English and Chinese in the subject-predicate structures, which are most likely to bring about difficulties to learners.

**Table 6.2**

### Differences between Chinese and English Noun + Verb Collocations in Morphology and Syntax

Chinese Noun + Verb Collocation			English Noun + Verb Collocation	
Example 1				
巴士车	到	了。		
bus	arrive	p.	The bus	arrived.
(Topic)	(Comment)		(Subject)	(Predicate)
Example 2				
狗	叫	着。		
dog	bark	p.	The dog	is barking.
(Topic)	(Comment)		(Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 3

他们	获得	了	成功。		
they	achieve	p.	success	They	achieved success.
			/succeed		
(Topic)	(Comment)			(Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 4

论文	进展	顺利。			
thesis	progress	smooth		The thesis	goes smoothly
(Topic)	(Comment)				

Example 5

成功	取决于	辛勤	工作。		
success	depend	hard	work	Success	depends on hard
(succeed)					work.
(Topic)	(Comment)			(Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 6

我	产生了	这些想法	。		
I	produce	these		These	have occurred to
		thoughts.		reflections	me.
				(thoughts)	
(Animate	(Predicate)	(Patient		(Inanimate	(Predicate)
Subject)		Object)		Subject)	

Example 7

旅游	可以	开阔	视野。	One	can broaden his
travel	can	open	vision.		vision by travel.
(Inanimate Subject)	(Predicate)			(Animate Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 8

说	比	做	容易。	To say /	is easier than to
say	than	do	easy	Saying	do / doing.
(Topic)	(Comment)			(Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 9

	必须要	照顾	好自己。	You	must take care of
	must	care	self.		yourself.
		good			
(Omission of Subject)	(Predicate)			(Subject)	(Predicate)

Example 10

他的书	被	广泛	阅读。	His books	read well.
His book	prep.	wide	read.		
	(Passive Voice)				(Active Voice)

Example 11

他的书	出版	了。		His books	were published.
His book	publish	p.			
	(Active)				(Passive Voice)

Examples 1 – 5 present differences in English morphological form of verbs such as ‘arrived, barking, achieved, goes and depends’. Example 5 also presents difference in English morphological form in grammatical concord between subject and verb in person and number such as ‘success’ and ‘depends’, and English feature such as phrasal verb ‘depends on’. Examples 6 and 7 present difference that English inanimate subject ‘these reflections / thoughts’ is equivalent to Chinese animate subject ‘I’ or vice versa English animate subject ‘one’ is identical to Chinese inanimate subject ‘travel’. Example 8 presents that English morphological form in syntax where gerund form or indefinite form of the verb functions as subject in sentence such as ‘to say / saying’ in contrast to Chinese equivalent ‘say’. Example 9 presents that English subject is compulsory in a sentence while Chinese subject can be deleted.

Examples 10 and 11 given above present that both Chinese and English have two types of passive voice sentences. In Chinese, one type contains preposition *bei* (被) shown as example 10. The other type does not contain preposition *bei* (被) such as ‘他的书出版了’ in example 11. In English, one type of passive sentence contains ‘be + V-ed + by’ structure of verb such as ‘His books were published’ in example 11, the other passive sentence presents active form such as ‘His books read well’ in example 10. Therefore, difference between Chinese and English lie in their reversed equivalents. That is, Chinese passive sentence is equivalent to English active sentence shown as example 10, and vice versa, in example 11 Chinese active sentence is equivalent to English passive sentence.

However, usually, Chinese passive voice sentence is marked by preposition *bei* (被), whereas English presents ‘be + V-ed + by’ structure in passive voice.

### Example 12

(12a) Chinese: Rama 打 死 了 Ravana。

Rama beat kill p. Ravana.

English: Rama killed Ravana. (Active voice)

(Agent Subject)

(12b) Chinese: Ravana 被 Rama 打 死 了。

Ravana prep. Rama beat die p.

English: Ravana was killed by Rama. (Passive voice)

(Patient Object)

T-rules (Transformation rules from active to passive voice) in Chinese include:

(1) Object > Subject

(Active sentence) (Passive sentence)

(2) Subject > Adverbial (*bei* ‘被’ + Obj. = PP)

(Active sentence) (Passive sentence)

T-rules in English include:

(1) Object > Subject

(Active sentence) (Passive sentence)

(2) Subject > Instrument

(Active sentence) (Noun for Passive voice)

(3) Verb > was killed + by

(Active sentence) (Passive sentence)

There are three rules that apply in the process of Chinese differs from passive transformation in English: (1) The Chinese preposition *bei* (被) and Chinese subject ‘Rama’ in the active sentence (example 12a) forms a prepositional phrase (PP) which functions as an adverbial in the passive sentence (example 12b), whereas English preposition ‘by’ and subject ‘Rama’ in the active sentence (example 12a) forms a

prepositional phrase (PP) functions as an instrument of agent in the passive sentence (example 12b). (2) English verbs will undergo some morphological changes along with the NP movements in a passive construction, whereas verbs in Chinese do not go through any change, (3) The copulative verb “be” is an essential element in English passive construction, but no copulative verb is required before the Chinese verb.

These differences between Chinese and English passive voice presented by examples given above 10, 11 and 12 are most likely to bring about difficulties among the Chinese learners of English.

In addition, English predicate can be a singular verb or a phrasal verb, such as “The telephone *rings*.”, “The days *go by*.”, and “The opportunity *slipped away*.” Their Chinese equivalents, however, can only be a single verb (mostly a disyllabic word). That explains why English phrasal verb is most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners. This goes to the English grammatical phrasal verb + noun collocation and Chinese verb + noun collocation in the following section.

Those differences illustrated by examples in table 6.2 of English noun + verb collocations are most likely to cause problems among the Chinese learners of English.

## **6.5 Differences between Chinese and English Verb + Noun Collocations and Prediction of Problems**

The following table 6.3 presents the differences between Chinese and English verb + noun collocations on which identification of the problems with this structure will be based.



**Table 6.3**

**Differences between Chinese and English Verb + Noun Collocations**

Chinese				English		
Example 1						
给	某人	提供	某物			
give	sb.	provide	sth.	provide	sb.	with sth.
(Vt1)	(Direct	(Vt. 2)	(Indirect	(Vt.2)	(Direct	(Object
	Object)		Object)		Object)	Complement.)
Example 2						
提供	某物	给	某人			
provide	sth.	give	sb.	provide	sth.	for sb.
(Vt. 1)	(Direct	(Vt. 2)	(Ind.	(Vt.2)	(Direct	(Object
	Object)		Obj.)		Object)	Complement)
Example 3						
来	了	客人		A guest	has.	come.
come	p.	guest				
		(Patient		(Agent		
		Obj.)		Obj.)		
Example 4						
吃	馆子					
eat	restaurant			eat	in a restaurant	
(Verb)	(A			(Verb)	PP	
	place)					

### Example 5

吃	大锅				
eat	big bowl	use	big	bowl	to eat
(Verb)	(Tableware as Object)	(Verb)	(tableware as Object)	as (Object Complement)	

### Example 6

吃	父母	live on	parents
eat	parents	(Phrasal Verb)	(Object)
(Verb)	(Object)		

### Example 7

John	与	琼	结婚	了	。			
John	with	Joan	marry	p.	John	married	Joan.	
						(got married to)		
			(Vi.)			(Vt.)		

---

Examples 1 and 2 present difference between Chinese and English in verb transitivity. Example 3 shows that Chinese patient object ‘guest’ of the verb 来 ‘come’ is equivalent to English agent object ‘guest’ of the verb ‘come. Example 4 shows that Chinese verb + place is equivalent to English verb + prepositional phrase (PP) collocation. Example 5 presents that Chinese verb + tableware is equivalent to English verb + object + indefinite form of verb as object complement structure. Example 6 shows that Chinese verb + noun object collocation is equivalent to English phrasal verb + object collocation. Example 7 shows that Chinese intransitive verb ‘marry’ without linking to object is equivalent to English transitive verb ‘married’ which links to the object ‘Joan’.

Differences between the two languages exist in these examples which will be most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English. The Chinese learners will

find it more difficult to decide which English transitive verb is equivalent to Chinese intransitive verbs.

## 6.6 Differences between Chinese and English in Modifiers and Prediction of Problems

Modifiers include attributive and adverbial types. Chinese modifiers always precede head content words such as noun / adjective + noun collocations and verb + adverb collocations whereas English modifiers can either precede or follow head content words, including a preposition can function as a post attributive modifier. For example,

树	tree
一棵树	a tree
一棵大树	a big tree
一棵枝繁叶茂的大树	a big luxuriant tree
校园里一棵枝繁叶茂的大树	a big luxuriant tree on campus
同济大学校园里一棵枝繁叶茂的大树	a big luxuriant tree on the Tongji campus

Table 6.4 below shows some differences between Chinese and English in modifiers with examples.

**Table 6.4**

### Differences between Chinese and English Modifiers

Chinese	English
Noun + Noun Collocation / Compound	Noun + Noun Collocation
Example 1	
艺术学校	
art school	arts school

Example 2

理论知识

theory knowledge

knowledge

Example 3

水

土

water

land

land and water

(Noun 1 + Noun 2)

(Noun 2 + and + Noun 1)

Example 4

生活

态度

life

attitude

attitude

towards life

(Attributive Noun)  
(Head Noun)

(Head Noun) (Prepositional Phrase)

Example 5

一些重要的事

some important thing

something important

(Adjective + Head Noun)

(Head Noun + Adjective)

Verb + Adverb Compound / Collocation

Example 6

放大

extend large

extend largely / enlarge

(Verb + Adjective Compound)

(Verb + Adverb Compound)

Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation

Example 7

特别            热的            天

very /

extreme        hot            day

extremely / terrific hot day

(Adjective + Adjective + Noun)    (Adverb + Adjective + Noun)

Example 8

一    本            书

one (quantifier) book                a book

(Numeral + Quantifying Noun + Countable Noun) + (Indefinite Article + Countable Noun)

Example 9

一            箱    书

one        box    book                                    a box of books

(Numeral + Quantifying Noun + Countable Noun) + (Indefinite Article + Quantifying Noun + of + Countable Noun)

Example 10

五只猫

Five Quantifier cat                                    Five cats

(Numeral + Quantifying Noun + Countable Noun) + (Numeral + Countable Noun)

### Example 11

一杯水

a cup of water

one cup water

(Indefinite Article + Quantifying Noun

(Numeral + Quantifying Noun + + of + Uncountable Noun)

Uncountable Noun)

---

In noun + noun collocation, example 1 shows that English has morphological form ‘arts’ in ‘arts school’ is equivalent to Chinese noun + noun compound ‘art school’. Example 2 shows that English noun ‘knowledge’ is equivalent to Chinese noun + noun compound ‘theory knowledge’. Example 3 shows that English noun 1 and noun 2 are reversed to Chinese equivalents. Example 4 presents that Chinese noun + noun collocation / compound ‘生活态度’ (life attitude) is equivalent to English noun + prepositional phrasal structure ‘attitude towards life’. In adjective + noun collocation (example 5) shows that English adjective ‘important’ follows the head noun while Chinese adjective equivalent ‘重要的’ precedes the head noun ‘some thing’. Examples 6 and 7 show that Chinese adjectives ‘大’ (large) and ‘特别’ (extreme) or intensifier ‘非常’ (very) are equivalent to English adverbs ‘largely’ and ‘extremely’. In examples 8-11, a quantifying noun always precedes Chinese head noun, countable and uncountable, such as “five + *zhi* ‘只’ (quantifying noun) + cat” structure in Chinese, which is equivalent to English ‘five (numeral) + cates (countable noun) in example 10, and in example 11 “a / one (numeral) + *bei* ‘杯’ (quantifying noun) + water” structure in Chinese is equivalent to English ‘a (indefinite article) cup (quantifying noun) + of + water (uncountable noun) structure.

These differences between Chinese and English modifiers are most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English. Chinese learners are likely to face difficulties with the plural form of the English nouns *arts* in example 1, since there is no

difference between singular and plural forms of a countable noun in Chinese.

There are also some other differences between Chinese and English modifiers as illustrated below.

The position of adverb between English and Chinese verb + adverb collocation structure is as follows.

	Example 12	Example 13
English:	rain heavily	miss (somebody) badly
Chinese:	下 大 雨	非常 想念 (某人)
	down big rain	very miss somebody

English adverb 'heavily' follows verb 'rain' in example 12, while adverb 'badly' precedes verb 'miss' in example 13. Chinese adverb modifiers of the verbs, however, are always positioned in front of verbs in the two examples. Hence, learners may well be uncertain about the position of the adverb in English verb + adverb collocations.

In the following example, Chinese adjective and adverb are the same, but their English equivalents are different: adverb needs the suffix “-ly”, which will be most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners.

English words are inflectional with morphological form, thus adjective and adverbs are different in syntax, while Chinese does not. But, some groups of English adverbs have two accepted forms, such as firm / firmly, deep / deeply / close / closely, and so forth. Therefore, learners will get confused in differentiating them. They will be wondering in which situations they should use adverbs 'firm', 'deep' and 'close' and in which other situations they are allowed to use adverbs with suffix '-ly'. This kind of difference is most likely to be problematic for Chinese learners of English in the use of English adverb + adjective + noun collocation.

### Example 14

English: completely different ways

Chinese: 完全不同的方法

complete different way

English adverb ‘completely’ modifies the adjective ‘different’ in example 14, while Chinese does not. Chinese learners of English in the study will neglect the adverb ending in suffix ‘-ly’ that is ‘complete’ modifying an adjective, just like examples 6 and 7 in table 6.4.

English noun classes include both countable and uncountable nouns (mass nouns). Countable nouns can be counted, and have singular and plural forms. English “Quantifiers” occur with countable nouns (Richards, et al., 2000:352), such as ‘loaf, piece, pile’, and so forth. Uncountable nouns cannot be counted and are invariable and hence follow restrictive collocation rules in the use of English quantifying nouns. English quantifying nouns contain two types: numeral + countable noun, where a quantifier is not required.

This can be easily contrasted with their equivalents in Chinese, since Chinese quantifiers including both measure words and classifiers from CA, which are placed between the numeral and noun, are used for all nouns shown as examples (8-11) in table 6.4). In other words, the use of a Chinese quantifier between a numeral and a noun is obligatory to indicate the unit of measurement of an object. Therefore, the type of English ‘numeral + countable noun’ does not exist in Chinese. Chinese nouns have no clear distinction between countable and uncountable nouns, singular and plural forms, and hence, the type of English ‘a / numeral + quantifier + of + head noun’ is more difficult for the learners. Chinese learners usually consider the English plural form of head noun and agreement between this noun with the verb. In addition, there are a lot of complex



problems with English and Chinese a numeral / quantifying + noun collocation. This is also difficult and confusing for the learners.

Example 15

English: a gust of wind

Chinese: 一阵疾风

a / one period rapid wind. (given by the author)

Example 16

English: a flight of stairs

Chinese: 一段台阶

a / one section / segment Stairs. (Given by the author)

English quantifying noun ‘gust’ is equivalent to Chinese 阵 ‘period’ in example 15, and English ‘flight’ is agreeable with Chinese 段 ‘section or segment’ in example 16. English classifiers or quantifying nouns are determined by head nouns, which is similar to Chinese. But English quantifying nouns must follow the restrictive collocation rule. Different English collocation head noun has to follow different quantifying noun. Moreover, the English article ‘a’ + quantifying noun is different from that of numeral ‘one’ + quantifying noun. The former is an English usage, the latter stands for one among all the objects. Therefore, English a / numeral + quantifying noun is one of the collocation difficulties for learners.

### 6.7 Differences between Chinese and English Collocations with reference to Lexical Meaning and Prediction of Problems

The choice of a word in use depends on its meaning. Guan (1995) stated that the meaning of a word had an inseparable relationship with its culture. CA should not only be a contrast of the linguistic structure but also a contrast of semantics and culture (Lado, 1957).

A good example is taken from Halliday with the use of *strong* vs. *powerful* when describing tea (Halliday, 1966:150). It is a convention in English to talk about *strong* tea, not *powerful* tea, although English native speakers would also understand the latter unconventional expression. This contrast implies something interesting about attitudes towards different types of substances in English culture.

The following sections show similarities and differences in denotations and connotations of words between English and Chinese collocations. Based on the theory of CA, those which are similar will facilitate learning and those which are different will cause problems for the learners.

### **6.7.1 Denotation and Connotation**

Each culture provides a unique notion for words. The cultural meaning a word carries involves two types of meanings: denotative and connotative. Examples (1-6) given below (Guan, 1995) illustrate the connotative meaning for the word 'red' in Chinese and English.

**Table 6.5****Connotations of the Adjective ‘Red’ in Chinese and English**

Connotation of Chinese adjective ‘red’	Connotation of English adjective ‘red’
1. symbolic red clothes of congratulation (披红)	1. hot (炽热的)
2. symbolic luck, success or respected by others (红运, 开门红)	2. bloody (bleeding or covered with blood; with a lot of wounding and killing)
3. symbolic revolutionary and political conscientiousness 象征革命和政治觉悟	3. Communist
4. refers to bonus (分红)	4. North Pole
5. Red light refers to ‘revolutionary’ 红灯指革命 (样板戏“红灯记”)	5. British (on the map British territory dyes red)
	6. Red light refers to ‘sexual service’
	7. ‘Red as a beetroot’ only occurs to indicate deep embarrassment (Gillian, 2003)
	8. ‘Red as a lobster’ is used to describe sunburn (Gillian, 2003)

The denotative meaning of the adjective ‘red’ in English is similar to that in Chinese, which refers to a type of color. However, they differ in their connotative meanings as shown in Table 6.5. In Chinese adjective ‘red’ implies a lot of symbolic meanings as nouns such as ‘luck’, ‘revolutionary’ 象征革命和政治觉悟 and so on. But, in English the adjective ‘red’ has descriptive meanings such as ‘hot’, ‘bloody’, ‘sunburn’ and so forth. This indicates that overlapping words, parallel words, semantic gap and words with partial semantic gap and conflicting words exist between English and Chinese cultures.

The denotation and connotation of many English words are similar to Chinese, such as *air*; *water*; *the sun*, *the moon*, *male*, *female*, *old*, *young*, *big*, *small*, *long*, and *short*. These words are known as **overlapping words** and therefore Chinese learners are not likely to encounter problems.

### **6.7.2 Semantic Gap between Chinese and English Words**

From the semantic point of view, there are other differences between Chinese and English denotative meaning of words: partially semantic gap words and conflicting words. Partially semantic gap words refer to words, which share similar denotative meaning in both languages but have connotative meaning in one language and not in the other (Guan, 1995). For example, number “13” has the same denotation in Chinese and English. No. 13 connotation in English has a derogatory sense, but in Chinese it has neither a derogatory nor a favorable sense. The English word ‘peony’ is the same as Chinese ‘牡丹’ in denotation. Chinese connotation of it, however, implies wealth and fame but English has no such connotation. Therefore, those English words with similar denotation but partial semantic lacuna in Chinese will lead learners to feel ambiguous or misunderstand the English words, which create many problems in the translation among Chinese learners of English.

Conflicting words refer to those words, which share common denotations but are completely against each other in terms of implied meaning. For example, ‘maotouying 猫头鹰’ and ‘owl’ implies bad luck in China, while it symbolizes a kind of wisdom in the West. For another example, ‘dragon / 龙’ in Chinese is of commendatory sense. In English, however, ‘dragon’ refers to a fierce or vicious thing, especially, a fierce bad tempered old woman, such as *Her mother is a real dragon*. As a result, those English words where the meaning contrast with that of the Chinese equivalents will cause ambiguity for the learners.

To illustrate differences between English and Chinese about meaning conversion from the original denotation as ‘吃eat’ exist in the following cases (Li, 2009), will cause problems for the learners.

The Chinese 吃eat + noun collocation contains varieties of meanings, which have no equivalence in English.

(1) 'Eat' as bearing of burden: 吃力 / have difficulty doing something.

(2) 'Eat' as elimination: 吃掉敌军一个师 / beat a division of enemy's armed force.

(3) 'Eat' as suffering: 吃官司 / go to court.

English eat + noun collocation also contains many metaphorical meanings, which have no equivalence in Chinese.

(1) 'Eat' as absorbing: to eat the loss, meaning ‘to suffer loss’ (Li, 2009).

(2) 'Eat' as annoying: What is eating him?

In these examples, the Chinese ‘吃’ collocates with different nouns which convey different connotative meanings and are not equivalent to English. For example, Chinese 吃力 denotes ‘eat force’ but connotes a bearing of burden, which is similar to ‘to have difficulty doing something’. This difference in connotative meaning of words between English and Chinese is related to cross-cultural issue and thus is most problematic for the Chinese learners of English.

### **6.7.3 Collocation Strength of Words**

In some cases, a word of one language may have more powerful strength of collocation than others as described below:

Example 1

punch a hole / 打洞, sound the night watches / 打更, beat somebody / 打人, conceive an idea / 打主意.

In the above example, the Chinese verb 打 which means ‘hit’ has stronger collocation strength since it remains the same when it is used to collocate with different nouns 'hole', 'watches', and 'somebody', while in English, different verbs such as 'punch', 'sound' and 'beat' are used instead.

On the contrary, some English words also have strong collocation strength as illustrated in example 2 below:

#### Example 2

free moment / 优美的动作, free market / 自由市场.

Example 2 shows that English adjective ‘free’ has stronger collocation strength, as it can collocate with different nouns like 'moment' and 'market'.

#### Example 3

critically examined the design / 严格检查设计

critically investigated the case / 仔细调查此案

In example 3, the English adverb 'critically' has powerful collocation strength and it can modify different verbs like 'examined' and 'investigated', while the equivalent Chinese adverbs are different: 严格 and 仔细. This reveals that the English adverb ‘critically’ has stronger collocation strength than the equivalent Chinese word and this difference will be difficult for the learners.

Examples 1 to 3 suggest that it will be most problematic for learners to deal with issues on collocation strength of TL word which is stronger than the equivalent MT Chinese.

Example 2 also reveals that the meaning of English words is determined by the context. In example 2, the adjective “free” is equivalent to Chinese ‘优美的’, whereas in example , ‘free’ is equivalent to Chinese ‘自由的’. This is the case of example 3. Therefore, which meaning it is by the English adjective “free” or “critically” is determined by the context is most likely to be ambiguous for Chinese learners of

English in the use of English.

The highest frequency intensifier – particle in general English texts is *very*, and thus Chinese learners will use its equivalent ‘非常’ in most cases. They may be ignorant that many other English adverbs also mean ‘very’ such as ‘deeply’, ‘closely’ and ‘horribly’. Although the denotations of ‘deep’ and ‘close’ are similar in both English and Chinese, their connotations ‘deeply’ and ‘closely’ are different. Thus, the issue arising from different connotation of a certain adverb may arise:

Stem of adverb:

deep	close
深的	近的

Adverb + adjective + noun:

Example 4

English:	deeply	absorbed	story
Chinese:	非常	吸引人的	故事
	very	absorbed	story

Example 5

English:	closely	acquainted	friend
Chinese:	非常	熟悉的	朋友
	very	familiar	friend

Example 6

English:	horribly	sad	days
Chinese:	非常	悲哀的	日子
	very	sad	day

In examples 4 - 6, the English adverbs ‘deeply’, ‘closely’ and ‘horribly’ are equivalent to Chinese ‘very / 非常’. This explains why learners will face problems with

English adverbs due to lack of connotation of English adverbs like ‘deeply’ and ‘closely’..

#### 6.7.4 Tautology

Tautology is characterized by the Chinese language in compounding words, which is Chinese preference where two words close in meaning together are used. For example, *daolu* 道路 “road road” (road), *zhiliang* 质量 “quality quantity” (quality), and *tigao* 提高 “lift high” (raise). Such kind of duplication which is acceptable in Chinese is not applicable in English. George (1952:433) states that tautology is faulty and ineffective wording, believing it is caused by “unwillingness to search for a substitute, or by careless re-use of the same word.” According to Allerton (1990), tautology means unnecessary repeating of the same idea in different words, which can arise due to cultural differences between the two languages. Shao (1997:212) also argues that observations and statistics revealed that many tautologies in English are regarded as redundant information but treated as usages in Chinese.

From the perspective of aesthetics (审美), English collocations enjoy clarity and simplicity while Chinese collocations subject to tidiness in form but richness in content. Differences between English and Chinese exist as given in the following examples 1 – 5 which illustrates negative transfer from Chinese tautology by Chinese learners of English:

	Example 1		Example 2	
English:	sunset		to merge	with
Chinese:	西边的	落日	合并	在一起
	in the west	sunset	merge	together



### Example 3

English:	to	eliminate		
Chinese:	全	部	消	灭
	entirely	eliminate		

The Chinese phrase 西边的落日 ‘in the west sunset’ is equivalent to English ‘sunset’ in example 1, 合并在一起 ‘merge together’ is identical to English ‘to merge with’ in example 2, and 全部消灭 ‘entirely eliminate’ is equal to English ‘to eliminate’. But, the three Chinese equivalents are unacceptable in English because the verb ‘merge’ contains the meaning ‘together’, it is universal that the sun sets in the west, and ‘to eliminate’ refers to remove or get rid of completely.

An English word annotating to a limited concept is viewed as “absolute”, and therefore usually cannot be contrasted nor modify intensification, while a Chinese word annotating to a limited concept is considered as “relevant” and can be contrasted and allowed to have a modifying intensification. The examples given explain why learners are likely to encounter problems with English adverb intensification.

### 6.7.5 Synonyms

Synonyms are pairs or more of words that share the same semantic field but could be differentiated in different contexts. Each synonym has a subtle nuance of meaning, making it distinct from the other words, which will help a learner avoid random substitutions of words that seem to look better in writing (Johnson, 2004). Synonymous words are not interchangeable in terms of collocation (Xiao and McEnery, 2006:8). There are plenty of synonyms in English which can be distinguished from many factors: semantics (denotation, connotation), stylistics, and corpus linguistics: semantic prosody, collocation strength. It can follow that English synonym becomes a complicated issue for learner not because of MT interference but because many factors are involved in English.

In other words, appropriate use of English synonym is dependent on knowledge of English vocabulary as such. Thus, insufficient knowledge of TL English synonyms from the aspects of denotation, connotation, collocation, semantic prosody, and collocation strength will be most problematic for learners. For instance, it will be more difficult for the Chinese learner to choose between “drop” and “fall” in noun + verb collocation. If no attention is paid to English restriction collocation rule, learners will probably make wrong choice among a pair synonyms in “The manufacturers' price \*falls.” (drops), or “Outside, a soft rain \*drops ceaselessly (falls)”. In English, “Price drops.”, “Rain falls.”, and “The supply falls.” are usually used.

Some other examples are the synonymous phrases *a flock of*, *a herd of*, *a school of* and *a pride of* annotate ‘a group of’. Since these phrases have to follow restriction collocation rules, a flock of sheep, a herd of cow, a school of whales and a pride of lions will be most problematic for learners. Chinese learners will have no idea which quantifying noun is the best when the synonymous phrases annotate the same meaning as ‘a group of’.

English synonym depends on its connotation, collocation, stylistics and so forth. And so do the Chinese synonyms. The following sections provide some examples which demonstrate that Chinese bears the same principle for differentiating synonym as English, which will assist Chinese learners in the learning of English.

The English adjectives *small*, *tiny*, and *minute* are synonymous. Although they refer to smallness, they are different in the degree of ‘smallness’. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms explains that, ‘small’ applies more to relative size determined by capacity, value, or number (e.g. a small amount of), ‘minute’ implies extreme smallness, and ‘tiny’ is an informal equivalent of ‘minute’. The Chinese synonymous verbs 希望 (hope), 盼望 (look forward to), and 渴望 (long for) have slight difference in the degree of intensity of semantics (Li, 2007). 渴望 is an extreme /

eagerness for hope, 希望 implies a general word, and 盼望 suggest a tendency to the extreme of hope, which is in the middle between 希望 and 渴望.

The English synonymous nouns *horse*, *steed*, *chamber*, *nag* and *plug* are different in stylistics. *Horse* can be used in any context, while *steed* and *chamber* are used in novels and poems, *nag* and *plug* usually occur in the spoken English. The Chinese verbs 蹣跚 (walk aimlessly) and 散步 (walk) are also different in stylistics. 蹣跚 is used in spoken Chinese while 散步 is used in the written Chinese.

The English synonym is different in its distribution in a sentence. For example, sleeping usually places in front of a noun as the sleeping old man, while asleep often positions behind a noun as the man asleep. Chinese synonyms can also be differentiated from each other by their syntactic functions in the sentence. The Chinese adjective 聪明 (smart) and noun 智慧 (wisdom) are the same in the meaning but different in their syntactic behaviour. 聪明 often functions as an adjective modifier and predicate, while 智慧 often functions as subject and object in a sentence. So, 他非常聪明 (He is very smart) is acceptable but 他非常智慧 (He is very wisdom) sounds incorrect.

The Chinese synonymous verbs 废除 (abolish) can collocate with 法令 (decree), 特权 (privilege) and 条约 (treaty), 解除 (relieve) can collocate with 武装 (arms), 痛苦 (pain) and 职务 (a post). So how to distinguish from one synonym to another and use them correctly in the context is significant for the learner and the teacher.

It can be summarized that synonyms of each language (TL English or MT Chinese) are restricted by connotation, collocation, and style of each word. The similar principle shared by the two languages will have a positive impact on the learning of TL synonyms. This principle from the identical aspects to differentiate synonyms will make the learning of TL English synonyms easier.

### 6.7.6 Special Collocations

There are some special collocations in English and Chinese. For example,

	Example 1	Example 2
English:	a thin voice	a faint smile
Chinese:	微弱的声音	淡然一笑
	weak voice	indifferent smile

Learners cannot produce the correct English phrases in the examples above by simply depending on the literal meanings through dictionaries or others. Although they have acquired an extensive vocabulary in their lexicons, learners will be still faced with considerable difficulties retrieving those adjective modifiers as in examples 1 and 2 which combine with special collocates.

Broadly speaking, English semantic construction is characterized by connection-oriented nexus, while their Chinese counterpart is characterized by a verb-oriented nexus. The English relative words include preposition (prepositional phrase), relative pronoun / adverb, connectives, non-finite verb (infinitive, participle, and gerund), and phrasal verbs. The Chinese language has neither change of morphology nor preposition, nor non-finite verb, and the distribution of the word is the determining factor of its grammatical function. Specifically speaking, English stresses hypotaxis (形合) whereas Chinese emphasizes parataxis (意合) in semantic construction syntactically (Nida and Taber, 1982:16). From the perspective of semantics, English hypotaxis means that meaning of a sentence can be conveyed by connectives, while Chinese parataxis means that meaning of a sentence can be conveyed by verbs or phrases with symbols.

The car wound <b>through</b> the village	小汽车迂回盘旋， <b>穿过</b> 村庄，
and <b>up</b> a narrow valley, <b>following</b> a	<b>爬越</b> 峡谷， <b>沿着</b> 一条因解冻而涨水
<b>thaw-swollen</b> stream.	的小溪行驶 (Lu, 1999:63).

The above example reveals that the English sentence conveys its meaning through prepositions such as ‘though’ and ‘up’ and participles such as ‘following’ and ‘thaw-narrow’. In contrast, Chinese follows a verb-centered semantic construction, conveying its meaning through verbs such as ‘穿过 / pass through’, ‘爬越 / climb up’, and ‘沿着 / go along’. Therefore, the English ‘through’ and ‘up’ prepositional phrases, and non-finite verb such as participles ‘following’ and ‘thaw-swollen’ which are equal to Chinese verb + place noun collocations are most likely to be problematic for the learners.

In brief, Chinese words or sentences are connected through meaning and their logical relationship between themselves, while English consists of orthographic spelling, subject-verb concord, case, gender, voice, morphological changes, formal subject and object. Therefore, there are significant differences between Chinese and English in morphology, word formation, syntax, text structure and rhetoric (Chen, 2008:36). These differences will be most likely to cause problems for the Chinese learners of English.

## **6.8 The Difficult Areas and Levels of Difficulty**

The purpose of doing a CA is to answer the Research Question 3 put forward in this study, namely,

“What are the areas of difficulty and hierarchy of difficulty encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations using CA?”

Previous sections have presented similarities and differences between English and Chinese collocations in order to identify those least or most likely problems with the Chinese learners of English.

From the point of view of grammatical structure, all categories of English collocations bear many similarities with Chinese collocations on the superficial level. From the semantic point of view, there are also similarities in terms of denotative meaning of words between the two languages equivalents.

However, there are a lot of differences on which aforementioned analysis of most likely problems to occur are based. The differences and areas of difficulties can be summarized and listed as given below.

In the area of noun + verb collocations:

- (a) English inanimate subjects which are equivalent to Chinese animate subjects or English animate subjects which are identical to Chinese inanimate subjects.
- (b) Passive voice in English superficially with copulative verb 'be' is equivalent to active voice of Chinese in syntax.
- (c) English notional voice (active voice in form but implying passive voice)
- (d) English phrasal verb
- (e) English grammatical and notional concord between the verb and subject
- (f) English obligatory subject which matches the omission of Chinese subject
- (g) The obligation of the English copulative verb 'be' between subject and descriptive adjective predicative
- (h) English part-of-speech

The differences and types of difficulties with English verb + noun collocations can be listed below:

- (a) English agent objects which are equivalent to Chinese patient objects
- (b) English phrasal verbs in double objects in the SVO structure
- (c) English noun phrases with prepositional phrases as an instrument or purpose or manner of verbs
- (d) Conversion of English part-of-speech
- (e) English verb transitivity
- (f) English transitive verb which is equivalent to Chinese intransitive verb

The differences and types of difficulties with English modifiers can be listed below:

- (a) English noun phrases with prepositional phrases (PPs) as attributive modifiers equivalent to Chinese noun + noun collocation / compound
- (b) English morphology in part-of-speech, plural form in noun
- (c) English morphological form in adjective + noun collocation
- (d) Some of the English adverb intensifications such as ‘deeply’, ‘closely’, and ‘horribly’, which mean intensifier particle ‘very’ in English adverb + adjective + noun collocation.
- (e) The English quantifying nouns in the case where the head noun is uncountable noun in ‘a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + noun collocation’.
- (f) Positions of English modifier

The positions of the first and second nouns in English coordinate noun + noun collocation involves:

- Some English adjectival modifiers follow French usages
- English adverb as attributive modifiers

Some possible types of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners in learning the meanings of English words are listed below:

- (a) Similar denotations but different in connotations:
  - Words with partial semantic gap
  - Choice or use of English verbs / phrasal verbs
- (b) English simplicity and clarity vs. Chinese compound resulting in tautology or redundant English collocations
  - Redundant English adjective in adjective + noun collocation
  - Redundant English word in verb + noun collocation
  - Redundant English word in phrasal verb
- (c) Degree or strength of two language words
- (d) A certain metaphorical meaning converted from original denotation

- (e) English words conflicting to Chinese equivalents
- (f) English words with multiple meanings which are determined by the context and
- (g) English special collocations

According to these differences and the types of English collocation problems, the levels of difficulty for the Chinese learners are ranked (from the highest to the lowest) in turn: English subject – predicate structures (noun + verb / phrasal verb / + modal + act verb collocation), English verb / phrasal verb + object collocations, English modifiers and cross-cultural lexical meanings. The reason for this ranking is explained below:

English subject – predicate structure includes three patterns: noun + verb + noun, noun + verb, and noun + be + adjective (Li, 2005). This is different from Chinese topic-comment structure at functionally pragmatic level and subject-predicate structure at the syntactic level. As has been described, English noun + verb collocations are related not only to syntax but also to deep semantic structure, subject-verb agreement, active and passive voice, a nominal singular and plural form, and so forth. At the lexical level, nouns and verbs are two major content words. The differences on denotation and connotation between English and Chinese nouns and verbs are difficult to be used by learners.

English phrasal verb is more difficult for Chinese learners. Usually, there are varieties of phrasal verbs for an English verb, where different preposition or adverb after the verb implies different meaning, such as ‘turn over’, ‘turn around’ and ‘turn down’. Chinese learners have no habit to use English phrasal verb, who feel difficult in determining which preposition or adverb can follow the same verb. The ambiguity will arise in figuring out which one, for example, between ‘make up’ and ‘make up for’ collocating with the noun ‘loss’ in the following two different contexts: 1. ‘Our losses will have to be made up with more loans’, 2. ‘Nothing can make up for the loss of a child’. Two examples reveal that two phrasal verbs seem to be alternatively used in the two cases. More importantly, the phrasal verb such as ‘make up’ varies from one context



to another, which depends on what collocate or node following them. In ‘she started making up’, ‘make up’ refers using a special paint and powder on so as to change or improve the appearance (化妆), while in ‘make up a story’, ‘make up’ means ‘to invent, often in order to deceive’ (虚构), and in ‘the chemist made up the doctor’s prescription’, ‘make up’ means preparing, arranging, or putting together ready for use (配制). Chinese learners will have difficulty in selecting between ‘make up’ and ‘invent’ in combining with the noun ‘story’, or between ‘make up’ and ‘preparing’ or ‘putting together ready for use’ in combining with doctor’s prescription.

The English phrasal verbs with figurative meaning are even most difficult for learners of ESL / EFL due to their different literal meaning and figurative meaning. For instance, literally, “look over” refers to “look at the whole of something” / 全部看, and “catch on” refers to “catch, grab” / 抓住. However, from the point of view of figurative meaning, “look over” refers to “review” / 检查, “catch on” refers to “understand” / 理解. Some English phrasal verbs with different stylistic meaning are also quite difficult for Chinese learners of English. For example, in informal English, the phrasal verbs “come across” and “look into” are used, whereas in formal English, the verbs “encounter” and “investigate” are used.

Learners had their own psychological, cognitive and semantic foundations, which implied in sentence – initial subject such as [ + animate ], [ + concrete ], [ + agentivity ], [ + prominence ] and [ + fossilization ] (Liu, 2005). Therefore, learners will find this noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation the most difficult type of collocation among the area of English collocation difficulty.

Like noun + verb collocation, English verb + object collocation is also involved in the syntax, such as English verb transitivity, phrasal verbs, agent objects, and logical object antecedent ‘it’. Some English verbs have higher degree of collocation and higher

frequency occurrence in the texts (such as get, make, do, etc.) “Nouns are more topic-related than other parts of speech.” (Leech, 2001:332) “Verbs are less topic-related sensitive than nouns.” (Ringbom, 1998:192). Study of verb system is an important area for the structure of any language which is most likely to bring about problems for learners (Harley, 1986 and Palmer, 1975), such as ambiguity of English verb synonyms which have been described in this study. Therefore, verb + noun type of collocation is considered to be equally more difficult for learners. Learners have to spend more time on memorizing which English verbs or phrasal verbs are transitive or intransitive, and which ones are both transitive and intransitive.

Comparatively, problems with English modifier are less heavily determined by the syntactic structure. English a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + uncountable noun collocation is different from Chinese. English noun phrase with prepositional phrases (PPs) as attributive post-modifiers are similar to Chinese noun + noun collocation. Despite these differences between the two language modifiers, as a whole, English modifiers are less difficult than verb + noun type of collocations.

According to the description and contrastive analysis between English and Chinese noun + noun collocation, learners will be uncertain which one is better between two structures in expressing one meaning: noun + noun or noun + prepositional phrase collocation. According to native habits, ‘attitude towards life’ is better than ‘life attitude’. In other cases both structures ‘living standard’ and ‘standard of living’ are acceptable among native language. More importantly, following the rules provided by grammar manuals cannot solve the problem for learners to make choice between two English structures.

Structural similarities which exist in adjective + noun collocation will less likely cause problems. However, it has been a constant problem for Chinese learners to select a more appropriate adjective in adjective + noun collocation. This selected adjective

collocating with noun must conform to native habit based on lexical semantic restriction rule in the context.

However, English noun + noun collocation or adjective + noun collocation is less difficult than noun and verb collocation, since they are not involved in the more complex syntactic structure.

English quantifying nouns exist only in the case of uncountable nouns. In Chinese, however, quantifying noun between a numeral and noun is obligatory, though the head noun is countable. Hence, it is thought that English quantifying noun problem due to these differences is difficult for the Chinese learners of English.

In adverb + adjective + noun and verb + adverb collocations, Chinese learners have less problem with structure than the choice of an adverb. However, the previous studies have shown that adverb usually has a low frequency occurrence in the texts. Therefore, compared with other types of modifier collocations, adverb + adjective + noun and verb + adverb types are less difficult for Chinese learners.

Based on the above areas of difficulty with English collocations, the levels of difficulty with English collocations for the Chinese learners of English are as follows: English noun + verb collocation will be the most difficult one, followed by verb + noun collocation. English noun / adjective + noun collocation will be more difficult than rest of the subcategories of collocations: a / numeral + quantifying noun collocation, adverb + adjective + noun and verb + adverb collocation which will be the least difficult one for the Chinese learners of English.

## **6.9 Summary**

This chapter makes a contrast between Chinese and English collocations and identifies that there are similarities between the two languages in lexical collocations and differences in grammatical collocations in morphology and syntax. Based on the

similarities and differences, this chapter explains those English collocations which are least likely and most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners from the grammatical and semantic points of view. Prediction of the types of difficulties together with the level of difficulty in the learning of English collocations is also presented. These provide the theoretical underpinning for this study and an approach to explain English collocation errors due to MT Chinese interference among the learners of English.

Based on CA, this study identifies that some categories of lexical collocations / compounds in English have no morphological forms in syntax, such as adjective / noun + noun and verb + noun collocations / compounds as well as noun + verb compound which are similar to Chinese equivalents and therefore will be least likely to bring about the problems in these categories of lexical collocations / compounds.

This study maintains that the areas which demonstrate differences between the two languages are indicative of the areas of difficulty, Chinese learners will have with English collocations. They are listed by three main classifications: English noun + verb / phrasal verb collocations, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation and modifier + head collocation.

English noun + verb collocation is not only related to lexical collocations / compounds but also related to grammatical collocations in morphological forms and syntax, whereas Chinese usually has no morphological forms in syntax, therefore, will be most likely to cause problems among the Chinese learners of English. Besides that, English noun + phrasal verb or phrasal verb + noun grammatical collocations are also most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English since Chinese has no phrasal verb.

The differences between Chinese noun + noun lexical collocation / compound and English noun + prepositional phrase grammatical collocation, and Chinese noun + noun lexical collocation without morphological forms and English noun + noun

grammatical collocation in morphological forms are more likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English in the area of attributive modifiers. In English noun + noun collocation, there are some other rules to follow in relationship between the first noun and the second which will be most likely to be more problematic for the Chinese learners.

Likewise, among the categories of verb + adverb, adverb + adjective + noun and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun, Chinese presents lexical collocations / compounds, whereas English equivalents present grammatical collocations in morphological forms and as a result problems with English in these categories will be most likely to occur among the Chinese learners of English.

From the semantic point of view, TL English and MT Chinese word equivalents with semantic gap will be most likely to be problematic in the process of learning English among the Chinese learners.

In order to confirm whether CA is a good tool of identifying difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners when learning English collocations, the next Chapter will use EA to analyze the data and identify the types of English collocation errors that are most frequently made by Chinese students and contrast the findings with those obtained by CA.

## CHAPTER 7

### ERROR ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS

#### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to identify those English collocation errors that are frequently made by the Chinese learners of English in order to answer the second and third research questions:

- 1) What are the types of English collocation errors that are most frequently made by the Chinese learners of English (RQ2)?
- 2) What are the areas of difficulty involving the influence of the mother tongue and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by Chinese learners in the use of English collocations from the perspective of Error Analysis (RQ3)?

Using EA as the analytic tool, findings of types and sources of errors identified from the students' essays will be examined and discussed under two broad categories – interlingual and intralingual errors. This chapter will thus address the following issues from the perspective of EA.

- 1) Identification of the collocation errors involving grammatical errors made by Chinese learners of English.
- 2) Examination of the percentage distribution (%) of the English collocation errors
- 3) Provision of a plausible explanation for the source of the errors.

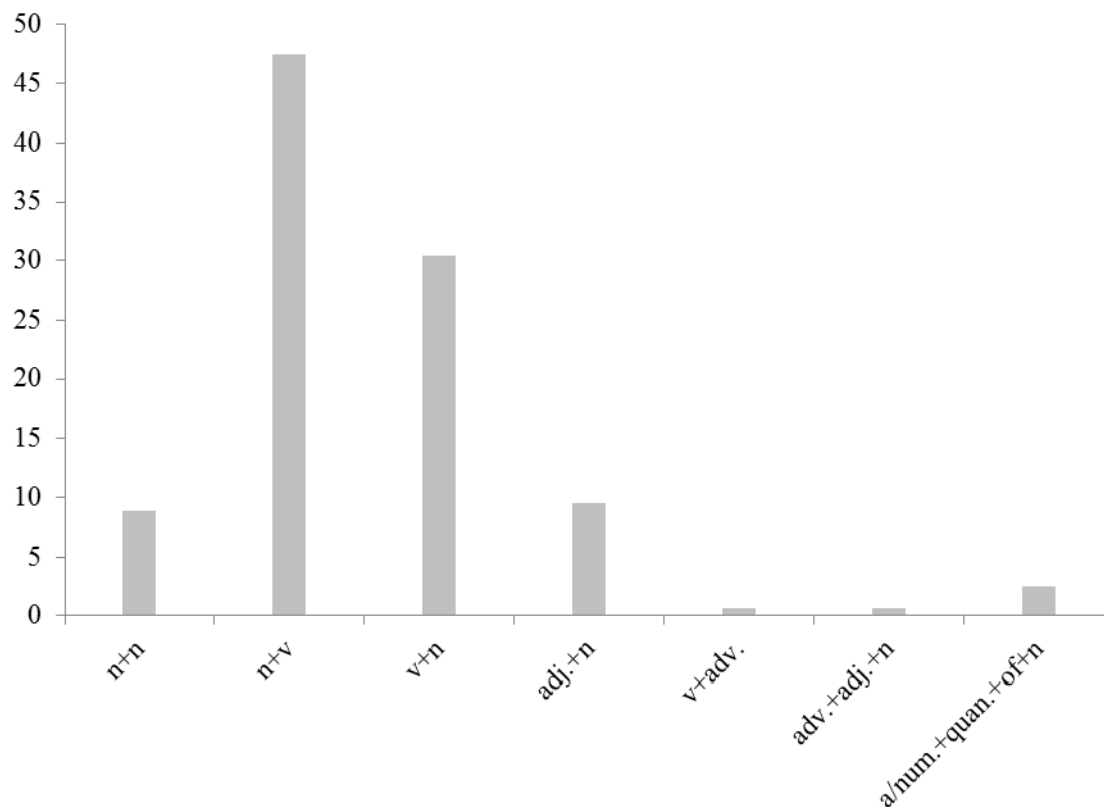
#### 7.2 Findings of English Collocation Errors

This section includes:

- (a) Distribution of errors
- (b) A graph to show that all such errors fall into two categories – interlingual and intralingual as shown in figure 7.2 and

(c) distribution of the type of errors in each category (as shown in table 7.1)

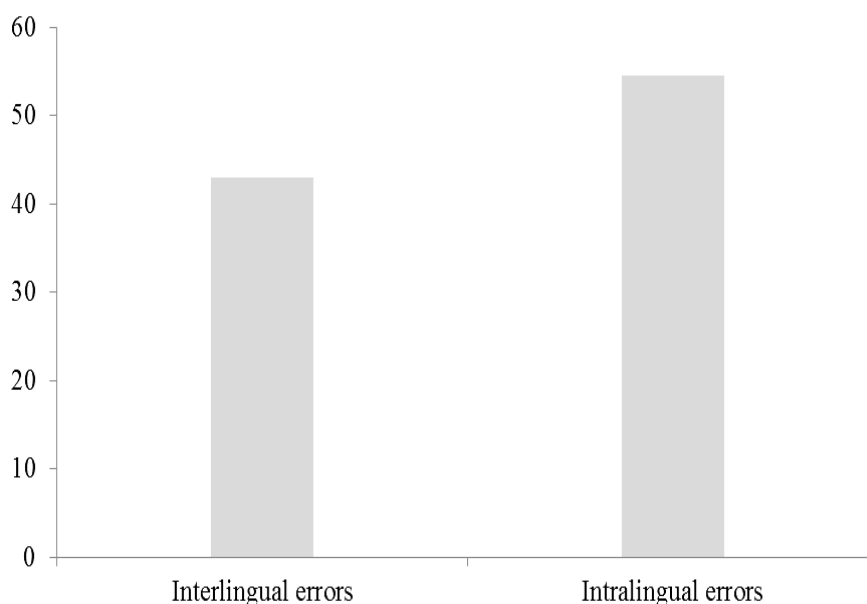
Figure 7.1 below shows the percentage distribution for the types of English collocation errors identified from the data obtained.



**Figure 7.1 Percentages of Collocation Errors Identified**

Figure 7.1 shows that out of the total of errors, the highest percentage of errors was errors in noun + verb collocation errors, whereas verb + adverb and adverb + adjective + noun collocation errors have the lowest occurrence.

Figure 7.2 below shows the percentage distribution of two main sources of errors: interlingual and intralingual errors identified from the data in this study (less than two percent of errors due to circumlocution will be reported in section 7.2.5).



**Figure 7.2 Percentage of Interlingual and Intralingual Errors**

Figure 7.2 shows that intralingual errors have a more occurrence than interlingual errors. The finding reveals that errors committed by the subjects result mainly from faulty or partial learning of the TL rather than the interference from the mother tongue. For example, “the perspiration made the idea success” which should be “Hard work leads you to success.” and “amplified his efforts” which should be “made his great efforts”. These examples indicate that learners have already acquired some knowledge of TL English expressions but due to incomplete knowledge of TL and violated the semantic selection or restricted collocation rule of TL, the errors occurred.

The detailed information of types of errors in the category of interlingual and intralingual sources as well as under other subcategories with reference to sources of errors will be presented in the following sections.

Besides the two major sources of errors, this study found another source of errors due to circumlocution which is a strategy using a number of words unnecessarily to find an approximate way to express a TL item. Table 7.1 below shows the percentage distribution of the types of errors in each of these categories:



**Table 7.1****Number and Percentage of Three Major Sources of Each Category of Errors**

<b>Types of collocation errors</b>	<b>Number / % of Error Interlingual</b>		<b>Number / % of Error Intralingual</b>		<b>Number / % of Errors due to circumlocution</b>		<b>Number / % of total number</b>	
	Noun + Verb / Phrasal Verb Collocation Errors	71	22.5	74	23.4	5	1.6	150
Verb / Phrasal Verb + Noun Collocation Errors	35	11.1	60	19	1	0.3	96	30.4
Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors	7	2.2	23	7.3	0	0	30	9.5
Noun + Noun Collocation Errors	15	4.7	13	4.1	0	0	28	8.9
Verb + Adverb Collocation Errors	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.6
Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors	2	0.6	0	0	0	0	2	0.6
A / Numeral + Quantify Noun + of + Head Noun Collocation Errors	8	2.5	0	0	0	0	8	2.5
The total number of errors	138	44	171	54	7	2.2	316 / 100	

Table 7.1 shows that there are three major sources of errors – intralingual and interlingual errors as well as circumlocution errors. Among them, the major causes of errors are intralingual and interlingual errors. Among the interlingual and intralingual errors, noun + verb collocation type of errors has the highest percentage among the seven categories of English collocation errors. Two percent of errors are due to circumlocution.

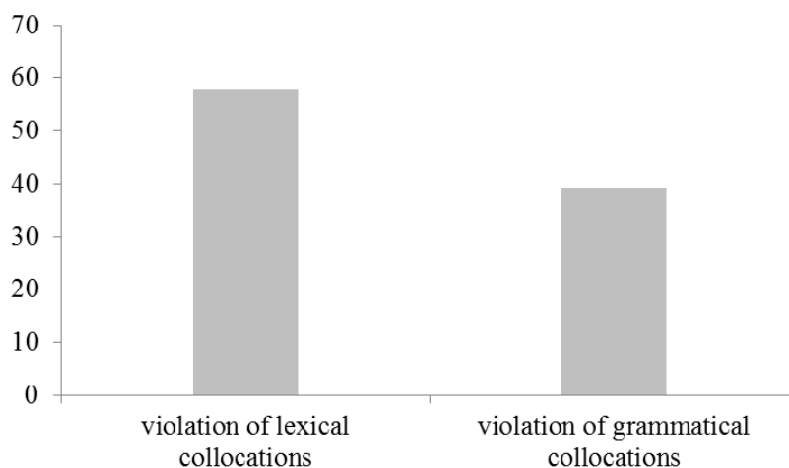
Table 7.2 below lists the seven types of English collocation errors and illustrates the errors with the number and percentage of three categories and other subcategories making reference to specific source of errors.

**Table 7.2****Number and Percentage of All Possible Sources of Errors**

Types of collocation errors	From the Grammatical Structure		From the Lexical Meaning		In the context	Errors due to Circumlocution	Total number
	Interlingual Errors	Intralingual Errors	Inter	Intra.			
Noun + Verb / Phrasal verb Collocation Errors	45 (14.2%)	30 (9.5%)	26 8.2%	44 (13.9%)	5 (1.6%)	150 (47.5%)	
Verb / Phrasal verb + Noun Collocation Errors	22 (7%)	9 (2.8%)	13 4.1%	51 (16.1%)	1 (0.3%)	96 (30.4%)	
Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors	1 (0.3%)	4 (1.3%)	6 1.9%	19 (6.6%)	0	30 (9.5%)	
Noun + Noun / PP Collocation Errors	5 (1.6%)	0	10 3.2%	2 0.6%	11 (3.5%)	28 (8.9%)	
Verb + Adverb Collocation Errors	0	0	0	1 0.3%	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.6%)	
Adverb + Adjective+Noun Collocation Errors	1 (0.3%)	0	1 0.3%	0	0	2 (0.6%)	
A / Numeral + Quantify Noun Collocation Errors	8 (2.5%)	0	0	0	0	8 (2.5%)	
<b>Total counts</b>	<b>82 (25.9%)</b>	<b>43 (13.6%)</b>	<b>56 17.7%</b>	<b>2 0.6%</b>	<b>126 (40%)</b>	<b>7 (2.2%)</b>	<b>316 (100%)</b>

Table 7.2 indicates that from the point of view of grammatical structure, interlingual errors nearly doubled the number of intralingual errors. In particular, noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors have the most error occurrences, followed by verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors. Intralingual errors due to context have the most occurrences, in which noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors have the highest occurrence, followed by verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors, the adjective + noun collocation errors and noun + noun / prepositional phrase collocation errors.

Figure 7.3 below shows the percentage distribution for the collocation errors due to violation of semantic restrictive rules between two individual words and violation of grammatical rules in morphology and syntax identified from the data obtained.



**Figure 7.3 Percentages of Collocation Errors at Lexical and Grammar Levels**

Figure 7.3 indicates that collocation errors at lexical level have a higher percentage (58%) of occurrence than those at grammatical level (39%). Lexical collocation errors refer to violation of lexical collocation (in lexical semantic restriction), and grammatical collocation errors refer to violation of grammatical collocation rules (in morphology and syntax).

Table 7.3 below exhibits number and percentage of seven types of English collocation errors from lexical and grammatical collocation classifications.

**Table 7.3****Number and Percentage of All Categories of Collocation Errors from Lexical and Grammatical Classifications**

Types of Collocation Errors	Errors of Lexical Collocations	Errors of Grammatical Collocations
Noun + Verb Collocation	70 (22%)	75 (23.7%)
Verb + Noun Collocation	64 (20%)	31 (9.8%)
Adjective + Noun Collocation	25 (8.5%)	4 (1.3%)
Noun + Noun Collocation	23 (7.3%)	5 (1.6%)
Verb + Adverb Collocation	1 (0.3%)	0
Adverb + Adjective + Noun	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)
A / Numeral + Quantifier + of + Noun	0	8 (2.5%)
Total Number of Errors	184 (58.4%)	124 (39.2%)

Table 7.3 indicates that noun + verb type of collocation errors have the highest number and percentage for both violations of lexical and grammatical collocations, followed by is verb + noun type of collocation errors. A / numeral + quantifier + of + noun type of collocation has no error in the lexical level. Violation of grammatical collocations in the type of noun + verb collocation errors (23.7%) have a little more of frequency occurrence than violation of lexical collocations (22%). In the case of verb + noun type of collocation errors, violation of lexical collocations (20%) doubles that of grammatical collocations (9.8%). Verb + Adverb Collocation has no error in grammatical collocation.

The following table 7.4 presents numbers and percentages of English collocation errors at lexical level between two independent words in match for semantic restriction. They were obtained mainly from intralingual errors due to context and interlingual

errors in the semantical field / lexical meaning identified from the data.

**Table 7.4**

**English Lexical Collocation Errors in Semantic and Selection Restriction**

Source of Errors		Number	Percentage
Interlingual Errors in the Semantic Field	Negative Transfer of Chinese Connotations	15	4.7%
	Negative Transfer of Chinese Topic-Oriented Structure	20	6.3%
	Literal Translation	9	2.8%
	Semantic Non-Native Prosody	6	1.9%
	Chinese Compound	6	1.9%
	others	2	0.6%
	Intralingual Errors in the Context	Ignorance of English Restrictions	126
Total Number		184	58%

Table 7.4 shows that the total number of English collocation errors at lexical level due to failure of semantic selection amounts to 184, which makes up 58% of the total number of English collocation errors (counting 316) identified from the data. Among violation of lexical collocations, 40% are intralingual errors due to ignorance of English restrictions to lexical selection in the context, 18% are interlingual errors. Negative transfer of Chinese topic-comment structure (6.3%) and of Chinese connotation (4.7%) has higher percentage and Chinese compound and semantic non-native prosody have the lowest percentages among violation of lexical collocations.

Table 7.5 below shows numbers and percentages of English collocation errors in morphology and syntax at grammatical level, which were drawn from errors in

grammatical structure identified from the data involving interlingual and intralingual errors with reference to sub-sources.

**Table 7.5**

**English Grammatical Collocation Errors in Morphology and Syntax**

<b>Source of Errors</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Interlingual	Confusion of Part-of-Speech	17	5.3%
Errors in the Grammatical Structure	Negative Transfer from Chinese	12	3.8%
	Verb Transitivity		
	Confusion of TL Subject-Verb	27	8.5%
	Agreement in Number		
	Confusion of TL 'Be' in Syntax	4	1.3%
	Negative Transfer from Chinese	18	5.6%
	Non-Phrasal Verb		
	Plural Form of Noun	1	0.3%
	Negative Transfer from Chinese	4	1.3%
	Coordinate NPs		
Intralingual	Over-Generalization	25	7.9%
Errors in the Grammatical Structure	Incomplete Application of Rules	2	0.6%
	False Concepts Hypothesized	7	2.2%
	Confusions of TL Verbs which are both Transitive and Intransitive	5	1.6%
	Confusion of Meaning of TL words	2	0.6%
Total number		124	39.2%

Table 7.5 indicates that at grammatical level there are 124 English collocation errors in morphology and syntax, which makes up around 39% of the total number of

English collocation errors identified in the present study. Among 39% of grammatical collocation errors, interlingual errors due to confusion of TL subject-verb agreement in number (8.7%) and intralingual overgeneralization (7.9%) have the most number and percentage of collocation errors in morphology and syntax, followed by negative transfer from Chinese non-phrasal verb (5.6%) and confusion of part-of-speech from Chinese non-morphological form in word formation (5.3%).

Shown as tables 7.2 and table 7.4 that intralingual errors in the context have highest percentage among all errors, thus the next section will be presenting the types of errors from intralingual sources first and then the types of errors from interlingual sources. This will be followed by the discussion of circumlocution errors.

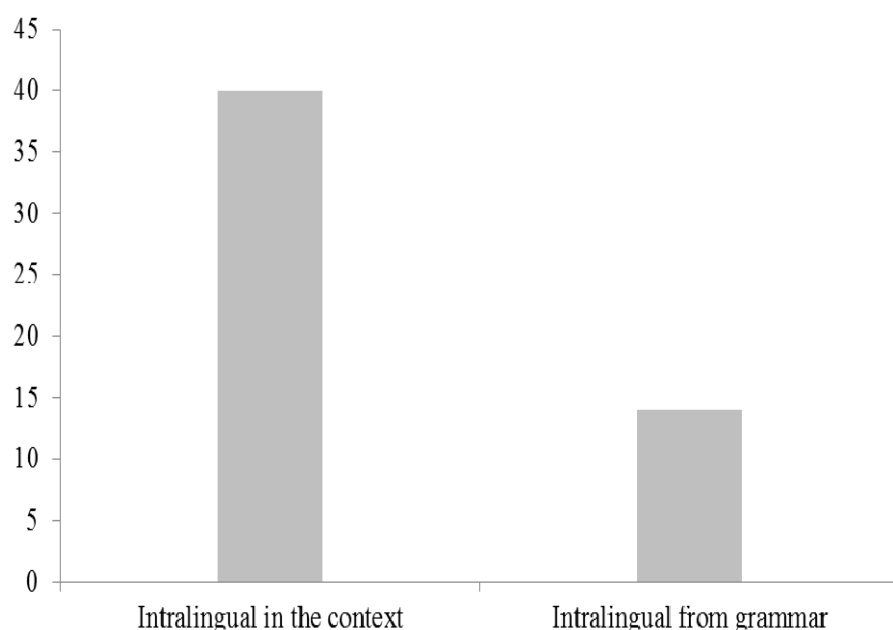
### **7.2.1 Intralingual Errors Found in the Linguistic Context**

Intralingual errors are a kind of incorrect hypothesis that learners made on TL based on their incomplete knowledge of TL previously acquired. According to such a hypothesis, the learners generalize some structures diverging from the TL, which can be regarded as developmental errors in that no features of MT can be seen. Intralingual errors involve 1. overgeneralization; 2. ignorance of TL restrictions of TL rules; 3. false hypothesizing concept of TL word or phrase; 4. incomplete application of TL word (Richards, 1970: 9-22). The first three types among these four categories of intralingual errors fall into intralingual errors from TL grammatical structure. Ignorance of TL restrictions of TL rules falls into the error in the context, for these errors were due to inappropriateness of a TL word or phrase in the context. From classification of collocation, these four sub-classifications of intralingual errors present natures of lexical collocation errors.

Context can be classified into linguistic context and situational context (Wang, 2007). The linguistic context can be subclassified into discursual and sentential contexts.

Sentence provides the context for the words, just as discourse provides the context for both sentences and words (Wang, 2007). Study of collocation between a word with its collocates is carried out in a smaller context, such as sentential context (Wang and Zhang, 2005). Those errors in which words are used inappropriately in the immediate / local / sentential context in spite of its acceptability from TL grammatical structure, fall into this category of intralingual errors found in this study.

Figure 7.4 below shows the percentage distribution of intralingual errors found in the context and in the grammatical structure.



**Figure 7.4 Intralingual Errors Found In the Context and Grammatical Structure**

Figure 7.4 shows that the occurrence of intralingual errors in the context is far more than those errors as a result of problems in the grammatical structure. The finding reveals that intralingual errors due to context are more common among the learners. Therefore, in this section these errors due to context will be reported first and provide examples to demonstrate them and then discuss the intralingual errors found in the grammatical structure.

Ignorance of English lexical rule is closely related to the generalization of deviant collocation between two independent words co-occurring at lexical level. It is the



application of English rules to contexts where they do not apply (Richards, 1970), which is the chief reason for those intralingual collocation errors from context which were found in this study. These errors are superficially well-formed from the surface structure and meaning of the TL. They are, however, out of place in the local / sentential context based on the restriction rules of collocation. These errors are linguistically correct but contextually incorrect. They are relative rather than absolute. This is because the meaning of a word contains seven aspects: denotative, connotative, collocation, social, affective, reflective, and thematic meanings (Leech, 1993). When learners cannot acquire all aspects of knowledge of a TL word error of this nature can occur.

### 7.2.1.1 Intralingual Verb + Noun Collocation Errors

The findings revealed that verb + noun collocation errors rank number one (16%) among the total number of subtypes of intralingual errors found in the context. This section thus will report verb + noun collocation errors in the context and explain how they occurred.

Selected examples from Appendix B: English verb + noun collocation errors due to context are presented below in order to illustrate the reason for errors shown as examples below:

Examples 1 - 5

<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
(1) He*amplified his efforts. (T9)	made his great efforts
(2) He needn't *afford so much perspiration. (T13)	He need not make great effort.
(3) You will *conquest your own disadvantage. (T34)	weigh / work on your weakness
(4) He *introduced a new viewpoint. (T48)	presented his viewpoint
(5) His diligence can make up for *awkward. (T51)	make up for deficiency

As described and established in the present study, phrasal verb and auxiliary verb (such as *will*, modals *need* and *can*) are considered in the type of grammatical collocation classification.

The above are examples of typical violation of lexical collocations. The learner overlooked co-occurrence lexical restrictions of English collocation rule in the immediate context and wrongly assumed that new item B behaves like A: the learner knows the verb ‘amplify / afford / conquest / introduce / make up for something’, and thus made an overgeneralization that these verbs or phrasal verb could combine with any noun by analogy.

From the structure, learners have no problems with it, knowing the morphological form of the past tense of verbs “amplified” and “introduced” and the phrasal verb “make up for”. Also, the learner is also capable of using modal verb ‘need’ and auxiliary verb ‘will’ in the structure. These indicate that the use of English auxiliary in grammatical level is less challenge to the Chinese learners at Tongji University. The big problem facing them is how to use a word in the context more appropriately in English verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation.

#### **7.2.1.2 Intralingual Noun + Verb Collocation Errors**

The findings revealed that noun + verb collocation errors found in the context is the second highest (14%) among all subcategories of intralingual errors. Although the words considered in a local context seem perfectly acceptable, in the sentential context these combinations are not used by a native speaker of English. This section will exemplify and explain the errors.

As described in previous chapters, in noun + verb collocation, noun + phrasal verb and noun + modal verb + act verb collocation are also involved.

Selected examples from Appendix A: English noun + verb collocation errors due to ignorance of English restrictions in the context are presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T55	Inspiration only *takes 1% of all.	Inspiration makes up 1% percent of all.
T90	Success should *fall on us if we work hard.	Success will go to us if we work hard. Or Success should fall from hard work.

Examples above reveal that subjects from the present study have acquired in part knowledge of TL English in grammatical structure, but ignored the restrictive collocation rule of an English word in the context. The subjects have known well how to use verb 'take' and phrasal verb 'fall on' in terms of morphology and syntax such as single form of verb 'takes' which is in consistence with subject 'it' and phrasal verb 'fall on'. However, they committed errors at lexical level concerning semantic selection or restriction between two words in pair. The noun 'inspiration' is mismatched to the verb 'take' (T55), neither is the noun 'success' and phrasal verb 'fall on' (T90).

These examples, strictly speaking, present 'non-nativelike' or 'non-appropriate' collocations which are unconventional and therefore are erroneous lexical collocations. This indicates that Chinese learners are expected to improve their knowledge of TL English words collocation at lexical context, particularly of restrictive collocation rule in the context from word semantic selection.

#### Example 1

Inspiration only \*takes 1% of all. (T55)

Correct form: Inspiration makes up 1% percent of all.

#### Example 2

Success should \*fall on us after hard work has been paid. (T90)

Correct form: Success will go to us if we work hard.

In examples 1 and 2, 'take' and 'fall on' are inappropriate use of verb and phrasal verb in the context. In English, there are a number of words representative of the typical sentential context, in which some words are restricted to those matched.

In example 1, the learner encountered that 'it takes somebody two hours to do something' in which a numeral 'two' is involved behind verb 'take' and thus assumed that any numeral like '1%' functioning as indirect object can follow verb 'take' in the sentence. Therefore, the error 'inspiration takes 1% of all' occurred. According to British National corpus, the phrasal verbs 'depend on' and 'based on' immediately coming after 'success' are normally used by the native speakers. If based on the native speakers, example 2 is supposed to be converted into 'Success depends on / is based on hard work'. However, by making reference to original context of the text (T90), the intended meaning indicated that success should come suddenly, and therefore, it seems to be more appropriate that "Success always falls from hard work rather than from inspiration' or 'success will go to us if we work hard'. However, the learner might have acquired pattern 'sth. fall on sb./sth.' with examples that 'An expectant hush fell on the guest' and 'it fell on me to break the news' (Benson et al., 1997: 128) where the verb 'fall' means 'come quickly and suddenly'. Therefore, he or she overgeneralized any word can arbitrarily be selected as subject in this pattern, irrespective of the restrictive collocation rules between verb 'fall' and the words preceding or following it. Example 2 shows that the subject appears to have no problem with structure between subject 'success' and phrasal verb 'fall on'. The phrasal verb 'fall on' is the predicate of the subject 'success'. However, the learner overlooked the restrictive rule of lexical collocation and mismatch between the noun 'success' and phrasal verb 'fall on' occurred.

### 7.2.1.3 Intralingual Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors

The following examples demonstrate English adjective + noun collocation errors. The primary reason for this type of error is due to the ignorance of restriction rule of English lexical collocation. Mismatch between two independent words occurred as a result:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T8	It is a *classical saying that success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.	an old
T14	He admired him as *smartest scientist.	the greatest scientists

The above examples indicate that Chinese learners had the ability of using and selecting TL English adjectives based on the conceptual and notional meaning of words, but they still encountered problems in the use of TL English collocation of a word in the context. Many adjective + noun collocation errors in this study were found to be de-contextual. They are relative errors in spite of correct linguistic structural form but inappropriate in the context. The following are specific examples for explaining the errors.

#### Example 1

People all over the world admire him as the world's \*smartest scientist. (T14)

Correct form: People all over the world regard him as the greatest scientist.

The subject knows well how to use adjective 'smart' modifies a noun, but failed to apply it in the context, hypothesizing that 'smart guy' and 'smart child' are true and thus generalizing that 'smart scientist' is acceptable, too. Dictionary and BNC informed that the 'smart guy / child' are acceptable rather than 'smart scientist'. Therefore, 'smart scientist' is mismatched to each other at lexical level, which is a typical violation of lexical collocation. Meanwhile, there are some errors at grammatical level in this example. The occurrence of possessive case of noun *world's* indicates a repetition since

it is overlapped with phrase 'all over the world' in the sentence. This may derive from circumlocution strategy adopted by the learner.

#### Example 2

It is a \*classical saying that success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.

Correct form: It is an old saying that success is 1% of inspiration and 99% of...

Like example 1, the learner in example 2 knew this nominal phrase well in terms of grammatical structure and meaning of individual word isolated from the context. However, in the collocation of one word with another in the context, he or she violated the restrictive rules of lexical collocation between two words, and wrongly applied the adjectives in the context. From the perspective of semantic prosody, each node has its typical collocates in the context, which was neglected by the learner.

#### **7.2.1.4 Intralingual Noun + Noun Collocation Errors**

In the error analysis, English noun + noun collocation error at lexical level was identified which derives from semantic mismatch between two nouns. For instance,

##### Example 1

Edison had thousands of inventions, which made him one of the most famous and \*successes scientist. (T88)

Correct form: the greatest scientists

Example 1 shows that the learner knows that the plural form of some nouns which end in letter '-s' should be added mark '-es' and also feels aware that plural form 'successes' denotes achievements, or a person who is a success, or something successful as well as that one noun can modify the other noun. So, the learner used one noun 'successes' to modify another noun 'scientist' in order to express the scientist who succeeds in doing something. However, he or she ignored lexical collocation rule in which two independent words need semantic match essentially. In other words, the noun

‘successes’ can not precede the noun ‘scientist’ in the ‘noun + noun’ collocation structure according to native speaker’s speaking habits.

Meanwhile, erroneous grammatical morphological form occurred due to ignorance of agreement between words in number. In the phrase ‘one of + noun’, noun usually presents plural form rather than single form like ‘one of scientist’, which should be ‘one of scientists’.

#### **7.2.1.5 Intralingual Noun + Prepositional Phrase Collocation Errors**

The following example will illustrate English noun + prepositional phrase collocation error, which is mainly due to violation of English grammatical collocation by analogy.

The example 1 below indicates that Chinese learner has used well TL English head noun + prepositional phrase (PP) phrasal structure. However, in the process of keeping testing the hypothesis of this TL nominal phrase rule, the expression diverged from the TL usage due to new context. The following is the example for giving reasons for the occurrence of lexical collocation errors.

##### **Example 1**

The saying (that success is a 1% of inspiration and a 99% of perspiration) is contain the two \*side of the success (T10)

Correct form: The saying contains two factors for success.

This is an inappropriate lexical collocation between head noun ‘side’ and ‘of’-prepositional phrase. Although it is acceptable from structure and is understandable but is strange from native speakers’ habits. The intended meaning suggests factor that determines success. However, on the one hand, the error is due to ignorance of lexical restrictions between ‘side’ and ‘of-prepositional phrase’. When encountering phrases ‘side of road’ and ‘two sides of the conflict’, the learner made an overgeneralization that

'side of' can be followed by any noun regardless of the fact that 'side' is mismatched to 'of success'. Meanwhile, another error arises from inconsistency between numeral 'two' and noun 'side' in morphological form, since 'side' should present plural form 'sides' in the phrase 'two sides'. As for the error in 'the saying is contain', it is processed in the type of noun + verb collocation rather than in the adjective + noun collocation here.

#### **7.2.1.6 Intralingual Adverb + Phrasal Verb Collocation Errors**

Adverb + phrasal verb type of collocation errors ranks the lowest among all subcategories of English collocation errors. The phrasal verb + adverb collocation error is found to be inappropriate use of adverb in the context, and thus will be demonstrated in this section. The main reason for this error is misapplication of the word in the context.

##### **Example 1**

I \*extremely agree with it. (T60).

Correct form: I strongly agree with it.

The example shows that the learner broke the lexical restrictive rule between the adverb 'extremely' and phrasal verb 'agree with', which is a typical lexical collocation error. The phrasal verb 'agree with' usually co-occurs with the adverb 'strongly', 'completely', 'absolutely' and 'entirely'. The learner knew the basic grammatical knowledge that adverb can follow verb and thus combine 'agree with' and 'extremely', irrespective of restrictive rules between the two independent words in lexical collocation.

#### **7.2.1.7 Collocation Errors due to De-contextualized Use of Synonyms**

Synonyms bear a likeness in denotation and in part-of-speech. Synonym errors are a class of developmental errors referring where learners build false concepts and faulty comprehension of distinctions in the TL (Richards, 1970). Learners in this study were found to have an erroneous use of English synonymous verbs and adjectives.



Selected examples from data of this study in Appendix B: verb + noun collocation errors due to de-contextualized use of synonyms are presented below to illustrate problems:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T4	Some people may think a lot and *bring up many useful ideas.	come up with
T103	The teacher told him how to *solve his question why they can't have a good reward.	answer
T28	Hard work *results in their success.	leads to

It is no doubt that all the examples above can be understandable from the overtly grammatical form / structure. But they violated the English restrictive rules of lexical collocations. The leading cause of these typical erroneous lexical collocations and de-contextualized use of synonyms is false hypothesizing of concepts related to connotation of TL words.

#### Example 1

Some people may think a lot and \*bring up many useful ideas. (T4)

Correct form: Some people think a lot and come up with many useful ideas.

The subject's former knowledge always influences them in using languages, such as 'Bring up this point at the next meeting' and 'the witness brought up fresh evidence' from dictionaries. In these examples, 'bring up' means 'to mention or bring to attention a subject'. It is taken for granted that the learner made reference to this concept meaning and the given examples, and thus produced 'bring up idea' in example 1. The phrasal verb 'come up with' refers to 'produce an idea / plan / solution, and so forth', such as 'she came up with a good idea'. It's true that two phrasal verbs 'bring up' and 'come up with' are synonymous in linking to the noun denoting 'idea'. However, the subject falsely hypothesized concepts of phrasal verb 'bring up' and ignored lexical semantic restrictive collocation rules in selecting phrase in the context to collocate with

'idea'. And as a result, the error occurred.

#### Example 2

The teacher told him how to \*solve his question why they can't have a good reward. (T103)

Correct form: The teacher told him how to answer his question why...

Like examples 1, the focus of the present study in example 2 is on the type verb + noun collocation 'solve his question' though it functions as object complement in the sentence, which is also a typical type of violation of lexical collocation. The phrase 'solve his question' is meaningful in contextual verb + noun collocation structure but is a non-nativelike and non-appropriate expression. The learner diverged from the English usage in the process of internalization of the two TL words, therefore, the error occurred.

#### Examples 3

Hard work \*results in success. (T28).

Correct form: Hard work leads them to success.

The English phrasal verb 'result in' in example 3 means to have as a result; cause; be the consequence, according to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Furthermore, 'result in' tends to connote a more negative semantic prosody, such as 'result in *death / fight*' in BBI dictionary, and 'result in *bad faith / deception / loss*' and so forth from BNC. However, the learner simply made reference to conceptive meaning and ignored affective meaning in lexical collocation context and thus arbitrarily combined 'result in' with the noun 'success'. The learner was unaware of the connotation of phrasal verb and the restrictive collocation meaning of TL English words as well as the semantic prosody between each node and its collocates.

The concordance lines from BNC indicate that English native speakers tend to use the phrasal verb 'lead to' rather than 'result in' to collocate with the noun 'success' which

shows a tendency towards positive semantic prosody, such as ‘lead to *award of professional qualification, successful result, a double efficiency*’ and so forth. The learner may falsely hypothesized the distinct between ‘result in’ and ‘lead to’ which have been formerly acquired and produced inappropriate lexical collocation ‘result in success’.

Some synonymous English noun + verb collocation errors found from the data are presented below in order to provide enough evidence for the problems:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T15	This saying never *passes away.	slips
T58	As the *word goes.	saying
T69	These phenomena *anger every person.	irritate

Examples given above show that some Chinese learners get confused about English synonymous verbs or phrasal verbs due to the violation of lexical restrictive collocation rules in the noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation context. When retrieving from the former knowledge of TL about a pair synonyms, for example, “anger” and “irritate”, “word” and “saying”, and ‘pass away’ and ‘slip away’. Chinese learners tend to depended on the denotation of each synonym ignorant of lexical restrictive rules in different contexts with different collocates. Therefore, the errors ‘the saying passes away’, ‘the word goes’, and ‘phenomena anger every person’ occurred. They should be ‘they saying slip away’, ‘the saying goes’ and ‘phenomena irritate every person’.

The following examples demonstrate English synonymous adjective + noun collocation errors.

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T2	*wrong view	false
T60	*underlying danger	potential
T87	many work	much work / many jobs

T87          \*final success                                      ultimate

The examples show that the inability to produce correct collocation by the Chinese learners was due to the fact that their knowledge of the English adjectives was insufficient. ‘Wrong view’, ‘underlying danger’, ‘many work’ and ‘final success’ are all typical erroneous lexical collocations. The subjects misused the adjectives in the selection of a pair of synonyms by ignoring restrictive collocation rules between two words. The following examples will be used to explain the reason for such lexical collocation errors.

Example 4

The \*wrong view on the truth lead us to more pains and less gains. (T2)

Example 5

Success is not so easy, it needs your hard work, the spirit that you never give up and the courage that you are faced with the \*underlying danger. (T60)

Example 6

Many failures occurred before \*final success. (T87)

The adjective ‘wrong’ bears the similar denotation to ‘false’ in example 4, ‘underlying’ shares the same denotation with ‘potential’ in example 5, and ‘final’ is synonymous with ‘ultimate’ in example 6. However, lexical collocation rules restrict to the co-occurring of ‘wrong’ and ‘view’, ‘potential’ and ‘danger’, and ‘final’ and ‘success’. The learners violated the lexical restriction of English in the phrasal / collocation context and made this intralingual error as a result.

In fact, there exists a middle ground between completely acceptable collocations and erroneous collocations for examples 4, 5 and 6 which may be judged as non-nativelike or stylistically non-appropriate. Though they conform to English grammatical structure and meaning is there, they are not completely acceptable

collocations by native speaker and therefore treated as erroneous lexical collocations.

To throw more light upon this, more information will be provided by concordance lines of ‘ultimate + success’ collocation from BNC:

#### Example 7

The occurrences of ‘ultimate + success’ collocations in the BNC:

experience of endoscopic injection, The ultimate success rate and reblending rate of  
cycles, the Geneva report gives the ultimate success rate as judged by  
implementation was a long way off and ultimate success was far from assured.  
plaintiff could have had no certain of ultimate success, and we are of opinion  
revision negotiation which despite its ultimate success, did little to reassure  
industrialized regions—whatever its ultimate success --at least offered more  
produced a wonderful cake (72) her final success was all the failures (73)

The concordance lines given in example 7 indicate that native speakers in the BNC have a tendency of using ‘ultimate’ rather than ‘final’ to link the noun ‘success’. In searching ‘ultimate success’, there are six tokens (one term similar to ‘mark’ or ‘signal’), while in the case of ‘final success’, there is only one token. Therefore, ‘ultimate’ which presents higher frequency occurrence of adjective collocate of ‘success’ than ‘final’ is more in line with native speakers’ habits.

### **7.2.2 Intralingual Errors identified from the Grammatical Structure**

The finding from this study revealed that around 14 percent of intralingual errors were grammatical structure-related. This section will report the intralingual errors from the point of view of grammatical structure and then explain them. The primary reasons for grammatical intralingual errors are overgeneralization of TL rules and ignorance of rule restrictions of TL.

### 7.2.2.1 Intralingual Noun + Verb Collocation Errors

Noun + verb collocation errors ranked the highest among all intralingual errors from the grammatical structure. Hence, this section will report this category of errors.

Falsely hypothesizing concepts means building false concepts and faulty comprehension of distinctions in the TL. Overgeneralization covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the TL. Some learners, for example, on the basis that the verb is always linked to ‘to be’, create a deviant structure *The word is contain the two side*. Overgeneralization is also associated with redundancy reduction (Richards, 1970:6 – 7). These errors were found in the present study. The examples below show intralingual noun + verb collocation errors, which are caused mostly by reason: falsely hypothesized concepts and overgeneralization. They are erroneous grammatical collocations in which more visible features of misusing morphological form present in syntax.

Selected examples from Appendix A: intralingual English noun + verb collocation errors due to false concepts hypothesized are presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T99	The word is contain the two side	The word contains two sides.
T103	Inventions are come from inspiration.	Inventions come from inspiration.
T83	Few people can be *succeed.	successful
T55	One of the hundreds time would be succeed.	He achieved success after hundreds of experiments.

Two examples below (from above data) explain the errors of this type.

Example 1

The word is contain the two side (T99).

Correct form: The word contains two sides.

### Example 2

Few people can be succeed (T83).

Correct form: Few people can succeed.

Errors in examples 1 and 2 were caused by false hypothesizing of concepts because the learners had not fully comprehended the distinction between Chinese and the target language. ‘Be’ does not exist in MT Chinese syntax. Here, we might suffice it to say that the learners made errors not out of ignorance of English, but because they knew too much TL English rule. In the context, the correct English sentence in example 1 should be ‘Two factors contribute to success.’, and example 2 should be ‘Few people can succeed’. Meanwhile, examples 1 and 2 are also typical examples of overgeneralization, where the learners think that a stem verb always combines with the structure ‘to be’.

Selected examples (as data) from Appendix A: intralingual English noun + verb collocation errors due to overgeneralization of TL rule are presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T73	He *spreaded news	spread
T105	I *feeled it probably.	felt

The next example is an error resulting from overgeneralization of a TL rule.

### Example 3

He \*spreaded news. (T73)

Correct form: He spread news.

### Example 4

I \*feeled it probably. (T105)

Correct form: I felt it probably.

The learners in examples 3 and 4 wrongly assumed that the new item B behaves like A: the learner knew that *believe* (A) has its past tense ‘*believed*’ and assumed that *spread* and *feel* (B) behaves likewise, and thus over-generalized the use of the regular past suffix *-ed* to irregular verb as

'spreaded' and 'feeled'. Therefore, misuse of morphological form 'spreaded' and 'feeled' which are the past tense of verbs 'spread' and 'feel' occurred in the erroneous grammatical collocation 'he spreaded news' and 'I feeled it probably'.

### 7.2.2.2 Intralingual Verb + Noun Collocation Error

This type of collocation is analyzed and discussed from the standpoint of grammatical collocation structure. Selected examples (as data) from Appendix B: Intralingual English verb + noun collocation errors due to grammatical structure in confusion of English verb transitivity are presented below:

<b>Text LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
<p>T56 Only inspiration can not make you successful. Like Edison himself, one day his thought me should have light in dark. Perhaps every one of us has the same thought as him, but he *achieved because of his hard working.</p>	<p>achieved success</p>
<p>T87 Most of us may choose to *give up after 5 times, a few may last 10 or more, nearly no one can stick to doing it after 20 times.</p>	<p>give up his attempts</p>

The following examples will demonstrate this type of errors. The main reason for these errors is due to the confusion of TL verbs which are not only transitive but intransitive as well.

#### Example 1

He who makes a lot of effort but has not enough inspiration only can see the light of success, but he can't \*reach. (T65)

Correct form: He who...., but he cannot reach success.

The English verb 'reach' can be transitive and intransitive. But, 'reach' in example 1 should be transitive, being followed by an object 'success'. The learner's confusion with



verb transitivity is influenced by English verb feature that is both transitive and intransitive.

The example below is another one on the TL verb that is transitive and intransitive but is wrongly used by the learner.

#### Example 2

Most of us may choose to give up after 5 times (T61).

Correct form: Most of us may choose to \*give up it after 5 times.

According to the Longman Dictionary, the phrasal verb 'give up' is mainly transitive. This suggests that it has to be followed by an object or gerund form of another verb. Though in the dictionary, one example is an exception, such as 'I give up; tell me the end of the story.', with 'give up' meaning 'can't guess', the phrasal verb 'give up' in example 2 is diagnosed not to suggest 'can't guess' but to be transitive, and therefore should be followed by 'it'.

The following examples from the data: knowing too much TL grammatical rules on English part-of-speech will be presented below.

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T69	Someone *want to *be succeed	Someone wants to succeed
T99	It will successes.	It will succeed.
T24	He successes.	He succeeds.

#### Example 3

Someone want to be succeed. (T69)

Correct form: Someone wants to succeed.

The error in example 3 is caused by false hypothesizing the concept of the verb 'be'. 'Be' does not exist in MT Chinese syntax but exists in TL. We might suffice to say that the learners made errors not because they were ignorant of English, but because they knew too much TL English rule and thus committed the error. The correct form should be

‘want to succeed’ in the context. This example is also a case in point of overgeneralization, where the learners think that an act verb must always combine with the structure ‘to be’.

On the other hand, the learner may intend to express “want to be a success”. From the psychological cognitive point of view, the learner tried to bridge the former and current mental image of English pattern in which the noun “success” and the verb “succeed” were involved. However, the diverging from the former image took place, and “want to be succeed” occurred as a result.

Meanwhile, subject-verb agreement was also neglected by the learner by using ‘someone’ collocating with ‘want’ in example 3. Since the subject ‘someone’ is the third person, the verb ‘want’ should be added ‘-s’ into ‘wants’ in order to keep concord in morphology and syntax.

So, example 3 is a typical erroneous grammatical collocation due to the violation of TL grammatical collocation rule:

### 7.2.2.3 Intralingual Adjective + Noun Collocation Error

The third most common errors are the adjective + noun collocation errors among all intralingual errors from the point of view of grammatical structure indicated by the finding in the present study.

Selected examples from Appendix D: intralingual adjective + noun collocation errors from the grammatical structure will be presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T94	*Hardworked people didn’t get great achievement.	Industrious; Diligent
T24	Everyone *successful is perspirative.	Successful people

### Example 1

\*Hardworked people didn't get great achievement. (T94)

Correct form: Diligent people did not make great achievement.

Example 1 is violations of both lexical and grammatical collocations. The adjective 'hardworked' modifying the noun 'people' is coined by the learner at grammatical structure. The learner was aware of the English rule that past participle of verb usually can function as an adjective, which resulted in the overgeneralization. Therefore, the coined word 'hardworked' occurred. Meanwhile, 'hardworked people' is violation of lexical collocation which should be 'industrious or diligent people'.

The example below is an error resulting from insufficient knowledge of TL phrase.

### Example 2

Everyone successful is perspirative (T24)

Correct form: Successful people usually make great efforts.

Example 3 shows that the learner knows well that the position of English adjective modifier 'successful' is behind indefinite pronoun 'everyone' as a post-modifier. But, according to English rule of restrictive collocation, not all adjectives are post-modifiers when their head nouns are indefinite pronouns. The learner had overgeneralized that all adjectives can be positioned after the indefinite pronoun, and as a result, the erroneous collocation 'everyone successful' occurred.

The BNC concordance lines imply that 'everyone can be / is successful' or 'making everyone successful' occurs. The structure of 'everyone successful' does not occur in the BNC. Therefore, structurally, example 2 is diagnosed as an intralingual error due to violation of grammatical collocation.

#### **7.2.2.4 Intralingual Verb + Adverb Collocation Error**

The finding shows that this category of error is the lowest among all the categories of English collocation errors. This section will provide some examples to elaborate this type of error. The error is a result of ignorance of TL English restrictive rules.

##### **Example 1**

I \*extremely agree with it (T60).

Correct form: I strongly agree with it.

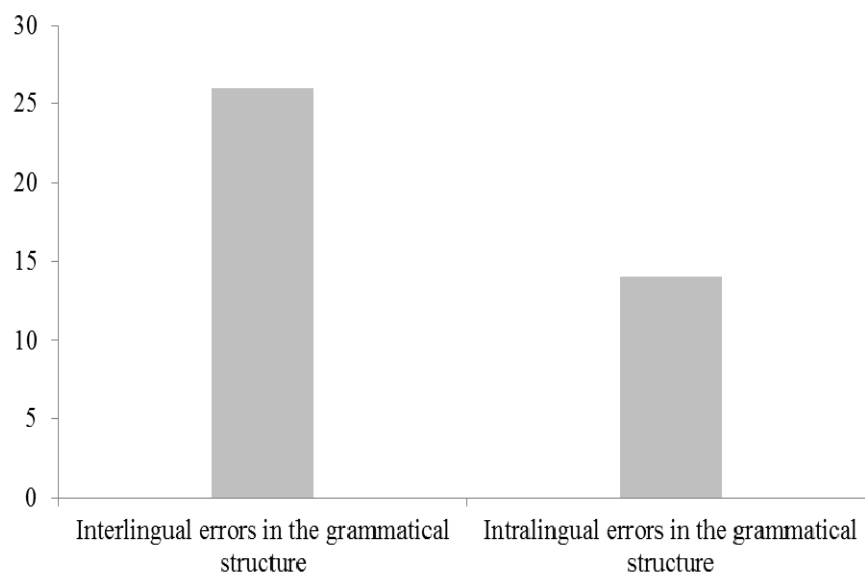
The learner had violated restrictive rule of the lexical collocation since the phrasal verb “agree with” could not be followed by adverb ‘extremely’. By searching in the British National Corpus (BNC), it displays that no token of ‘extremely agree with’ is found. In contrast, there are three tokens in ‘strongly agree with’, two tokens in ‘completely agree with’, and one token ‘absolutely / entirely agree with’ in BNC. This reveals that two adverbs ‘strongly’ and ‘completely’ are more acceptable collocates of the phrasal verb ‘agree with’ among native speakers.

The discussions in the next sections will focus on interlingual errors from the grammatical structure and in the semantic field. The criterion for determining whether an error is interlingual error from the grammatical structure is to find out if there is a distinct difference between Chinese and English in morphological form and other grammatical feature.

#### **7.2.3 Interlingual Errors identified from the Grammatical Structure**

Errors in the data due to the negative transfer from Chinese non-inflectional morphology in part-of-speech, non-phrasal verb, and from copula ‘be’ which does not exist in Chinese syntax fit into interlingual errors from the grammatical structure. Errors due to interference from the meaning of Chinese words fall into the errors in the semantic field.

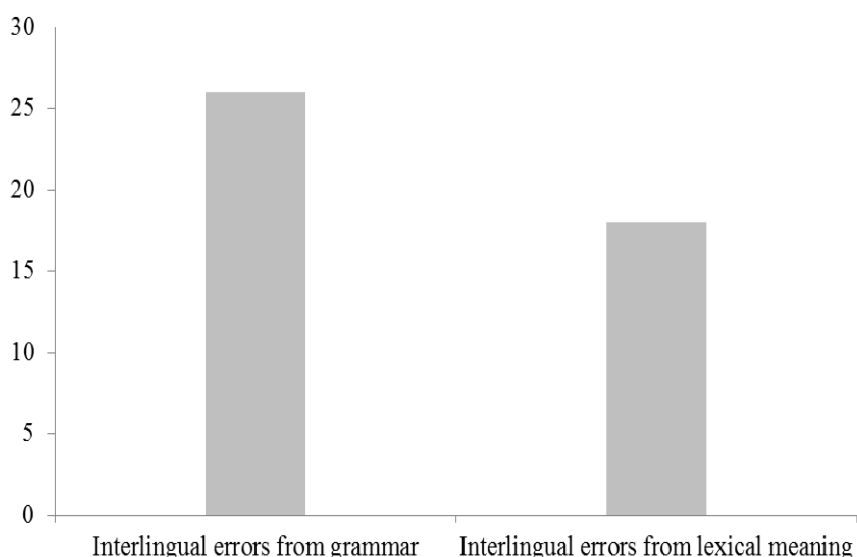
Figure 7.5 below shows the distribution of interlingual and intralingual errors found in the grammatical structures of the learners' sentences.



**Figure 7.5 Interlingual and Intralingual Errors from the Grammatical Structure**

Figure 7.5 shows that from the perspective of syntactic structure, interlingual errors nearly doubled the number of intralingual errors. This finding implies that errors in grammatical structure which are from interlingual source are more common than those from intralingual source for the Chinese learners. In other words, MT interference is mainly responsible for English collocation errors in the area of syntax.

Figure 7.6 below shows the percentage distribution of interlingual errors in the grammatical structure and in the semantic field.



**Figure 7.6 Interlingual Errors from the Grammatical Structure and from the Lexical Meaning**

Figure 7.6 shows that interlingual errors in grammatical structure are higher in occurrence than errors in the semantic field. The finding reveals that errors which are due to the interference from Chinese grammatical structure are more common than those interference errors resulting from semantic meaning of Chinese words. Therefore, it would be more difficult for the learner to overcome interference from Chinese grammatical structure.

The sections below, hence, will report the interlingual errors from the grammatical structure and explain them based on CA. For each class of error, a short explanation of the type of error will be provided before giving the examples found in the data. After the example, an explanation as how this could have occurred will be provided.

### **7.2.3.1 Interlingual Noun + Verb / Phrasal Verb Collocation Errors**

In this study, it was found that interlingual noun + verb collocation error ranks the highest among all subcategories of English collocation errors from interlingual source. Hence, this section will present some examples in order to demonstrate these errors. The main reason for such errors is the negative transfer of Chinese syntactic structures into

English syntactic structures. Chinese learners failed to transfer from the similar deep semantic structure between MT and TL English into surface grammatical form in syntax, mainly due to confusion of English part-of-speech, subject-verb agreement in person and number, or non-copulative verb “be” in passive voice.

As has been described in chapters 3 and 6, a Chinese word usually has no morphological forms in syntax. The part-of-speech of the Chinese word is up to its distribution in the sentence rather than its form. If a Chinese word is in the position of a subject / predicate, it is judged as the subject / predicate. So, incorrect form of the word ‘success’ instead of ‘succeed’ occurring in the position of the predicates was also identified in the study.

Selected examples from Appendix A: English noun + verb collocation errors due to this sort of confusion of English part-of-speech will be presented below:

This type of errors can be explained by examples 1 and 2:

Examples 1

It success. (T112)

Correct form: It succeeds.

Example 1 given above displays a cognitive process where Chinese learners in the process of orienting more meaning and less form resulted in them employing a surface structure strategy. This process can be reflected from the Chinese language without morphological form. In Chinese usually there is no morphological change between noun and verb *chenggong*, both are 成功. Thus, for Chinese learners, the English noun ‘success’ and the verb ‘succeed’ are identical, which can be written using the same form *chenggong* (成功). Chinese non-morphological orientation is also reflected on the subject-verb agreement in number and person just as ‘It success’ where no particle of ‘-s’ added in verb.

The similar explanation is also made for examples 2 and 3 below.

### Example 2

She can success. (T117)

### Example 3

You will success. (T112)

As has been described in chapters 3 and 5, English verb contains auxiliary verb including modal verb and thus noun + auxiliary verb + act verb collocation is treated as one subtype of noun + verb collocation. Like error in example 1, influenced by mother tongue Chinese the subjects do not distinguish noun ‘success’ from verb ‘succeed’ treating the two words as the same one *chenggong* (成功) in examples 2 and 3.

This kind of Chinese interference also takes place in English subject-predicate agreement in person and number. Selected examples from Appendix A: interlingual noun + verb collocation errors derived from this Chinese feature will be presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T101	Success *need some luck.	needs
T3	It is times that a *question *bother me – Is it the actual that success it out of reach without extremely scaring struggle?	Answer to a question bothers me.
T22	He often practices and eventually his inspiration and perspiration have been *paid back.	...eventually his inspiration and hard work have paid off.

The following examples illustrate confusion of TL subject-verb agreement in person and number as a result of MT interference.

### Example 4

Success \*need some luck. (T101).

Correct form: Success needs some luck.



#### Example 5

A question \*bother me.

Correct form: Answer to a question bothers me.

Examples 4 and 5 are violations of grammatical collocation due to disagreement between subject and verb in person and number. In Chinese there is no such feature, while English is characterized by an agreement between subject and verb or predicative in terms of person and number. For the Chinese learners, English morphological form of the verbs 'need' and 'needs' are the same as '需要', and both 'bother' and 'bothers' can be equal to '费心, 打扰'. As a result, the errors occurred. Meanwhile, example 5 is a typical violation of lexical collocation, since 'answer' instead of 'question' can collocate with 'bother' according to native speaking habits.

#### Example 6

He often practices and eventually his inspiration and perspiration have been \*paid back. He won the champion of the Spanish Football League (T22).

Correct form: ...Eventually, his inspiration and hard work have paid off.

Example 6 is another interference error due to Chinese 辛勤的汗水 'perspiration' which suggests 努力工作 'hard work'. Meanwhile, according to CA, English contains notional (or implied) passive voice such as in example 6 where 'paid off' presents active voice formally but implies passive voice. This is equivalent to Chinese 'be paid back' (回报). As a result, passive voice 'be + paid back' structure occurred. However, in the context, it is intended to express that hard work is rewarding. Thus, the correct form should be 'His inspiration and hard work have paid off' and this can be illustrated with the example from BNC, 'The hard work paid off and all the staff can now feel proud of these thriving and beautiful birds.'

The negative transfer of the Chinese active voice into the English passive voice was also identified in the data, an example of which is provided below.

Example 7

“Success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.” In my opinion, I agree with this word. The reason can \*list below. (T107)

Correct form: ...The reason for explaining this saying can be listed below.

Example 7 is a grammatical collocation error. Chinese syntax does not contain the copulative verb “be” in example 7, while the copulative verb “be” is an essential element in English passive construction (see section 6.5, Chapter 6). In the transformation from the similar deep semantic structure which MT Chinese shares with TL English, non-copulative verb “be” in Chinese grammatical structure occurred. This has been identified by CA in that the deletion of the copulative “be” is common when Chinese learners construct English passive sentences.

### **7.2.3.2 Interlingual Verb / Phrasal Verb + Noun Collocation Errors**

As described and listed in the previous chapters that verb + noun collocation covers phrasal verb + noun collocation. English verb includes phrasal verb and verb groups which is inexistence in Chinese. In the identification of collocation errors, phrasal verb + noun collocation errors were collected and counted into verb + noun collocation errors. In the case of verb + noun collocation errors, the present study found that this category of errors is the second in occurrence of frequency (11%) among all subtypes of interlingual English collocation errors.

The leading cause of more interlingual verb + noun collocation errors identified in the present study is the negative transfer from Chinese non-phrasal verb grammatical structure, as illustrated in the following examples:

Examples 1-4	Correct form
(1) He *idles his time everyday. (T23)	He idles away his time everyday.
(2) We can use electricity to *lit the darkness. (T49)	We can use electricity to light up the darkness.
(3) I don't *approve it (T108)	I do not approve of it.

In examples 1 to 3, the Chinese non-phrasal verbs which are structurally similar to the English phrasal verbs had a negative impact on the learners and therefore resulted in grammatical errors, though both enjoy one same deep semantic structure. In Chinese, phrasal verb 'idle away' and verb 'idle' is the same as '荒废', 'light up' and 'light' is '照亮', and 'approve of' and 'approve' is '同意'. The learners have no awareness of phrasal verb and verb in the use. As a result, the errors 1 – 3 occurred.

As has been described in chapter 6, an English predicate can be a single verb or a phrasal verb, and is either an intransitive verb or a transitive verb. Chinese, however, is not characterized by phrasal verbs, and a predicate is a single verb or adjectives / adjective phrases. As a result of this, the Chinese learners created erroneous verb + noun collocation errors.

The following example shows confusion of TL part-of-speech due to the MT interference. As described in chapter 3, auxiliary is allowed to occur in the type of collocation established in the present study.

#### Example 4

It will \*effect my life (T12)

Correct form: It will affect my life.

In Chinese, the noun 'effect' and the verb 'affect' is the same as '影响' in example 4, and therefore, the noun 'effect' is mistaken for the verb 'affect' and the error 'it will effect my life' occurred.

The next example shows the negative transfer of the Chinese intransitive verb into English transitive verb.

#### Example 5

When friends and classmates complain to me that someone is lucky to achieve one's own aim, I do not agree to. (T28).

Correct form: I do not agree to what they said.

In Chinese 同意 'agree to' is an intransitive verb, while in English the phrasal verb 'agree to' is transitive and compulsory to follow an object in example 5. As the result of interference from the Chinese language, the error occurred.

### **7.2.3.3 Interlingual Noun + PP Collocation Errors due to Interference of Chinese Noun + Noun Collocations**

The findings from the present study revealed that there are a higher percentage of interlingual error occurrences in noun + noun collocations (4.8%) than in adjective + noun collocations (2.2%). A Chinese coordinate compound is one in which the immediate constituents are in coordinate construction. The constituents in coordination are normally of the same form class, such as noun + noun coordination, adjective + adjective coordination, and so forth. In Chinese in the case of noun + noun collocation, the first noun acts as an attributive noun of the second head noun. Chinese attributive modifiers always precede the head noun. Most English attributive modifiers involving PPs, however, follow the head noun. When Chinese noun + noun coordinate compounding is negatively transferred into English head noun + PP structures, errors can occur. This section will provide some examples to demonstrate these errors which are due to negative transfer of Chinese coordinate compound structure.

Selected examples from Appendix D: English collocation errors due to interference from Chinese noun + noun collocation into English grammatical head noun

+ prepositional phrase (PP) structure will be presented below:

<b>Text LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T 13 He did <u>lamp experiment</u> more than one thousand times.	experiment for lamp
T 5 As long as his or her <u>intelligence quality</u> is not too low.	quality of intelligence

Two examples given below are chosen to demonstrate the errors due to Chinese collocation interference with English grammatical collocation where prepositions are involved.

#### Example 1

He did the lamp experiment more than one thousand times. (T13)

Correct form: He did the experiment for lamp for more than one thousand times.

Example 1 is a literal translation of the Chinese noun *diandeng* (电灯) + noun *shiyān* (实验) forming coordinate compound *diandeng shiyān* (电灯实验), which means 'experiment for lamp' in English noun + PP grammatical structure.

#### Example 2

As long as his or her intelligence quality is not too low. (T5)

Correct form: His or her intelligence quotient is not too low.

This is also direct translation of Chinese coordinate compound structure between the modifier noun *qingbao* (情报) 'intelligence' and the head noun *zhiliang* (质量) 'quality' which means "quality of intelligence" of English noun + PP structure. English native speakers are conventionally used to say 'quality of + noun', such as 'quality of education / material / service' by searching for 'quality' as a KWIC in the BNC. There are also a couple of other tokens such as 'dramatic / environmental / poor quality' in the BNC. Based on this, 'intelligent quality' may be acceptable. However, 'quality of intelligence' is more completely acceptable collocation than 'intelligent quality', since the former has a most frequency occurrence and conforms to native expression.

Meanwhile, the subject ‘quality’ cannot collocate with ‘be low’ which should be ‘be poor’. ‘Quantify’ rather than ‘quality’ can be ‘low’. The subject failed to distinguish noun ‘quality’ from ‘quantity’ and lacks common knowledge in both Chinese and English (质量是差的) ‘the quality is poor’, and thus produced ‘quality is low’. The acceptable form should be ‘His or her quality of intelligence is not too poor’. However, ‘quality of intelligence’ seems to be irregular to native speakers. Having been a further study, example 2 seems to intend to denote ‘intelligence quotient’. If this is true, the original phrase should be ‘as long as his or her intelligence quotient is not too low’, where the noun + noun collocation ‘intelligence quotient’ can be acceptable. So, example 2 is also a violation of lexical collocation, for the learner failed to go by the lexical collocation rule.

In addition, similar to the problem identified by using CA, error due to Chinese non-inflectional change of a word is also identified in English noun + noun collocation errors in this study.

#### Example 3

I have paid \*truth perspiration (T35)

Correct form: I have made real effort.

This error is due to the fact that a Chinese word goes unchanged in word form though a change of part-of-speech takes place in English. In Chinese, the noun ‘truth’ and the adjective ‘true’ is the same ‘真正的’, denoting ‘real’ state of something. So, this is a literal translation of ‘real effort’, which broke the lexical collocation rule.

#### **7.2.3.4 Interlingual Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors**

This section will provide some examples to show adjective + noun collocation errors which are due to the interference from the structure of the Chinese language.

### Example 1

Their speeches build them an \*honorable image to the society. (T3).

Correct form:

Their speeches build them a good image to the society

This is a literal translation of Chinese (受人尊敬的) ‘honorable’ + (形象) ‘image’, which should be ‘their speeches build them a good image to society’.

### Example 2

As the tea drink might not be popular, many \*company refuse his idea. (82)

Correct form: ..., many companies turned down him.

This is a typical violation of grammatical collocation due to negatively influencing of Chinese where there is no morphological form in plural forms of noun, which should be ‘many companies’ rather than ‘many company’.

## 7.2.3.5 Interlingual a / Numeral + Quantifying Noun + of + Head Noun Collocation

### Errors

The percentage of occurrence as given in the table 7.1 shows that a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation error (which is around 2.5%) ranks one of the lowest among all subtypes of English collocation errors. This type of error refers to English quantifiers and quantifying nouns. English errors concerning quantifying nouns were found in the data. According to the description earlier (section 6.5 in chapter 6), Chinese quantifiers always occur between a numeral and Chinese head noun, while English quantifiers occur only between the indefinite article 'a' or numeral and an English uncountable head noun. As a result of the influence from the MT, the learner constructed phrases as given in the following examples which are selected from the data:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T42	million of shoot at football match	millions of goals

T9	million premium	a million of premium
T71, T91	thousands of failure	thousands of failures

#### Example 1

He finished million of shoot at football match. (T42)

Correct form: He finished millions of goals

This phrase is a literal translated version from Chinese *baiwanci* (百万次) 'million' *de* 的 'of' *shemen* (射门) 'shoot' (百万次的射门), which means 'millions of goals'. Chinese noun has no difference between singular form 'million' 百万 and plural form 'millions' 百万, and as a result the error has occurred. Meanwhile, it is intended to express 'goal' rather than 'shoot' *shemen* (射门) in Chinese. So, example 1 is violations of both lexical and grammatical collocations. At lexical level in the context where at football match, 'millions of' and 'shoot' are mismatched. In the other context where 'shoot' refers to a new growth from a plant or a young stem and leaves, 'millions of shoots' can be acceptable. At grammatical level, plural form 'millions' is replaced by singular 'million' in the phrase 'millions of', therefore, 'million of' occurred.

#### Example 2

million premium (T9)

Correct form: a million of premiums

This phrase is influenced by Chinese *baiwan baoxianfei* “百万保险费” (million premium), and the error occurred, which should be 'a million of premiums'. In Chinese, a numeral can usually function as an adjective to modify any noun (no difference between countable and uncountable), which is distinct from English. In English both 'a million of' and 'millions of' are acceptable structure in native usage. Therefore, example 2 is also a violation of grammatical collocations.



### **7.2.3.6 Interlingual Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors**

In this section, examples will be given to demonstrate the adverb + adjective + noun collocation errors. The main reason for the errors is the ambiguity of English part-of-speech due to the interference from the non-inflectional morphology of the Chinese language.

The Chinese adjective is equal to the adverb in morphology. The part-of-speech of a Chinese word is determined by its distribution in the sentence. Interlingual adverb + adjective + noun collocation errors are those which are negatively transferred from this Chinese feature.

#### **Example 1**

It is an \*absolute wrong answer. (T69)

Correct form: It is an absolutely wrong answer.

This is a direct translation from Chinese 绝对错误的答案 'absolute wrong answer'. Chinese adjective '绝对的' meaning 'absolute' is the same as the adverb 绝对地 'absolutely', and therefore, the error occurred. In English, it should be 'it is an absolutely wrong answer' or 'the answer is absolutely wrong'.

### **7.2.4 Interlingual Errors found from the Lexical Meaning**

Some errors were due to interference from the Chinese lexical meaning of words. The expressions produced by the learners may be acceptable in English structurally but unconventional in English from the perspective of semantics due to the lack of English semantic compatibility.

#### **7.2.4.1 Semantic Non-Native Prosody (Discord)**

Semantic prosody is a study on whether a word is a semantic concord with its collocates or not (Wang and Zhang, 2005). Both individual words and phrases can have semantic prosody (Schmitt and Carter, 2004:7). In Stubbs' words (2002:255), between

some node and collocates present some typical semantic preference or semantic prosody (affective meanings of a given node with its typical collocates). However, there is semantic prosody limitation / control between two words or phrases, and the scope of the study on semantic prosody is smaller than that on collocation (Wang and Zhang, 2005). The semantic prosody focuses on typical semantic relationship between two words based on the collocation. It implies that between the English subject and verb semantic restrictions exist – semantic prosody in a sentential context. In English, only when some verbs / phrasal verbs come after those pronoun subjects which are [+ Human] or [+ Animate] there can be a semantic prosody. The finding in this study reveals that errors which present a sort of semantic non-native prosody (i.e. semantic discord – lacking English semantic compatibility) between the English subject and verb are more common (see Appendix A). They violate English semantic selection restriction rule of words on the syntactic level, even though they are true in terms of the grammatical structure and semantically plausible within that sentential context.

#### Example 1

Success will wait in front of you. (T10)

Correct form: Success will go to you.

This example is a semantic non-native prosody between the subject and the phrasal verb in English. Grammatically, the English phrasal verb ‘wait for’ comes after the agent ‘success’ and is followed by the pronoun ‘you’. Native speakers in BNC, however, use the form ‘wait for’ in a different way. The agents of the phrasal verb ‘wait for’ are usually animate subjects “I, she, he and we” and so forth:

I was waiting for another court case as well.

Tess was waiting for Angel to bring the horse and carriage.

She was waiting for an ambulance to take her to St Thomas’ Hospital.

He was waiting for the mountain rescue team to pick up.

We are waiting for you to sit down properly.

This is true of the example 2 below:

Example 2

Inspiration climbed up to his brain. (T82)

Correct form: Inspiration sprang.

In example 2, the agentive 'inspiration' links to phrasal verb 'climb up to' of which object is the position noun 'brain'. This is a Chinese translation. Native speakers, however, use another way. The following concordance lines from BNC indicate that the agent of 'climb up to' tends to be pronouns – which is to say the word with [+ Human] or [+ Animate], *they, he, I, we,* and *they* below:

They climbed up to the top floor and stood around in the corridor

I climbed up to his small attic room.

We climbed up to the road.

He climbed up to the catwalk.

They climbed up to the small tower

Another official climbed up to the platform.

I climbed up to the gateway of the bridge.

The Chinese learners of English in this study generated some similar sentences as shown below: selected examples (as data) from Appendix A: English noun + verb collocation errors due to MT Chinese semantic structure from animate agent into TL inanimate subject or vice versa are presented below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T21	Difficulties from many unknown sides are waiting for us.	We will encounter many difficulties unexpectedly.
T86	The chance always fled through his fingers.	Someone fled from... / He always loses the opportunity.

The occurrence of the error can be explained using the CA theory. A Chinese topic may be of any word class or any structure regardless of the fact that subject is animate or inanimate. Errors like those given in the above examples arise as a result of interference from the Chinese language during transformation from Chinese deep semantic structure into the generation of English surface grammatical structures. Based on concordance lines from BNC, ‘somebody wait for / climb up to / flee’ is acceptable in English syntax rather than ‘something climb to / tell / wait for something else.’

#### **7.2.4.2 Errors due to Collocation Strength of Words**

Collocation strength of words refers to classifying collocations according to collocation strength – degree of words' association (Lewis, 2000:63 and Abdaoui, 2010). Strong collocation refers to words that co-occur so frequently that when a word appears its collocate follows it most of the time. Weaker collocation implies that when two words collocate seldom, the strength drops and the collocation is not strong enough for the collocate to be expected since the words do not keep going together (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2008).

As has been identified through CA, errors derived from the collocation strength of verbs were also identified by the EA. For example, *get* (achieve) the gains (T5), *get* (draw) a conclusion (T50), and *get* (make) a great achievement are found in this data. In Chinese, the verb *dedao* (得到) *get* possesses strong collocation strength in combining with other nouns. Associative reasoning adopted by the Chinese learner is that, the verb *dedao* (得到) *get* can be semantically co-occurring with the verbs *qude* (取得), and *huode* (获得), which are, however, a semantic gap in English. The conceptualized Chinese verb *dedao* (得到) has different English equivalents: *get*, *obtain*, *gain*, *achieve*, and *secure*. Chinese students retrieved this group of verbs from their mental lexicon. In Chinese culture, the verb 取得 / 获得 / 得出 can collocate with the nouns 成就 (achievement), 收获 (gains)

and 结论 (conclusion). These combinations are unacceptable in native habits. However, influenced by Chinese, students chose ‘get’ and produced habitual L1 Chinese expressions.

#### **7.2.4.3 Errors due to Negative Transfer of Chinese Compounds**

Chinese compounds contain coordinate noun + noun compound, endocentric adjective + noun compound, verb + adverb compound, and so forth. A four-character compound is the Chinese preference. When this Chinese feature is negatively transferred into English, tautology which is a technical reference to redundancy in language (Wang, 2006) arises.

Redundancy error such as ‘ten years time’ was also detected from the data in the sentence ‘He took ten years time to achieve his success’ (T90), which is Chinese literal translation. In Chinese, Chinese numeral ‘十’ (ten) + noun ‘年’ + noun (时间) = 十年的时间 ‘ten years time’ is acceptable collocation, which should be ‘ten years’ in English. According to CA, to avoid ambiguity and to reinforce meaning, the Chinese language usually uses two words close in meaning together. Such feature of the compounding words is acceptable and viewed as usage in Chinese, which is, however, treated as tautology and semantically disharmonious combinations in the English language.

In the case of the phrase ‘totally black water’ (black water) (T73), it is also a kind of L1 interference from Chinese. As described and identified by CA, an English word annotating to a limited concept is viewed as “absolute”, and therefore, these words usually cannot be intensified, while a Chinese word annotating to a limited concept is considered as “relevant”, and accordingly can be intensified by a pre-modifier to emphasize the tune. So, the adverb ‘totally’ can be used to modify ‘black’ in Chinese.

Likewise, erroneous phrasal verbs ‘combine...together’ in ‘we need inspiration to combine these knowledge together’ was identified from the student’s essay (T12). In Chinese ‘把...与...结合起来’ ‘combine together’ is usage, but is thought of as a tautology or redundancy in English since the verb ‘combine’ carries the meaning of the adverb ‘together’. Negatively influenced by Chinese conventional expression, the English collocation error occurred, which should be ‘combine these with knowledge’.

#### **7.2.4.4 Negative Transfer from the Chinese Metaphor of a Word**

This study also found errors derived from negative transfer from Chinese connotations of words. Learners associated an entity with an attributive sense, thus resulting in the creation of an enriched meaning (Gillian, 2003).

##### **Example 1**

sunlight of success (T82)

Correct form: hope of success

This error in example 1 is negatively transferred from the Chinese metaphorical meaning of *chenggong zhi guang* (成功之光), which means ‘hope of success’ in English.

##### **Example 2**

Success likes perspiration. (T47).

Correct form: Success is due to hard work.

Or: Success goes to those who work hard.

The error in example 2 results from the arbitrariness of Chinese topics in topic-comment structure. The learner used the Chinese rhetorical strategy of Chinese-personification, which implied that ‘成功总是喜欢那些勤奋工作的人’ (Success likes those persons who work hard’. However, it is unacceptable in English convention and the correct form should be ‘Success is due to hard work’ or ‘Success goes to those who work hard’ based on the context.

#### 7.2.4.5 Wrong Lexical Choice due to Cross-Cultural Semantics

Some errors were completely due to cross-cultural difference between MT and TL semantics. This kind of error is most prevalent among adjective + noun collocation errors as illustrated below:

##### Example 1

There is \*good inspiration (T 38, 51, 75 and 98)

Correct form: great inspiration

##### Example 2

(My mind prouced) \*proper inspiration (T52)

Correct form: inspiration

Examples 1 and 2 are interference errors due to Chinese culture and value. Psychologically, it may be influenced by the Chinese “good spirits / 好的幽灵” and “bad spirits 坏的幽灵”, the learners generalized and composed “good inspiration 好的灵感”, for two Chinese disyllabic words “幽灵” and “灵感” shared the monosyllabic word “*lin* / 灵” and thus, this mental tendency of symmetry led the learners to produce the phrase ‘good inspiration’ in contrast to ‘bad inspiration’, and ‘proper inspiration’ in contrast to ‘improper inspiration’.

Native speakers from BNC tend to choose adjective collocates of the noun ‘inspiration’, like ‘great’, ‘much’, ‘deeper’, ‘early’, ‘main’, ‘a real’, ‘a kind of’, ‘a fresh of’, and so forth rather than ‘good inspiration’ or ‘proper inspiration’.

#### 7.2.5 Errors caused by Circumlocution

An error resulting from the use of strategies like circumlocution is one type of performance errors while transfer and intralingual errors are attributed to competence errors (Ellis, 1997:58). A learner makes use of circumlocution in order to overcome the lack of TL knowledge (Ellis, 1997:58). When lacking the most suitable L2 item, a

learner uses a less suitable L2 item by circumlocution strategy (Wetzorke, 2005). Circumlocution strategy suggests using a number of words unnecessarily to find an approximate way to express a TL item. Those expressions which use circumlocution are semantically plausible within the sentential context. Overall, 2% percent of the total number of English collocation errors identified from the data in this study was attributed to circumlocution strategy. The finding reveals that the source of circumlocution errors also accounts for English collocation errors. Therefore, the sections below will report such errors and then explain them.

#### 7.2.5.1 Noun + (Auxiliary) + Verb Collocation Errors due to Circumlocution

The finding reveals that noun + verb collocation errors due to circumlocution were the most common among all subcategories of errors (see table 7.1). Thus, the following examples will illustrate these errors, which are selected from Appendix A: English noun + verb collocation errors due to circumlocution.

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T76	We set out our foot.	We set out.
T86	Your 99% perspiration will in some day give results to you.	Your 99% of perspiration will be rewarding some day.
T91	The future in front of you is a transparent ruler. You can judge your effort on it.	Your future depends upon your effort.

All above selected examples show that they need wording, for some Chinese learners failed to retrieve suitable English substitution from their former knowledge of TL and thus turned to paraphrasing strategy. As a result, the errors occurred. The following examples illustrate this:

##### Example 1

We set out our feet (T76).

Correct form: We set out.



### Example 2

Your 99% perspiration will in some day give results to you. (T86)

Correct form: Your 99% of effort will be rewarding some day.

Examples 1 and 2 show that an initial implement of a production plan failed due to ignorance of an L2 equivalent and the learner used circumlocution strategy or resorted to paraphrase to locate in the L2 some alternative means to express their meaning. This circumlocution strategy results in the unnecessary wording in the two expressions.

The English equivalents of the above examples are supposed to be 'We set out.' in example 1 and 'Your effort or hard work is rewarding some day.' in example 2 where the noun 'perspiration' refers to 'effort' or 'hard work' in the context of original student essay.

#### **7.2.5.2 Verb + Direct Object + Indirect Object Collocation Errors due to Circumlocution**

Errors due to circumlocution were also diagnosed in the data in verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation. The following is example of verb + direct object + indirect object which is considered as one type of verb + noun collocation error due to the use of circumlocution.

### Example 1

Perspiration makes the average people very good persons who become successful. (T31)

Correct form: Hard work makes people successful.

As a consequence of failure to find a best TL item, the student had used circumlocution approach to paraphrase the intended expressions like example 1. However, in English, this is thought of as redundancy.

### **7.2.5.3 Verb + Adverb Collocation Errors due to Circumlocution**

Errors derived from using circumlocution were also found in verb + adverb collocation errors.

#### **Example 1**

I agree with what he said without any doubts (T21)

Correct form: I completely agree with what he said

When failing to find a TL item, the learner used circumlocution. As a result, the error occurred.

## **7.3 Discussion on the Type of Collocation Errors made by the Chinese Learners of English**

The purpose of conducting EA on the essays of the Chinese learners of English was to answer the second research question (RQ2) in this study:

“What are the types of collocation errors that are most frequently made by the Chinese learners of English?”

The present study investigated seven types of English collocation errors. They are English noun + noun / prepositional phrase collocation, noun + verb collocation (including noun + phrasal verb, noun + auxiliary verb + act verb), verb + noun (including phrasal verb + noun) collocation, adjective + noun collocation, verb + adverb collocation, adverb + adjective + noun collocation and ‘a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun’ collocation errors. Among them, this study identified that two categories of English collocation errors have higher occurrence: noun + verb (phrasal verb / auxiliary verb + act verb) (48%) and verb / phrasal verb + noun (30%) collocation.

This study also found out that intralingual errors (around 54%), interlingual errors (around 44%) and circumlocution (2%) are responsible for English collocation errors identified from EA carried out through this study. In particular, the finding that

intralingual errors due to context (40%) indicates that Chinese learners of English collocation errors were not simply caused by MT interference but mainly by violation of TL restrictive rules of collocation in the context. Verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors (16%) and noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors (14%) due to context were most common among Chinese learners of English.

This study found that collocation errors at lexical level between two individual words that tend to co-occur from compounding and lexical semantic restriction have a higher occurrence than errors in morphology and syntax at grammatical level. That is, lexical collocation errors are found more than grammatical collocations errors by the present study. This finding suggests that it is more problematic for Chinese learners to deal with appropriate use of two independent words in lexical collocation which conforms to native speaker's speaking habits. Among seven types of collocation errors identified from the data in the present study, noun + verb type of collocation errors have the highest number and percentage for both violations of lexical and grammatical collocations, followed by is verb + noun type of collocation errors. This finding reveals that noun + verb and verb + noun collocations are major problems from both lexical and grammatical levels. Violation of grammatical collocations (23.7%) in the type of noun + verb collocation errors has almost the same frequency occurrence as violation of lexical collocations (22%). This finding reveals that Chinese learners feel it equally difficult to learn English noun + verb collocation (or English subject-predicate structure) in terms of lexical match for semantic restriction and in morphology and syntax. In the case of verb + noun type of collocation errors, the finding that violation of lexical collocations (20%) doubles that of grammatical collocations (9.8%) suggests that problems with verb + noun collocation for Chinese learners lie more in the lexical semantic selection in order to attain a match between verb and noun than in morphological form of them.

Furthermore, this study found that lexical collocation errors due to intralingual source have the highest frequency occurrence (40%) identified from data, which are more than those due to interlingual source (18%). This finding reveals that intralingual errors are more responsible for collocation errors at lexical level, which are mainly derived from insufficient knowledge on collocation of a TL word in the context.

At grammatical level, this study found that interlingual errors due to confusion of TL subject-verb agreement in number (8.7%) have the most number and percentage of collocation errors in morphology and syntax, followed by negative transfer from Chinese non-phrasal verb (5.6%) and confusion of part-of-speech from Chinese non-morphological form in word formation (5.3%). These findings indicate that in grammatical level, those TL English grammatical features which Chinese does not bear are more problematic for Chinese learners, such as subject-verb concord in person and number, non-morphological form including non-phrasal verb and non-part-of-speech.

The findings in this study also reveal that Chinese learners confronted many problems with English synonymous verbs and adjectives as well as overuse de-lexicalized due to the violation of English verb or adjective restrictive rules of collocation in the context.

These findings of intralingual errors reveal that for the Chinese learners, in general, their knowledge is insufficient on how to use TL English collocations in the context and English verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation and noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation in the context in particular.

This study found out that interlingual errors accounted for around 44% percent of English collocation errors. This means that interference from the mother tongue also contributes to the English collocation errors made by the Chinese learners. The distribution of percentages of types of errors due to interference were around: 22.5% of noun + verb errors (including noun + phrasal verb collocation errors and noun +

auxiliary + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors), 11% of verb + noun collocation errors (including phrasal verb + noun collocation errors), 5% of noun + noun collocation errors including noun + prepositional phrase collocation errors, 2.5 % of a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation errors, 2% of adjective + noun collocation errors, 0.6% of adverb + adjective + noun, and 0.6% verb + adverb collocation errors.

The Chinese learners in this study were found to underuse English post-modifiers but overuse noun + noun collocations. Chinese attributive modifier nouns are found to be negatively transferred into English equivalents of prepositional phrases (PPs) as attributive modifiers following the head nouns. Due to the interference from the MT Chinese, this study also found that there was ambiguity of part-of-speech of English in noun + noun collocation and in adjective + noun collocation just as identified by CA.

It is found from this study that Chinese learners tend to make inappropriate use of verbs regardless of non-native semantic prosody between verb and subject or inappropriate use of verbs where there was semantic gap between TL and MT equivalent verbs. This study also found that due to Chinese coordinate compound or cultural interference Chinese students tend to use tautology or redundancy in their production of English noun / adjective + noun collocation, noun + verb collocation, verb + noun collocation and adverb + adjective + noun, which is in agreement with those likely types of difficulties identified by CA.

In conclusion, these interlingual errors found from the data in this study from TL English grammatical structure and lexical semantic restriction indicate that there is a negative effect of MT Chinese on the learning of TL English collocations.

English collocation errors due to circumlocution (2%) indicate that in addition to the major intralingual and interlingual categories of errors, other source of error also is responsible for English collocation errors.

## CHAPTER 8

### **PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS ON THE ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS DRAWN FROM FINDINGS OF CONTRASTIVE AND ERROR ANALYSES**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to compare the findings obtained through the Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA) with reference to the difficulties of learning English collocations encountered by the Chinese learners. In Chapter 6, CA was used to predict the potential problems with the types of English collocation areas that Chinese learners are likely to encounter. In Chapter 7, EA of the Chinese learners' essays was conducted in order to find out whether the predictions of CA could be confirmed by EA. So, based on the findings from CA and EA, this chapter tries to answer the third research question (RQ3):

“What are the areas of difficulty and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations from the perspective of (a) Contrastive Analysis and (b) Error Analysis?”

The other purpose of this chapter is to examine the interaction between the findings from CA and EA and college TEFL or ELT programs in the pedagogical practice.

Section 8.3 and section 8.4 will discuss pedagogical implications drawn from the findings based on structural grammar-translation approach and section 8.5 will focus on communicative approach to teaching the type of English collocations.

#### **8.2 Contrast of Areas of Difficulty in the Learning of English Collocations**

This section will make a contrast and discussion between the findings from Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 based on the following questions:

- a) Are the areas of difficulties identified through CA and EA similar or different?
- b) In what areas were the findings similar?
- c) In what areas were they different?
- d) What are the actual areas of difficulties found in EA but not identified by CA?

Some of the areas of difficulties obtained through CA and EA are similar, others are different. They can be contrasted in the form of table 8.1 below. Plus “+” indicates that area of difficulty from CA is similar to EA with percentage indicating data obtained from EA, while minus “-” indicates the different areas between findings from CA and EA. Percentage given within the brackets indicates the total number of errors.

**Table 8.1**

**Contrast between the Area of Difficulty Identified through CA and EA due to Differences between the two Languages**

Area of difficulty	Findings	From CA	From EA
Noun + verb collocation		+	(22%)
	English inanimate subjects are equivalent to Chinese animate subjects or English animate subjects are identical to Chinese inanimate subjects. /	+	6.3%
	non-semantic prosody between English subject and predicate	+	0.9%
	Passive voice in English superficially with copulative verb ‘be’ is equivalent to active voice of Chinese in syntax.	+	0.6%

	English notional passive voice (active voice in form but passive voice implied)	+	0.3%
	English grammatical concord between verb and subject in person and number	+	8.5%
	English obligatory subject which matches the omission of Chinese subject	+	+
	English part-of-speech	+	4.1%
	Chinese subjects (place noun subject, adjective subject, coordinate VP as a subject, determinative VP as a subject, omission of Chinese subject)	+	—
	Chinese allows omission of subject pronouns in syntax	+	—
	Chinese transitivity	+	0.3%
	Chinese connotation	+	0.9%
Verb + noun collocation			(11%)
	Negative transfer of Chinese non-phrasal verb in double objects in the SVO structure	+	5.7%
	Conversion of English part-of-speech	+	0.9%
	English noun phrases with prepositional phrases as an instrument or a purpose or a manner of verbs	+	—
	Verb transitivity	+	0.3%
	Negative transfer from Chinese semantic structure	+	4.1%
English modifiers		+	(10%)
	Noun + Noun Compound interference to English	+	1.3%



Noun + Prepositional Phrases (PPs) collocation		
English plural forms of head noun in modifier noun + head noun collocation, such as 'school activities' (学校活动 / school activity)	+	0.3%
Confusion of English part-of-speech in noun + noun collocation such as 'safty car' (安全车/safe car' in Chinese)	+	0.3%
Negative transfer from Chinese compound 'road' (道路 'road road' in Chinese)	+	1.9%
Negative transfer from Chinese noun connotation in noun + PP collocation such as 'light of success' (成功的曙光) 'hope of success'	+	1.3%
Negative transfer from Chinese adjective connotation	+	1.9%
The position of adjectives which come after the head noun in English but come before the head noun in Chinese, such as 'something important' (一些重要的事 / important something)	+	0.3%
English plural form of noun in English adjective + countable noun collocation such as 'many students' (许多学生 / many student in Chinese)	+	0.3%
The English quantifying nouns in the case where the head noun is uncountable noun in a / numeral + of + noun collocation.	+	2.5%
Some English adverb intensifications such as 'deeply', 'closely' and 'horribly' which mean the intensifier	+	—

	particle 'very' in English adverb + adjective + noun collocation.		
	Chinese with no morphological form in adverb + adjective + noun, where adverb occurs without the suffix '-ly' but word 'DE' (地)		0.5%
Intralingual errors	Problems with TL: ignorance of TL restrictive collocation rules; overgeneralization, false hypothesizing concept of words and misapplication of word in the context.	—	54%
Circumlocution errors	Noun + Verb / Phrasal Verb, Verb / Phrasal Verb + Noun, Noun + Noun and Verb + Adverb Collocations	—	2%

Table 8.1 shows that vast majority of the areas of difficulty identified through CA are similar to those found through EA in terms of interlingual source of errors shown as plus '+' and percentage. As identified by CA, this study found by EA that 8.5% of English noun + verb collocation errors were found to result from grammatical concord between verb and subject in person and 6.3% percent of noun + verb collocation errors were found to result from MT Chinese topics being used as English subjects in terms of animate or inanimate agent. Ambiguity of English part-of-speech makes up 5.8% among noun, verb, adjective and adverb collocation errors. This finding that a total of 44% of errors predicted by CA occurred in the EA verifies that CA can help in predicting what types of errors which might occur in the real context.

However, as shown in table 8.1, few types of difficulty identified in CA did not occur in EA, and also some errors found in EA were not identified in CA, shown as minus '-'. In the area of noun + verb collocation, there is one type: Chinese allows omission of

subject pronouns in syntax. In the verb + noun collocation, there is one type: English noun phrases with prepositional phrases as an instrument or a purpose or a manner of verbs. In the area of modifier, there is one type such as English adverb intensifications such as ‘deeply’, ‘closely’ and ‘horribly’ which mean the intensifier particle ‘very’ in English adverb + adjective + noun collocation.

The answer will be simple to the question why these three types of collocation errors which were predicted in CA did not occur in the EA. As described previously, English and Chinese belong to completely different language family and system. Chinese is topic-comment oriented and English is subject-predicate oriented structure. Chinese has a more phrase / syntactic oriented structure which have no morphology as its core grammar. Collocation at different levels of language structure plays an important role in explaining, interpreting and understanding Chinese construction. Issues regarding collocations between Chinese and English accordingly become more complicated. Therefore, it is quite normal that several cases predicted in CA were not identified in EA through a simple list.

Specifically, the reason why the types of collocations listed above identified through CA were not found in EA may be that the subjects in this study might have used avoidance strategy. For instance, ‘miss somebody badly’ can be replaced by ‘miss somebody too much’, so adverb ‘badly’ which means the intensifier particle ‘very’ in English adverb + adjective + noun did not emerge. Or it is possible that some collocation is not necessarily to occur due to restriction to the given topic from which the data are drawn, such as English noun phrases with prepositional phrases as an instrument or a purpose or a manner of verbs, which is predicted in CA but not occur in EA. Or it is likely that the subjects acquired well concerning that type of collocation such as errors due to interference from Chinese in which it allows omission of subject pronouns in syntax, which is also foreseen in CA but not occur in EA. Or if the data

collected for this study may have been inadequate to make those error occurrences. Or the subjects in this study might have been at the intermediate / advanced level of English. If the subjects would have been the beginners of English, these contrastive errors could have arisen according to the principle of CA.

The intralingual errors due to context and grammatical structure and a small proportion of errors due to circumlocution which were found in EA but not identified by CA in this study suggest that EA solves the problem in the theoretical CA and thus proves EA a more effective approach than CA in identifying all possible sources of errors among learners of English, as EA captures both interlingual and intralingual errors. EA analyzes not merely the products of native language habits but also the learner's attempt to figure out some of the inner intralingual strategies and other learning strategies.

This finding from EA that intralingual errors and errors due to circumlocution were not predicted by CA suggests that analyzing the patterns of the types of collocation in both languages in the CA does not contribute to predicting all types of errors which might occur in real written context.

### **8.3 Hierarchy of Difficulty from the Perspective of CA and EA and Pedagogical Implications**

This section will present findings on the hierarchy of difficulty by CA and EA. The discussion will be focused on the following:

- What are the areas in which similarities are found in terms of hierarchy?
- What are all the areas in which differences are found in terms of hierarchy?

Table 8.2 shows the contrast between the hierarchy of seven types of English collocations identified through CA and EA:

**Table 8.2****Hierarchy of Difficulty from the Perspective of CA and EA**

<b>Subcategory of Error</b>	<b>Hierarchy of difficulty from CA</b>	<b>Hierarchy of difficulty from EA (%)</b>
Noun + Verb Collocation	+	48
Verb / + Noun Collocation	+	30
Adjective + Noun Collocation	+	9.5
Noun + Noun (Noun + PP)	+	8.9
a / Numeral + Quantifying Noun + of + Head Noun Collocation	+	2.5
Adverb + Adjective + Noun	+	0.6
Verb + Adverb Collocation	+	0.6

Table 8.2 indicates that from the perspective of CA and EA, type of English noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors ranks number one among the seven categories of English collocation errors. English verb + noun collocation error is the second ranking. This is followed by English adjective + noun collocation and noun + noun collocation errors in that order. The rest of the subcategories of English collocation errors have a lower rank.

The hierarchy of seven categories of English collocation errors found through EA corresponded to those identified on the basis of CA. Thus, it proves the usefulness of CA to identify the level of difficulty.

Therefore, pedagogically, the presentation of types of English collocations should be based on this finding from the most difficult area to the least difficult one.

The following is the presentation of collocations between a KWIC 'inspiration' collocating with other words from the data and from BNC based on grammatical structure method.

This approach to provide students with correct form by native speakers (NSs) can help students analyze the grammatical, semantic and pragmatic features of a certain TL word, which can promote the effectiveness of teaching the collocations. The procedure of this structural approach in presenting the types of collocation from the most difficult area to the least difficult is as follows:

(a) Teacher presents the target expressions of ‘inspiration’, which are displayed in the right column. Draw students’ attention to what comes before and after the target words in target corpus BNC.

(b) Then present students with the learner data in the middle column. Checking what learners produced (LC) and making contrast with BNC (NL) with the concordance lines of “inspiration”, it can be seen where the learners deviate from the standard conventional English usage. By imitating the NS English collocations and patterns, students can not only identify their problems but also correct them. Some generalizations can be made about the English language rules and regularities by a contrast between learner’s corpus (LC) and TL.

<b>Type of</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>BNC</b>
<b>Collocation:</b>		
Inspiration + Verb / Phrasal Verb:	appear, include, break out, come out, have, make, take us into	come / draw from, dry up, struck by, spring, manifests
Verb / Phrasal Verb + Inspiration:	make up, be made up by, be made up of, be built up with, be composed of, give up, look down to, have, likes, depend on, need, pay, make up for	seek / gain / draw...from, find...in, look for, be in search of, replace, lack, indicate, offer,

Adjective +	good (2), proper	great, some, theological
Inspiration:		
Noun +		source of inspiration
Preposition +		
Inspiration:		
A+of+		a flash / kind / lot / of inspiration
Quantifying		
Noun +		
Inspiration:		

Students will find “inspiration” from the above presentation in differences between learners and native speakers in the use of *inspiration*, feeling that native speakers seem to have a wider range of word selection in different categories of collocations with *inspiration*, while learners are limited in their selection of collocates with *inspiration*.

By searching for “inspiration” from the BNC and LC, students will figure out how native speakers use verbs or phrasal verbs collocating with “inspiration” and that how Chinese learners use them differently. After translation, students will learn that many LC sample sentences are MT Chinese literal translations. This presentation can oblige students to memorize the correct collocates of the noun “inspiration” in a local context and get rid of the inappropriate composition of TL collocations.

The following is a procedure for a teacher to present types of English collocations from most likely difficult area (collocations between nouns and verbs) to least likely difficult area (attributive modifiers) with example of one KWIC ‘inspiration’ in the concordance lines, which is also based on the grammatical structural approach:

Noun + Verb	Example from BNC
+ Object	
Collocation:	
	(1) Leadership has found its inspiration.
	(2) Inspiration was drawn from somebody.
	(3) Clint obviously derives a lot of inspiration from West Coast rock.
	(4) He gained great inspiration from it.
	(5) They seek out some inspiration for the action.
	(6) His inspiration comes from a diversity of sources.
English	(7) Declarations make explicit reference to their theological inspiration.
Attributive Modifier + Head Noun:	(8) It was a kind of inspiration to me as I was the only black kid in the area. (9) Delightful book will prove an inviting source of encouragement and inspiration to many.

In the teaching, teachers need to give priority to the type of collocations between nouns and verbs from two classifications of collocations: (a) lexical compounding between nouns and verbs. Teachers will direct students to know when the subject is an animate somebody, the verb collocates of ‘inspiration’ are usually ‘find / draw / derive / gain / seek out’ in examples 1 – 5. When the subject is an inanimate ‘inspiration’, it can be followed by predicate phrasal verb ‘come’ in example 6, (b) grammatical collocations from the morphological form of verbs in subject-predicate structure presented above, such as ‘found’, ‘drawn / derives / comes / gained from’, and ‘seek out’.

In attributive modifier + head noun collocations, teachers can generalize that native speakers tend to use ‘a lot of / great / some / a diversity of / theological / a kind of / source of / a flash of’ to modify the head noun ‘inspiration’.



After reinforcing the correct form of TL English collocations with ‘inspiration’, students can find that those collocations such as ‘inspiration comes out / break out / be composed of / likes’, ‘good / proper inspiration’ and so forth diverge from the native English form and come to realize what correct form will be in the future use by using CA between native English language and learner language.

#### **8.4 Areas of Difficulty in the Learning of English Collocations and Pedagogical Implications**

In this section, the pedagogical suggestion will begin with those areas of difficulty identified through CA and EA in terms of interlingual source and then move on to the intralingual source to show how this knowledge can benefit teachers when they teach English collocations.

The presentation of teaching English collocation is mainly based on structural grammar-translation approach in the sections below.

##### **8.4.1. Pedagogical Implications from Noun + Verb / Phrasal Verb Collocation**

###### **Errors**

By using CA, this study identifies that English noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation is the most likely difficult area for the Chinese learners of English. By using EA, noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors have 54% of occurrence among the total categories of English collocation errors identified from the data.

Around 6.3% of errors from EA are found due to the interference from Chinese animate subject to English inanimate subject or vice versa. Therefore, the following sections will discuss this problem along with its pedagogical implications.

Since collocations between noun ‘success’ and other words has a higher occurrence in the data, including “success + verb”, “subject + verb + success”, and “subject + be + a success” in noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation, and therefore

selected as a typical example used for the presentation of steps of teaching noun + verb collocation patterns with examples given below:

(a) Presentation of TL

Teachers present students with patterns drawn from authentic materials about “success + verb”, “subject + verb + success”, and “subject + be / verb + a success” in noun + verb collocation. The text of English authentic materials would contain features of the TL English patterns. It will provide the learners with the way the English language is structured and the way the particular word or phrase behaves. After a set of texts which meets these requirements are drawn up, a series of communicative tasks are needed to design. The texts of authentic materials needed are presented below from BNC:

Priorities must ensure that economic success **goes** hand in hand with responsibility.

That was as far as their success **went**, though.

Success **depends on** three interrelated factors.

I have not **had** much success in my application for jobs.

We are determined to **make a** success of audit regulation.

I can hang wallpaper and **make a** success of it.

You will **achieve** success only if you set about it in right way.

The most successful companies **achieve** success.

Business can **lead to** success.

The business was to **be a success**.

The scheme was judged to **be a success**.

Philip was confident she'd **be a success**.

They might **struggle for** success in this season.

You will **long for** success with television.

### (b) Analysis of TL

By observation of the examples given from BNC, the students will identify and make inference that inanimate subject “success” usually links to verbs “go” and “depend on” which are commonly used by the native speakers in the pattern “success + verb”. In these two grammatical structures, TL English presents morphological forms such as ‘went’, ‘goes’, and ‘depends on’. In contrast, in pattern “sb. / sth + verb + success” when the object is “success”, the verb collocates usually are “make”, “have”, “achieve”, or “lead to”. When “success” is a predicative, the indefinite article “a” cannot be omitted, which should be “be a success”. That is, “sb / sth have (a) success”, “sb make a success of sth.”, “sth / sb is a success” and “sth lead to success” are acceptable patterns in TL English.

### (c) Presentation of Learner Language (LC)

Students are called upon to translate the following sentences (from data) into MT Chinese and try to figure out what each English equivalent is according to the TL rules of collocations at the lexical and grammatical levels based on the second step.

(1) Success is waiting for you (T70)

成功在等待者我们。

(2) Success will wait in front of you. (T10)

成功将在你前方等待着。

(3) Success is very close to you. (T84)

成功离你很近。

(4) We can never sit and wait the success to find us out. (T10)

我们从不坐等成功来找我们。

(5) Their diligent make their way to success. (T31)

勤奋使他们走向了成功。

(d) Practice

Ask students to keep English collocation rules drawn from the second step in their minds in the use of “success”, and make a contrast between Chinese equivalents identified from the third step in terms of subject, verb / phrasal verb, and object in the sentence between two languages. Finally, ask students to make a correction of sentences 1-5 of LC based on the rules acquired.

(e) Production

Having examined what the students have done on error correction, teachers then present the correct English equivalents of sentences 1-5:

- (1) Success is going to you. / Sb. is waiting for you.
- (2) Success will go to you. / Sb. will wait for you.
- (3) You will step towards success. / Sth. is close to something else.
- (4) Success can never go to those who sit idle but get everything.
- (5) Someone makes his way to success (by hard work). / Diligence leads them to success. / Success depends on diligence.

Take sentence 4 as an example to demonstrate how to make a contrast between sample sentence, MT Chinese and TL English as given below:

Chinese:	women	congbu	zuodeng	chenggong	lai	zhao	women
	我们	从不	坐等	成功	来	找	我们
	we	never	sit and wait	success	come	find	us.(T10)

English: Success can never go to those who sit idle but get everything.

Facing this sample sentence in English, students are required to translate it into Chinese and make a contrast between Chinese and English agent subjects side by side. Based on CA, students will be aware that TL English inanimate agent subject ‘success’ was wrongly replaced by Chinese agent animate topic ‘我们’ (we). Therefore, Chinese learners, normally, make reference of TL English collocation rule obtained from the

second step, that English agent subject usually links to verb 'go' or phrasal verb 'depend on' or others, and make correction.

Most importantly, from the point of view of the semantic structure, teachers have students be aware that the meaning of the noun "success" will show variation in three contexts: "be a success", "have success" and "make success" according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary* (Li, 1997:1526).

In the process of contrastive analysis between the students' language (IL) and the native English as well as the Chinese equivalents, students are required to process and retrieve among English rules of collocations at the lexical and grammatical levels and students' intentions of expressing ideas.

However, if there is a significantly big difference in syntax and semantics in subject – verb – object structure between Chinese and English, it is essential to present the two versions: English and Chinese translations in the teaching. The specific procedure which applies to collocation strategy in the learning of the TL English pattern: "...see the time when (an event) happens" in noun + verb collocation (from the data of this study in T1 that "history saw...") is shown below:

- Direct students to look at the verb "see" in the pattern and
- Move eyes from 'see' to the left to locate the noun / NP subject of 'see'
- Contrast the English and Chinese language patterns to identify differences
- Provide students with examples to have them infer what the equivalents are between the two languages based on the differences

The procedure can be demonstrated by providing the following three examples:

### Example 1

English:	The fifth century	saw	the end of the Roman Empire in the West
	(Agent Subject)	(Verb)	(Object)
Chinese:	五世纪时,	罗马帝国	在西方 崩溃 了。
	The fifth century	the Roman Empire	in the west end p
	(Adverbial)	(Agent Subject)	(Adverbial) (Verb) p
	(Adverbial)	(Topic)	(Comment)

After giving example 1, then guide students to identify differences between the two equivalents:

- (a) In terms of the difference in agent / subject: the English agent is time noun phrase “The fifth century”, while Chinese agent is a proper noun phrase “the Roman Empire”.
- (b) In terms of the differences in syntax between Chinese and English: English presents SVO pattern, while Chinese does SV pattern. English verb is “saw” and object is “end”, while Chinese verb is “end”.

Offer students one more example to reinforce this pattern with an emphasis on the relationship between the English subject and verb:

### Example 2

English:	This year	has seen	a big increase in road accidents.
	(Agent Subject)	(Verb)	(Object)
Chinese:	今年	交通事故	大增。
	this year	road accidents	big increase
	(Adverbial)	(Subject)	(Adverbial) (Verb)
	(Topic)	(Comment)	

Again point out the differences: the English agent is a time noun “This year”, while Chinese subject is a noun+ noun compounding word 交通事故 (road accidents), and English presents an SVO syntactic pattern, while in Chinese it is an SV pattern. The noun “increase” as the object of English sentence is identical to the verb as the predicate of the

Chinese sentence, while in English syntax, the verb is ‘see’, too.

The third example is given to students in order to generalize some regularities of this pattern:

### Example 3

English:	That Thanksgiving	had seen	us busily preparing a traditional
	morning		dinner featuring roast turkey.
	(Agent Subject)	(Verb)	(Object)
Chinese:	那个感恩节的上午	我们	忙着在准备一道以火鸡为主的传统菜肴。
	That Thanksgiving	we	busily dinner traditional
	morning		preparing
	(Adverbial)	(Subject)	(Verb) (Object)

Emphasize that similar to examples 1 and 2, the English sentence in example 3 remains presenting an SVOC syntax, while in Chinese it is an SVO structure. In the English sentence, the subject is the time noun phrase “That Thanksgiving morning”, the verb is “seen”, the direct object is “us” and the indirect object is “dinner”. In contrast, the Chinese subject is the subject case “we”, the verb is “preparing”, and the object is “dinner”.

In the process of analysis as demonstrated by the three examples above, the grammatical patterns of the target English structure "Time + see" can be inferred. Students will eventually be aware of which item precedes and follows the verb 'see'. This approach is also applicable to the learning of other types of English collocations.

English grammatical concord between subject and verb was found to be another problem in noun + verb collocation (3.6%), therefore, pedagogically, it is advisable to parse a sentence into subject and predicate as well as further smaller parts. Ask students to identify the subject first and then the verb with a purpose of checking the agreement between subject and verb in person and number. Some tasks for practice can be done in

class, such as filling out the blank among given stem, error identification, and so forth. For the beginner's class, short sentences can be presented for the practice of grammatical concord. For students at the intermediate level, long sentence and even a paragraph can be provide to reinforce their awareness of grammatical agreement between English subject and verb. In particular, whenever producing a TL English sentence, students are required to check whether or not the subject and verb is in agreement with each other in number and person.

Ambiguity of English part-of-speech was found to be another prevalent problem in noun + verb collocation errors (2.6%), such as three English words *success*, *succeed*, and *successful* which have a high occurrence in the data. As a result, students should get enough practice of English word formation at the morphological and syntactic levels. The following procedure is proposed:

(a) Presentation

Teachers present students with correct form of TL expressions in the context with *success*, *succeed*, *successful*. The following examples are drawn from BNC:

- 1) Taylor and his managers decided that it had to be 'double or quits' if the business was to be a success.
- 2) She was determined it would be a success.
- 3) But, if you want to be a success that is what you have to do.
- 4) Philip was confident she'd be a success.
- 5) One can have success and the elegance to remain discreet.
- 6) We have success to report on that.
- 7) Extra care is needed to achieve success.
- 8) If public regulation and control could not achieve success, then perhaps the lobby and pressure of special interest groups might.



- 9) If you achieve success in local unaffiliated competitions, you may want to investigate affiliated competitions.
- 10) Few people succeed.
- 11) Time-out is unlikely to succeed unless it is part of a dual strategy
- 12) I hope Channel 5 succeeds, for just one reason
- 13) In this it succeeds.
- 14) He succeeds Peter Strangeway, who retires from his position,
- 15) Open pastureland succeeded the neglected wood as I walked on
- 16) US scientists have (for some reason best known to themselves) succeeded in making water run uphill.
- 17) He strove so hard to make successful the IRA.
- 18) They must all make successful Ld tests.
- 19) Companies provide booklets containing advice on how to make successful applications for credit.

Teachers get students observe the position of three words. The noun “success” usually positioned in the beginning of a sentence as an agentive subject or at the end of a sentence as part of predicative (in examples 1 - 4) or a patient object of the verb (in examples 5 - 9). The verb “succeed” (in examples 10 and 11) has a morphological change in different contexts such as “succeeds” (in examples 12 – 14) and “succeeded” (in examples 15 and 16). The adjective “successful” with morphological form usually precedes a noun (in examples 17 – 19).

#### (b) Practice

Rewriting a sentence is a possible strategy to avoid interference from Chinese structure and meaning and develop TL knowledge of vocabulary. The following examples demonstrate how to rewrite sentences with the word or phrase in brackets. The examples 1 and 2 below involve rewriting sentence by conversion of part-of-speech or

filling out the blank by choosing appropriate word form among given words.

Example 1

He wanted to succeed.

- He wanted to be a success.

- He wanted to be successful. (success, succeed, successful)

Example 2

His success depends on his hard work. If he were lazy, he could not have succeeded. Later on, he was unlikely to tell his friends that, "I am a success, but if I want to be continually successful, I have to keep studying hard." (succeed, successful, succeed).

In the case of examples 3 to 4 below, exercise involves rewriting the sentence by paraphrasing.

Example 3

Success will go to you. (step towards)

- You will step toward success.

Example 4

Their success all proves that diligence is the most important thing on your way to success. (lie in)

- It proves that success lies in diligence.

The exercise of rewriting sentence by paraphrasing it provides a lot of insight for students. By presenting examples 3 and 4, the Chinese learners will come to see that there are two grammatically acceptable expressions. In example 3, one expression has an animate subject; the other has an inanimate subject in English. Inspired by teachers, the Chinese learners can be aware that different TL subject needs to collocate with different verb or phrasal verb in English collocations at the lexical and grammatical levels. By the way, the feature of English phrasal verbs (verb + preposition) which do

not exist in Chinese can be reinforced and strengthened.

Rewriting sentence by conversion of part-of-speech, or filling out the blank according to a group of words with similar root and meaning but different part-of-speech also can make students aware that the similar semantic structure at the deep level can be transformed into diverse superficial grammatical expressions in English. The exercises are designed for improving students' awareness of TL words.

#### (c) Reflection

After practice like the above presentation, learners will pay more attention to the importance of part-of-speech in the TL, and figure out how to use the morphological form of TL English words correctly. Teachers need to stress that not only this feature of morphological form but also other unique features of TL which are different from MT Chinese should all be focused on in the learning.

### **8.4.2 Pedagogical Implications from Verb / Phrasal Verb + Noun Collocation**

#### **Errors**

According to the findings from CA, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation is one of the most difficult areas, and from EA, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors have a percentage of around 30% in the total number of English collocation errors from the present study. Among them, the interference of Chinese non-phrasal verb was one of the verb + noun grammatical collocation errors (around 6%). Thus, pedagogically, learners could be instructed in a proper way in this aspect shown below.

A teacher may select a newspaper or magazine article, for instance, which contains a number of phrasal verbs. Learners could be asked to identify all the phrasal verbs which are involved in the reading materials and make a guess about their individual meanings in the context. This allows learners to develop familiarity with the TL phrasal verbs. A follow-up group discussion on the reading passage will highlight use of the target phrasal

verbs. And learners will eventually begin to reflect on what exactly constitutes a phrasal verb.

Having finished the identification of English phrasal verb, teachers present the following group of collocation errors (from the data of this study), and have students make correction of them according to TL phrasal verb rules:

It provides us convenience (T1) / It provide us with convenience

I disagree his views (T13) / I disagree with his views

Electricity will lit the darkness (T49) / Electricity will light up the darkness

They approve it (T108) / They approve of it.

For some English phrasal verbs, such as “provide sb. with sth.” and “provide sth. for sb.” where direct and indirect objects are involved, teachers can highlight them by presenting more similar examples, such as “supply sb. with sth.” and “supply sth. for sb.” and so forth.

Under certain conditions, some other English phrasal verbs may have an item inserted between the verb and particle and these conditions are as follows, which are also needed to stress in the teaching:

- If the object of a separable phrasal verb is a noun, the particle may precede or follow the noun. He *picked* the book *up*. OR He *picked up* the book.
- If, however, the object is a pronoun, the particle must follow it. He *picked it up*.

Finally, teachers can generalize that students will be alert about English phrasal verbs from structure, keep reminding learners themselves of adding one preposition after a verb wherever necessary in case Chinese interference occurs. Students need to read extensively with a purpose of searching for those English phrasal verbs. With the aid of dictionary and other manuals, try to get to know the meaning of each phrasal verb, especially for those which have multiple meanings in different contexts. By doing so, encourage students to observe which collocates have a highly frequent co-occurrence,

what change for a phrasal verb will take place in the morphological form, position, and so forth. Keep practicing for TL English phrasal verbs, the knowledge of it for Chinese learners will be improved.

False hypothesizing concept of de-lexicalized verbs was found to be another typical problem with English verb + noun collocation. A net method can be constructed for de-lexicalized verbs, such as “get”, “have” and “take”. Teachers could show collocates of three de-lexicalized verbs, and challenge students to identify which verbs are appropriate for several nouns such as “walk”, “sick”, “touch”, “shower”, “problem”, “advantage”, and so forth. For example, in the *get* task, a teacher may come up with the collocations: *get married, get a divorce, get ready, get worse, get a drink, get angry, and get home*. In this case, the incidental vocabulary learning approach is also recommended to learn English general word. We cannot predicatively say that students will acquire the general verb ‘do’ or ‘make’ for instance before they know the usages. But, by exploring collocation restrictions in this way, the distinction between ‘do’ or ‘make’ and other de-lexicalized verbs like ‘take’, ‘have’ and ‘get’ would be made. More importantly, students would free themselves from the negative influence of their mother tongue as they gradually accumulate knowledge of TL English word usage.

### **8.4.3 Pedagogical Implications from Modifiers and Nouns**

Prepositional phrases as post attributive modifiers play a significant role in TL English grammatical structure. This study found that ‘head noun + of-success’ phrase frequently occurred in the data: *way / factor / gate / peak / process / rule / key / door / part / stories / light / half / part / award / sunlight / conditions / appearance / basic / role / secret / truth / fact / inventor* of success.

Revelation drawn from the findings of this study that contrastive analysis between TL and learner language is pedagogically useful and effective, therefore, a search for

prepositional phrase ‘of-success’ produced by native speakers is necessary. BNC native corpus displays that, native speakers usually use *chance / lack / measure / secret / hope / portents / expectation / form / pursuit / indicators / method / degree / possibility / range / vision / trappings / principle / symptom / way* of success. It is suggested to stress and select those more commonly used ‘of-success’ phrases used by the native speakers, such as *chance / lack / measure / secret / hope* of success which occur at least twice in the search for ‘noun + of-success’ structure from BNC, and avoid using those strange use of phrases produced by the Chinese learners, such as *appearance / sunlight / access* of success. For this kind of errors due to intralingual source found from this study, EA theory is useful in guiding on how to improve it. EA theory has already revealed that learning is a process of TL rules establishment, stressing learners’ role in the learning. Therefore, pedagogically, the correction of such kind of errors largely depends on Chinese learners’ cognitive psychology. Task design for teaching should be subject to student-centered activities. Through a great deal of practice for reading, translation, listening and writing, students will improve themselves in expressing TL English well.

Besides reading grammar books and study rules on English modifiers, reading English novels, newspapers and magazines is an essential alternative. While reading, learners should be encouraged to look out for PPs as post attributive modifiers which are equivalent to Chinese noun + noun compounds.

Some basic methods are thought of as important in the writing of English noun phrases, which include error identification and correction, translation from MT Chinese to TL English. The procedure of teaching English noun + prepositional phrase collocation is given below:

(a) Teachers have students carry out error identification and correction by presenting some incorrect TL noun phrases drawn from the data of this study and also other correct noun phrases given by the author.

the world scientist (T14) / the scientist in the world

lamp experiment (57) / experiment for lamp

*toy company* / *a photo album* / *a bus stop* / *hospital zone*

(b) Teachers have students figure out what grammatical rules are involved in English noun + noun collocation and noun + of-prepositional phrase collocation. Before doing this, some kind of guidance needs to be provided for the students.

In English noun + noun collocation, the first noun as an attributive is used to identify a particular type in relation to the group of people or things described by the second noun. For example,

*insurance companies* – companies for (selling) insurance,

*ski club* – club for gathering ski players (head noun ‘club’ identifies an institution for modifier noun ‘ski’),

*search procedure* – procedure for the purpose of search,

*labor force* – a force that labors / is engaged in labor

(c) Based on these rules under guidance, students need to practice more to keep these rules in their minds and to be capable of distinguishing well which type of collocation is correct: *insurance company* or *company for insurance*; *world scientist* or *scientist in the world*. Students will feel that there is the same word order between MT and TL within these rules in noun + noun collocation listed in the second step, but outside these rules students may follow the way of noun + prepositional phrase collocation. Teachers, in this case, encourage students to be alert in using between English noun + PP structure and noun + noun structure.

#### **8.4.4 Pedagogical Implications from Synonyms**

English errors due to synonyms are also found from this study, and therefore, pedagogically, need to be discussed. Revelation drawn from the theory of cognitive

psychology that there is a bridge between old and new knowledge for a learner can be applied into the instruction of synonymous phrasal verbs. For example, 'lead...to' in 'The many victories led them to believe that anything was possible'. A teacher tries to encourage students to associate the new phrase 'lead...to' with those old ones 'cause', 'give rise to' and 'bring about'. That is, it involves the use of a new item to reactivate an old one based on its synonyms 'give rise to' and 'bring about'. It is important to remind students not only of keeping their eyes on the noun subject in the sentence 'victories' and the verb predicate 'led...to', but also of associating 'lead to' with other synonymous items like *cause*, *bring about*, *give rise to*, and so forth.

Then students could be asked to substitute 'cause', 'bring about' and 'give rise to' for 'lead to' in the sentence:

'The many victories caused them to believe that anything was possible.'

Or 'The many victories brought about their believing that anything was possible.'

Or 'The many victories gave rise to their believing that anything was possible.'

Finally, the instructor could get the students to analyze the above three possibilities in the production. Meanwhile, teachers' emphasis is supposed to be on the fact that the meaning of a phrasal verb and noun is usually determined by its context. Therefore, in the use of TL English collocation, lexical semantic restriction rules must be taken into consideration.

### **8.5 Communicative Approach to Learning English Collocation**

After adequate practice for grammar-translation method in learning English collocations discussed in the previous sections, it is an essential strategy that instructors need to shift to communicative approaches. It has been acknowledged that grammar-translation approach presented in earlier sections is of great help for students in constructing rules and using English collocations more accurately. Communicative



approach will be beneficial to improve students' comprehensive competency to use TL more fluently, especially among those students with higher level of proficiency of English in China. With sufficient grammatical structures on TL collocation types based on grammar-translation approach, students can likely make communication better.

The following is the tasks designed for using communicative approach to learning and improving English collocations. Three tasks proposed by the present study below will focus mainly on those types which are more frequently encountered by learners:

#### Task One

Students are divided into several groups in which different topic for discussion is given. When one participant of a group is presenting, the rest of the group put down those types of collocation which are established by the present study. Each one will have a turn to do this. Then each participant presents what he or she has done, during which the whole group carries out a discussion as to whether one type of collocation presented is correct according to native speaking habits. If incorrect, using dictionary or other manuals to make correction. A further task is to get students to figure out whether other words to alternatively substitute for the given verb, or adjective or noun in one type of collocation at random. In the discussion surrounding one topic, unconsciously, students practice their ability to use English collocation. This communicative approach can be alternatively used in class with grammar-translation approach. By doing so, students will not feel tedious but keep alive and motivated about English language items.

#### Task Two

Students can be given half an hour of practice for listening several passages in class. While listening, each student is required to put down and then present as well as share whichever type of collocation he has caught. In the end, instructors collect and present all types of collocations in the passage orally, especially, present those which are commonly used but Chinese learners tend to make errors.

### Task Three

While being given one passage for reading, students are required to find out all types of English collocation which they encounter more frequently in the reading passage. Then task of collection and presentation of each type of collocation is given to students. After a brief discussion of some types of collocation related to synonyms, for example, which is subject to cause ambiguity among Chinese learners of English, students are required to have an essay writing with reference to the types of collocation identified in the reading passage.

Meanwhile, among each task, students are required to identify hierarchy of difficulties in the use of English collocations. Then students will come to realize how to focus on those most difficult types of English collocation.

Over the latest three years of teaching practice among the College students in Tongji University, it has turned out that these tasks based communicative approach to learning TL English collocations is useful. Students improved a lot in using correct English collocation by adopting communicative approach actively.

### **8.6 Summary**

This chapter discussed the pedagogical implications of the findings from the perspective of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis. The discussions are centered on the implications with reference to the areas of difficulty and hierarchy of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners in the use of English collocations from the interlingual and intralingual errors. Some approaches beneficial to both learners and teachers are proposed in order to make improvement in teaching the English collocations.

## CHAPTER 9

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### 9.1 Introduction

The objective of this investigation was to find out the kinds of problems that the Chinese learners of English are likely to face in the learning of English collocations. Both CA and EA have been employed to investigate this problem and hence this chapter will discuss the findings that have emerged through this research and the significance that the findings arrived at.

This chapter will begin with the use of CA as a tool to investigate all the problems of learning English collocations and then move on to the discussion of the use of EA.

#### 9.2 Use of CA to Investigate the Problems of English Collocations

This study intended to describe and contrast Chinese and English collocations and to investigate problems with English collocations in the lexical and grammatical levels. It is important to conduct this investigation using CA approach to describe L1 and L2 separately and explain those English collocations which are least likely and most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners based on CA between the two languages from the point of view of linguistic structure and semantics. Contrastive analysis between Chinese and English collocations has covered the categories, which involve the noun + noun / prepositional phrase collocation, noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, adjective + noun collocation, verb + adverb collocation, adverb + adjective + noun collocation and a / numeral + quantifying noun + of + head noun collocation.

According to the theory and method of CA, this study undertook individual descriptions of Chinese and English collocations, and then carried out a contrast between

the collocations of these two languages. In addition, this investigation also explained the areas of differences between the two languages which in turn are indicative of the areas of difficulty Chinese learners will have with English collocations at the lexical and grammatical levels.

By using CA, this study found out that it is an essential step to give a separate description of the mother tongue and the target language. Without this step, the description of similarities and differences between the two languages will be inadequate and the investigation of the problems encountered in the learning of TL collocations for learners and the explanation of the interference of mother tongue will not be that effective and satisfactory. Both description of L1 / L2 and contrastive analysis are two necessary steps in a classic CA method.

By using CA, this study found out that there are similarities in lexical collocation / compound formation and differences in grammatical collocations between Chinese and English categories of noun + noun, verb + noun and adjective + noun. For the category of noun + verb, similarities present only in compounds. In other words, there are similarities in noun + verb compounding and differences in noun + verb collocation between Chinese and English. Based on the differences identified from the description and contrastive analysis, this study also uncovered the areas of difficulties and the hierarchy of difficulty in the process of learning English collocations among the Chinese learners of English.

In the description of collocations and contrastive analysis, this study also found that in noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation, there is a big gap between the MT Chinese and TL English in the lexical semantic selection or restriction and grammatical level, and thus is most likely to be a problematic category of collocation for the Chinese learners. Chinese involves both functional topic-comment and grammatical subject-predicate structures, while English contains subject-verb agreement in morphology and syntax.

This study also found out that Chinese inanimate subject is equivalent to English animate subject on one occasion and on the other occasion English inanimate subject is similar to that of the Chinese animate subject. In addition, Chinese topic is found to be arbitrary in the selection of a word. Any Chinese word without a morphological form is equivalent to that of English morphological form. The passive voice in English sentence superficially with the copulative verb 'be' is found to be equivalent to the active voice of Chinese in syntax.

In the case of verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, this study found out that there were differences in lexical compound and grammatical structure between MT Chinese and TL English transitive and intransitive, verbs and phrasal verbs and agentive and patient subjects and as a result were most problematic for the Chinese learners of English. This study also found that in some cases the Chinese noun + noun coordinate compound is equivalent to English head noun + prepositional phrase, and thus most likely to create problems among the Chinese learners of English.

From the point of view of semantic prosody and selection between two words, this study found out that by using CA there are differences between Chinese and English animate / inanimate subject-verb collocation and adjective + noun collocation.

These findings obtained through CA have important pedagogical implications for teachers and learners. The description of the two languages using CA from which the differences were found will help learners to understand the features of the two language collocations and differences between them. In the production of English sentences, learners could be cautious about those TL features which do not exist in the MT, such as English animate / inanimate subject, English subject-verb agreement in grammatical concord, morphological form in part-of-speech and the passive voice in English with copulative verb 'be' which is equivalent to the active voice of Chinese in syntax. The semantic prosody between the English subject and verb and between the adjective and

noun needs to be given priority in learning. In English noun + noun collocation, there is no set rules to follow but some guidance for learners, hence, learners need to make a choice between English noun + prepositional phrasal structure and an English attributive noun preceding the head noun.

In order to avoid interference from the MT Chinese, learners could also become alert to those typical Chinese features. These features involve arbitrariness of Chinese subject and omission of 'be' between the English subject and predicate. Chinese compounding has a tendency to demonstrate tautology in coordinate noun + noun collocation. In the learning of the TL English verb + object collocation structure, learners could learn to avoid the influence from the Chinese intransitive verbs which can be followed by the objects and the Chinese patient object which is equivalent to the English agent subject.

In short, the use of CA can help learners understand the differences between the MT and the TL, and enable learners to locate and focus on the problematic areas in the learning of English collocations and structures. CA methodology can thus help to improve learners' competence and performance of TL English and solve the problems derived from the interference of MT.

Differences identified from CA would also be helpful for teachers who are teaching English collocations to the Chinese learners. Teachers could strengthen students' knowledge of the English phrasal verbs, prepositional phrases as post attributive modifiers, and morphological forms of words and so on. In the area of words with semantic gap and conflicting words between English and Chinese, approaches such as free translation and paraphrase could be employed. As illustrated in the previous chapters, the Chinese syntactic structure is less restrictive than English, where intransitive verb can precede an object, and attributive modifiers always precede head nouns. According to these Chinese features as well as differences between the two languages, teachers need to

encourage students to find those equivalents between MT and TL. Teacher could get students to check whether an English subject is positioned initially, and also check whether an English animate / inanimate subject keeps a semantic prosody and grammatical concord with the verb in the sentence. In addition, teachers need to encourage students to check whether an English preposition is correctly used in a phrasal verb and in a prepositional phrase as a post-modifier of a noun, and also check whether an English attributive modifier is a noun preceding the head noun or a prepositional phrase following the head noun. Finally, guidance from CA methodology will lead to more effective teaching methodologies.

Based on CA, this study, also found out the areas of difficulty and the level of difficulties encountered by the Chinese learners of English in the use of English collocations. They are listed by three main classifications: English noun + verb / phrasal verb / noun + auxiliary + act verb collocation, verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation, and attributive modifier + noun collocation. This finding also provides pedagogical implications with reference to teachers as they need to spend more time on these difficult areas. In the teaching, presentation of the types of TL collocations can start with structure between noun and verb / phrasal verb and then move on to English collocation structure between modifier and head noun. That means the teaching should be carried out from the most difficult to the least difficult areas in order to highlight the focus on teaching. Whenever students read, they should keep their eyes on those TL subject-predicate-object structures figuring out which subject a sentence has: animate or inanimate, whether subject-verb is in agreement with each other in person and number, whether 'be' is there in passive voice and what their Chinese equivalents are. Students also need to observe which collocates have high percentage / frequency occurrence. Those collocates with highly frequent occurrence can be generalized and used in the future use of TL collocations.

This study found out from the individual description of MT / TL collocations that, there are the similarities between each category of the MT and the TL collocations. Based on CA, this study found that these similarities will be least likely to be problematic for learners of English. CA has claimed that language learning is a process of habit formation in which learners learn a language through imitation and reinforcement of a set of new linguistic habits upon the old ones. Hence, in the Chinese EFL setting, teachers make students aware of imitation of those TL structurally similar collocations in MT. In the teaching of the English adjective + noun collocation, the teacher could first present students with similar sequence of collocation, and then move on to TL collocation structurally different from that of the MT. For instance, some TL synonymous adjectives can be replaced by each other because of the similar grammatical structure and meaning (e.g. *big* success and *large* success) and this will be least problematic for the learners. Similarly, this also applies to some TL synonymous verbs which can be substituted for each other grammatically in verb + noun collocation (e.g. *gain* freedom and *obtain* freedom). However, in terms of the syntagmatic relation, there are restrictive collocation rules in the TL despite similar grammatical structure and similar denotative meanings in Chinese and English. Thus, teachers can guide students to identify these similarities between the MT and the TL collocations, emphasizing the importance of similarity which can facilitate learning of the TL.

However, there are some limitations with the use of CA alone. Description of two languages is a huge project, particularly, between subject-prominent English and topic-prominent Chinese. So, it is difficult to cover all aspects of knowledge in relation to the seven categories of collocations between the MT and the TL. In addition, contrastive analyses between the two languages not only touch upon lexical compounds but also on grammatical structure in morphology and syntax between the two combined words. As a result, the areas of difficulty and the hierarchy of difficulty in the learning of English



collocations through CA cannot be done precisely through a subjective analysis. More importantly, CA alone cannot uncover those difficulties that stem from the intralingual sources and other sources of errors.

### **9.3 Use of EA to Investigate the Problems of Learning English Collocations**

This study also aims at explaining the occurrence of the types of errors of English collocations committed by the Chinese learners of English and to investigate the influence of the mother tongue on the learning of English collocations. Using EA, this study found out that 44% errors were due to interference from the MT, 54% were intralingual errors and 2% errors were due to circumlocution. These findings prove that EA method is useful to find all possible sources of errors, for intralingual errors and errors due to circumlocution were not found from the investigation using CA.

This study also found out that intralingual errors (54%) are more responsible for the occurrence of English collocation errors. This finding reveals the main problem that learners have is that they are still trying to grasp the rules and are ‘testing’ out their understanding of the TL in the learning process. Meanwhile, 44% of total number of English collocation errors due to interlingual source was identified in the present study, which indicates that the subjects have more difficulty avoiding the influence from mother tongue Chinese setting, in particular, from Chinese grammatical structure (26%). This study through EA also uncovered the strategy that the learners used the aspect of circumlocution (2%) in the learning of English collocations. This is also a very significant finding.

By adopting EA method, the present study found more violation of lexical collocations (58%) than that of grammatical collocations (39%). The lexical collocation problems due to failure of semantic restriction between two independent words have a more frequency occurrence than those grammatical collocation errors in morphology

and syntax. This finding reveals that inappropriate use of words is most responsible for English collocation errors.

This study not only found seven types of English collocation errors but also established that the type of English noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors were the most common ones followed by verb + noun collocation errors for the Chinese learners of English.

In brief, one can state that those interlingual errors which were found in EA are similar to those areas of difficulty identified by using the CA. The hierarchy of errors committed by the learners from EA is also identical to the hierarchy of difficulty found from CA. So, one can conclude that EA would be a useful tool to identify some other sources of errors in addition to the contrastive ones. The findings obtained through EA helps to prove that CA is limited in identifying all possible problems in the learning English collocations on the one hand and it further proves that EA is a good analytic tool since it can explain all sources of errors.

On the other hand, contrastive errors identified through EA in this study suggest that the negative transfer continues to take place throughout the learning process among the Chinese learners. In this process, even the Chinese learners of English in the intermediate and advanced levels depend on their mother tongue habits in the process of learning the TL. This finding on the contrastive errors can assist teachers to teach English collocations by highlighting differences between MT and TL. Thus, a teacher can effectively guide students to understand all those similarities between the MT and TL in the learning of the TL in order to facilitate their learning.

The finding through the EA that intralingual error was the major cause of English collocation errors can help the teacher to reinforce TL knowledge and to improve the learning strategy of the learners. Teachers provide a native speaker corpus or other authentic reading materials for learners in order to draw students' attention to the most

frequent collocates, and thus make students become aware of the TL restrictive collocation rules.

To sum up, the findings on the contrastive errors and intralingual errors as well as errors due to circumlocution through EA can inform the teacher what to be taught and what category and classification of English collocations should be emphasized in a L2 classroom. The findings on the major types of errors such as English noun + verb / phrasal verb and verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation linguistic structures would be significant for the teachers and learners since they will take these two categories of collocations as the focus. In the use of English collocations, these two categories of collocations could be given priority and identified in the reading tasks. With more and more practice, students will gradually become aware of the restrictive English collocation rules and familiarize with the occurrence of collocates, that is which collocate precedes or follows the node most frequently in the process of internalization of the TL system. Finding on classification of lexical and grammatical collocation errors informs teachers that focus of learning be on dealing with problems with lexical match for semantic restriction.

However, a mere use of EA without a CA-based description of the two languages seems to be inadequate to identify all those contrastive errors, since some problems identified by CA did not occur in EA of this study. According to the EA methodology, explanation of errors is one of the essential steps in the EA and findings obtained in EA revealed that interference of MT remained as one source of errors among the Chinese learners of English collocations. However, without a description and contrast of the MT and TL as well using CA, it would not be possible to identify the reasons for the occurrence of the interlingual errors which were found by EA. In other words, it is necessary to blend CA and EA in order to conduct an in-depth investigation of the problems of learning English collocations among the Chinese learners of English.

In the processing of data drawn from this study, some of the errors that occurred did not arise from those differences between English and Chinese. These findings suggest that CA is inadequate in explaining some errors committed by the Chinese learners of English. Moreover, investigation and identification of the area of difficulty as well as the level of difficulty in the use of English collocations among the Chinese learners of English has not been undertaken extensively. Thus, it is useful to embark on this investigation using EA on collocations among the Chinese learners of English as a foreign language.

#### **9.4 Conclusion**

Collocations are co-occurrence of two words at the lexical and grammatical levels. Lexical collocations between two content words are more concerned with word formation (including compounds and so on) from lexical, semantic and selection restriction. Grammatical collocations, combination between one content word and another particle, are related to word formation at the morphological, phrasal and syntactic levels. Chinese collocations do not have morphological forms between the two combined words.

Contrastive linguistics was basically concerned with the linguistic systems or structures (Klein, 1986). Structural linguistics methodology involving both CA and EA methods is used in the present study with reference to the identification and explanation of those collocations by making use of the methods of word formation including compounds in the morphological, phrasal and syntactical levels. Both lexical and grammatical collocations must follow restrictive semantic selection between the two words.

Therefore, it can follow that the study of collocations not only touches on lexical semantic restriction from compounds but also the grammatical knowledge. According to

the findings on the two major sources of errors: intralingual and interlingual, learning a new lexicon actually means a learner has to learn its word formation at the morphological level, syntactic pattern, multiple meanings of the word, and lexical relationships between it with other words in the context. All these are grammatical knowledge.

Another conclusion can be drawn from the findings of this study that CA and EA, as application of structural linguistics theory and methodology, are significant to identify and explain the problems with Chinese learners of English collocations. The findings obtained by using the integrated method combining CA with EA suggest that (1) linguistic structure and behavior based on CA theory should be linked to linguistic cognitive psychology based on the EA theory, (2) imitation and reinforcement of TL structures similar to MT from CA theory should combine with the establishment of rules of TL structure and continually hypothesizing those rules of TL structure from EA theory and (3) teacher-centered approach should be connected with the student-centred teaching methodology. In other words, the use of CA and EA is not only quite acceptable in academic research but also practical approach in college EFL teaching in China. Especially in the current situation in China where students are insufficient in English grammatical structures and use of words, the traditional grammar-translated teaching approach is becoming important to be alternatively used along with communicative approach. Communicative proficiency is likely to become easier to achieve only if one has acquired the sufficient grammatical structures (Chung, 2005: 35). On the one hand, CA-based linguistic similarities and differences between TL and MT will be highlighted in the teaching activities to the students in low proficient level who need more input of grammatical structure. Grammatical structures enable learners to reach high level of English proficiency in both accuracy and fluency (Nho, 2005: 184) and therefore structural linguistics methods are important in the teaching. On the other hand, students' cognitive competence should be stressed in the teaching-learning

process for the students. Teachers should have students learn TL English by imitation and reinforcement of TL structures and also by establishing rules to generalize regularities for these rules of TL. The part played by the teachers and students in language learning cannot be separated from each other. Teachers should act as organizers and directors and students should be participants and actors in the teaching-learning activities. As organizers, teachers should design more class activities and make students motivated to take part in such activities with the intention of discussion.

The findings from CA and EA are useful for several pedagogical purposes and useful both to teachers and learners. Teachers of ELT or TEFL should provide students with structures linguistically similar to TL and highlight structural differences from theoretical contrastive analysis. Student learners can make use of CA to identify similarities and differences between MT and TL. From the differences identified through CA, learners can focus on those difficult areas and thus solve problems facing them in the learning process. By using EA, the learners can make a self-evaluation on how much they have acquired (of the TL English).

CA and structural linguistics methods are beneficial both to learners and teachers to identify the types of cross-linguistic problems which Chinese learners encounter more frequently in the learning of TL English collocations. Teachers can present different types of English collocations for students according to the procedure, namely, from the most likely difficult to the least difficult areas. By doing so the learners will get opportunities to focus on the difficult areas and thus learn TL English more efficiently. If the descriptions of features of MT Chinese and TL English as well as similarities and differences between the two languages structures were taken into consideration, the learning and pedagogy of TL can be made more effective and functional.

English noun / adjective + noun collocation is least likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners due to the similarities found. Some types of TL English grammatical structures are equivalent to MT Chinese lexical compounding forms, such as English grammatical noun + prepositional phrase collocation is equivalent to Chinese lexical noun + noun compound. Noun + verb and verb + noun collocations are two types of collocations with lexical and grammatical properties in English and Chinese. These two types of collocations are related not only to surface grammatical structure but also to deep semantic structure as well as appropriate choice of lexical words and therefore are most likely to be problematic for the Chinese learners of English. Learners need to know some TL English inanimate subjects are equivalent to Chinese animate subjects, or vice versa and also need to know the morphological forms of English verb and noun in order to maintain the grammatical concord in person and number. The difference between English phrasal verb and Chinese verb is also most likely to bring about problems for the Chinese learners of English. These differences should be emphasized in the teaching as well.

The finding that intralingual errors due to the context is the main cause for the occurrence of English collocation errors reveals that most Chinese learners can use TL English fluently but not accurately. Therefore, pedagogically, teachers should help students to improve their ability to use English words more appropriately in contexts, and improve their learning strategies of English collocations in general and that of English collocations between verb and noun in particular. A learner's perception and cognition of new knowledge largely depends on the image of old knowledge which has been already acquired. New knowledge in the context can activate the images of old knowledge. By activating the image of former knowledge, the learner can more quickly and accurately perceive the new knowledge. Thus, teachers can draw the attention of students in particular to the combination between words in larger context in order to

stimulate students' cognition to collocations with reference to grammatical patterns of the target English words. In other words, teachers try to keep students aware of the fact that collocative meaning of a word can be expressed only by context. The purpose of text with concordance lines of TL based activities is to have students see that learning of a language is an organic process rather than a linear one, in which structures are not used in isolation but made to interact with each other in the context.

The occurrence of the interlingual errors found through EA in this study is a reflection that MT interference is a universal problem with learners of English. English subject-predicate structure is really more difficult to learn for the Chinese learners than other categories of English collocations, since learners remain influenced by the MT interference at the lexical and grammatical levels. Therefore, the pedagogical implication is that teachers of all TEFL subjects need to make the learners become aware of those differences between the two languages participating in the learning process so as to avoid committing interlingual errors. In selecting which collocation to teach, it is essential to take into account those collocation equivalents which have a tendency to be translated literally from MT by the students and hence cause collocation errors. Verb + noun type of collocation is more difficult for Chinese learners in terms of lexical choice which is match to collocate than in grammatical morphology. This witnesses that both Chinese and English share the similarities in structure from CA but main problem lies in how to make an appropriate match for semantic restriction between verb and noun in the type of verb + noun collocation. Therefore, in the teaching of English verb + noun collocation, focus is on the lexical level concerning match between verb and noun. This issue on the type of verb and noun collocation also occurred in other types of collocations identified in the present study.

Lexical, semantic and collocation restriction are quite challenge to the Chinese learners of English collocation in the present study. The finding that violation of lexical



collocations occurred more frequently reveals that learners are insufficient in the complete knowledge of vocabulary, particularly in collocation relation between nodes and collocates. Vocabulary knowledge includes word meaning, collocation rules, associative knowledge, and grammatical knowledge (Berrin, 2008). Hence, it is far from an easy task for learners to produce a type of collocation which conforms to native expressions by distinguishing all subtle nuances among TL words to make appropriate lexical choice. L2 learners should be aware that lexical meanings depend not only on denotation or definition and semantics but also on collocation relation which has effects on the lexical meaning and grammatical functions.

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## Appendix A: Noun + Verb Collocation Errors

The following is the presentation of English noun + verb / phrasal verb collocation errors, including interlingual and intralingual errors identified from the data, and other subcategories of errors with specific reference of source of errors.

Category of Error	Total Number of Error
Total of Noun + Verb Collocation Errors	150
Interlingual Errors	71
Intralingual Errors	74
Errors due to Circumlocution	5

### 1. Interlingual Errors (71 texts in total)

#### 1.1 Interlingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (45 texts in total)

##### 1.1.1 Confusion of Part-Of-Speech due to MT (13 texts in total)

The erroneous items are labeled with\*, and the correct form of English is positioned to the right column while the example from the data in the middle (LC).

Text	LC	Correct form
T68	You can't *success.	succeed
T81	You can also *success.	succeed
T117	He / she can *success.	succeed
T117	Few of they can *success.	succeed
T92	We could *success.	succeed
T94	He would not *success.	succeed
T112	You will never *success.	succeed
T4	It *success.	succeeds
T15	His *succeed *is just composed of inspiration and perspiration.	His success depends on...

T69	Beethoven writer down a lot of good music.	wrote; composed [G]
T70	Chances are easy to come across *unconscious but hard to look for.	unconsciously
T99	The most disappointing thing isn't you *failure but you nearly succeeded	...is not that you failed but that you can succeed.
T3	A research carried out by a Korean scientist can <u>throw light upon my</u> *confuse.	clarify my confusion.

### 1.1.2 Negative transfer from Chinese intransitive verb (1 text in total)

Text	LC	Correct sentence
T100	I'm very agree with.	I agree with you.

### 1.1.3 Confusion of TL Subject-Verb Agreement in Number (27 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T58	His success *base on not only inspiration.	is based on / depends on
T101	Success *need some luck.	needs / depends on
T102	Their success *indicate us that	indicates that
T39	Success *need your inspiration	needs
T115	Success *need 99% perspiration	needs 99% of perspiration
T29	perspiration *enable him	enables
T3	a question *bother me	bothers
T9	Success *rest on 99% perspiration	depends
T72	Hard *works bring out real things	Hard work leads you to success.
T113	Perspiration have been paid back.	Hard work has paid off
T16	Edison had thousands of inventions, which made him one of the most famous and *successes scientist.	greatest
T56	Edison *have done it.	has



T61	Nowadays, society *make us that we should have more creativities.	makes us believe that we...
T62	Some *businessman cheat their customers for higher profits.	Some businessmen
T68	It *give us the key to way to success.	gives
T69	His family * try to persuade him to give up it.	tries
T71	He *get a material from others.	gets
T71	If you *works more hard, you're most able to be successful.	work
T71	Success include some keys such as...	includes
T95	Libai, one ancient poet, just *make record of his emotion and showed it in a romantic way.	made
T113	She just loves it and never *find it hard and tired.	finds
T3	Although inspiration only *stand one percent, it is the most factor for success.	makes up one percent [L, G]
T3	The boss always * think about the contract. Edison *have ever said: "Success is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.	thinks [G] has [G]
T101	Hard work *help us overcome difficulties and *enlighten our minds .	helps, enlightens
T107	The sadness of victory *take care of one who work hard.	The sadness of victory lies in [G]
T112	The story *tell us even you are "genious" you don't do something to you talent you will never *success.	tells / be a success [G]
T104	Edison failed many times before he eventually *invent the bulb.	invented

#### 1.1.4 Confusion of TL 'Be' in Syntax (4 texts in total)

In the following examples selected from the data, the copula 'be' is either omitted or added on or some other strange structure of TL English.

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T107	The reason *can list below	The reason can be listed below.
T3	We really *interested in it.	We are really interested in it.
T22	Perspiration have been paid back.	Hard work has paid off. [L, G]

## **1.2 Interlingual Errors Found from Semantics (26 texts in total)**

### **1.2.1 Negative Transfer of Chinese Connotations (3 texts in total)**

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T47	Success *likes perspiration.	Success depends on hard work.[L]
T57	Inspiration *break out.	Inspiration springs. [L, G]
T86	In fact the truth is every time the opportunity *calls on him, he has never caught it	In fact, the truth is when opportunity arises, he has never caught it. [L]

### **1.2.2 Negative Transfer of Chinese Topic-Oriented Structure (20 texts in total)**

This type of error refers to one due to semantic non-native prosody between English subject and predicate arising from Chinese topic-comment structure grammatically, particularly, in terms of animate or inanimate subject, which were identified from the data shown below:

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T10	We can never sit and wait the success to find us out.	Success can never go to those who sit idle but get everything.
T22	If you work, the land will pay you!	Your effort will be rewarding.
T40, T110	Success *needs 99% perspiration.	Success depends on hard work.
T102	Success attach the importance to perspiration.	Someone attaches importance to hard work. [L, G]
T114	The world told them idea is most important.	Someone told them that... / Their own experience told them that inspiration is most important.

T79	Perspiration decides more (of success).	Success depends more on hard work than on inspiration.
T86	The chance always fled through his fingers.	The opportunity is always missed by him. / He always loses the opportunity.
T52	Painting needs inspiration than many other work.	Inspiration is more important than other factors in the painting.
T10	Success will wait in front of you.	Someone will wait for someone. / Success will go to you. /You will step toward success.
T31	Their dilligent make their way to success.	Someone makes his way to success. / Diligence leads them to success.
T81	My study is not well.	I did not do well at school.
T84	Success is very close to you.	You'll step towards success.
T21	Difficulties from many unknown sides are waiting for us.	We will encounter many difficulties unexpectedly.
T24	Everyone successful is perspirative.	Hard work goes to successful people.
T55	One of the hundreds time would be succeed.	He achieved success after hundreds of experiments.
T83	Why some people have a success in the end but others not? Because they don't *meet inspiration.	find source of inspiration
T87	Some students *do some ready work before class, listen to teachers carefully in class	get ready for work
T82	A inspiration *climbed up to his brain.	Inspiration sprang.
T37	Inspiration controls your performance.	Your performance depends on inspiration.

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### 1.2.3 Other Semantic Non-Native Prosody (3 texts in total)

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T82	A inspiration brought a idea, the perspiration made the idea success	An idea occurred to me due to inspiration drawn from hard work.

T82	The perspiration made the idea success.	Hard work leads you to success.
T9	Pride let him make no efforts.	Pride results in his making no efforts.

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## 2. Intralingual Errors (74 texts in total)

### 2.1 Intralingual Errors Found in the Context (44 texts in total)

#### 2.1.1 Ignorance of English Restrictions (33 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T90	He *took every effort to do experiment, which *cost him about ten years time.	He made every effort to make experiment, which took him about ten years.
T53	It is his 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration that* bring his and his team is success.	It is his 1% of inspiration and 99% of perspiration that lead him and his team to success.
T40	An apple knocking on his head	An apple striking / hit him a blow on his head
T51, T105	the saying *says	goes
T55	It only *takes 1% of all.	makes up
T56	Inspiration doesn't only belong to genius, but we all have it.	Inspiration is not gained only by genius but all of us.
T59	The *sudden inspiration can help us solve the problem and take us into beautiful success.	A flash of inspiration can lead us to success.
T62	Her perspiration took her a good harvest.	Her hard work leads her to success.
T63	Success is made up of inspiration and perspiration.	Success depends on inspiration and hard work.
T66	Difference is being enlarged.	The difference is becoming significant.
T67	The only secret between the talent and the ordinary is perspiration.	Work hard is the key to distinguishing talent from ordinary people.
T69	His merits stand up on his striving.	His achievement is determined by his effort.

T72	Hard works bring out real things.	Hard work does lead you to success.
T85	Her success was made up with a lot of efforts.	Her success depends on many efforts.
T87	Thinking brings us the inspiration	Inspiration can be drawn from deep thinking.
T91	No effort will *get no success.	No effort, no success.
T91	Life is equal to everybody.	Everyone's life is equal.
T94	I will stand on Edison's side.	I will stand by Edison's side.
T104	He was killed by his fame and talent.	He was inviting self-destruction due to his fame and talent.
T49	His invention had *improved our life.	He had our life improved by his invention.
T68	They don't think *out the new ideas.	of
T90	Success should fall on us.	We shall step toward success.
T111	inspiration and ...have equal situations.	Inspiration and ... are equally important.
T17	Dream promoted his success.	Dream is the source of his success.
T70	Inspiration will *appear.	spring
T87	Many failures occur.	He has many failures.
T105	Perspiration...will be paid off.	Hard work will paid off.
T100	99%* perspiration demands.	Hard work depends on hard work.
T114	This fact leads many young people to...	This leads many young people to...
T25	Inspiration includes good ideas, opportunities, situations.	Inspiration can be drawn from good idea, opportunities.
T14	Success *belongs to one who work hard.	goes
T3	A research carried out by a Korean scientist can throw light upon my *confuse.	clarify my confusion

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### 2.1.2 Errors due to Ignorance of Rule Restrictions between Synonyms (11 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T1	Success *rests on 99% *perspiration.	depends on hard work
T7	Success *rely on many *aspects.	depends on many factors
T15	Saying never *passes away.	slips
T28	Hard work that *result in their success.	leads them to success
T46	saying *comes.	goes
T58	As the *word goes.	saying
T60	a famous *words going that success is 1%...	saying
T69	These phenomena *anger every person.	These irritate every person.
T91	Inventions were *created.	made
T68	You must do a great effort to achieve the success.	You must make great effort to achieve success.
T70	Don't overestimate your ability and set a proper *object.	target

### 2.2 Intralingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (30 texts in total)

#### 2.2.1 Over-Generalization (23 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T1	Success is depend on efforts	Success depends on efforts.
T24	He *successes	succeeds
T95	We also *needs perspiration	need
T73	He spreaded news.	He spread news.
T99	You nearly *successes.	succeed
T95	If you *works *more hard, you're most able to be	If you work harder, you're most likely to be able to have success.

	successful.	
T102	He *was dedicate to study the theory.	He dedicated to study the theory.
T43	It may *depends on their habits and character.	depend
T77	He met *with the difficulties	He met / encountered the difficulties
T103	Many inventions * <u>are come from inspiration.</u>	come from .
T105	I *feeled it probably.	felt
T9	his fingers worthed to million premium (worth)	His fingers are priceless.
T92	Success is base on perspiration.	Success is based on hard work.
T51	Success linked with work hard.	Success was linked with hard work.
T15	Success <u>is built up with</u> both inspiration and perspiration.	depends on
T18	Perspiration can <u>make up</u> a person's shortcoming.	make up for
T64	We can *illustrated that Jordan had a gift on basketball	We can illustrate that Jordan...
T64	If you are eager to be success, you must *be make 100% efforts	you must make 100% of efforts.
T66	Success * <u>is *depended on</u> not only one's inspiration, but also one's hard work	depends on
T69	You may *failed.	fail.
T97	This theory *applys in all the fields all over the world.	applies to
T47	He *fought against the fate.	fought
T27	You have a good *situations.	You are in a good situation

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### 2.2.2 Incomplete Application of Rules (2 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T71	Edison is *know for his invention that improve the quality of human being's life.	known
T33	Perspiration can *make up inspiration.	Hard work can make up for the inadequacy of inspiration.

### 2.2.3 False Concepts Hypothesized (5 texts in total)

False hypothesizing of concepts because the learners had not fully comprehended the distinction between Chinese and the target language. 'Be' does not exist in MT Chinese syntax. Here, we might suffice it to say that the learners made errors not out of ignorance of English, but because they knew too much TL English rule

Text	LC	Correct form
T99	The word *is contain the two *side.	The word contains two factors contributing to success.
T83	Few people can *be succeed.	succeed
T55	One of the hundreds of *time would *be succeed.	times; succeed
T100	I'm very agree with.	I agree with you.
T18	You will be more *access to success.	You will step towards success soon.[L, G]

### 3. Circumlocution Errors (5 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T76	We set out our foot.	We set out.
T86	You need 99% perspiration to switch the lock which is hard to open and push the door to success.	Hard work can lead us to ultimate success.
T91	The future in front of you is a transparent ruler. You can judge your effort on it.	Your future possibly depends upon your effort.



T86	Your perspiration will in some day give results to you.	Hard work is rewarding someday.
T16	To get success, we need inspiration as well as give perspiration	Success lies in inspiration and hard work.

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## Appendix B: Verb + Noun Collocation Errors

The following is the presentation of total number of English verb / phrasal verb + noun collocation errors, including interlingual and intralingual errors identified from the data and other subcategories of errors with specific reference of source of errors.

Category of error	Total Number of error
The total verb + noun collocation errors	96
Interlingual errors	35
Intralingual errors	60
Errors due to circumlocution	1

### 1. Interlingual Errors (35 texts in total)

#### 1.1 Interlingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (22 texts in total)

##### 1.1.1 Negative Transfer from Chinese Non-Phrasal Verbs into English Phrasal Verbs (18 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T1	Light bulbs *provides us convenience	provides us with convenience
T13	I will not*disagree his views.	disagree to/about/on
T23	He *idles his time every day.	idles away his time
T32	I began to *wonder my diligence	wonder about my dilligence
T37	People *agree this point	agree on this point
T80	I think it's a opinion that I can't *agree more.	I think it is the viewpoint that I cannot agree to any more.
T49	We use electricity to*lit the darkness	light up the darkness
T74	We *look the world.	look at the world
T80	I can't *agree more.	agree to it.
T108	I don't *approve it	approve of it
T71,	You should *pay your / much / 99% most	You should put your 99% of

T73, T86, T100, T109, T111, T117 T92	*perspiration	energy into hard work.
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### 1.1.2 Verb Transitivity (1 text in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T28	When friends and classmates complain to me that someone is lucky to achieve one's own aim, I don't agree to.	...I do not agree to somebody/something.

### 1.1.3 Confusion of Part-Of-Speech (3 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T35, T39	You want to *success	succeed.
T12	It will*effect my life.	affect

### 1.2 Interlingual Errors Found from the Connotation (4 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T12	We need inspiration to combine these knowledge together	We need to combine inspiration with (or and) these knowledge
T5	She can *get the gains eventually.	achieve
T45	He *invented thousands of inventions	made thousands of inventions
T40	We *aim the *goal and we must head for it.	Since we set a target we have to keep doing it.

### 1.3 Literal Translation (9 texts)

Text	LC	Correct form
T98	You had *paid much hard work	You had made great effort.
T66	Someone pays hard work on the inspiration.	Inspiration depends on hard work.
T33, T73,	He just wanted to emphasize the leading position of working hard and paying /	make

T117	*pay efforts	
T50	We can easily*get a conclusion	come to / draw a conclusion.
T25	You will*get greater achievement	make
T111	One can*get their aim	accomplish / achieve his aim.
T2	The need of working hard has *killed children's *inspiration.	Hard work strangles children talents.

## 2. Intralingual Errors (60 texts in total)

### 2.1 Intralingual Errors Found in the Context (51 texts in total)

#### 2.1.1 Ignorance of Rule Restrictions (42 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T1	Success*costs people's efforts and diligence.	depends on
T2	We sometimes gave up our *inspiration that is thought less important than perspiration.	creative ability/vision
T9	He *amplified his efforts clearly.	made his great efforts
T12	We shall *expand much perspiration to get knowledge	make great effort
T13	He needn't to *afford so much perspiration	make great effort
T34	You will *conquest your own disadvantage and finally achieve what you are going after.	weigh / work on your weakness
T48	He *introduced a new viewpoint towards success.	presented
T51	Deligence can make up for *awkward.	deficiency
T68	He *gave out the most perspiration, so he succeed.	made great effort
T74	Believe when Edison said and *pay out your perspiration you'll be successful.	make your effort

T98	Thousands of people had dreamed to fly in the sky and tried to realize the *will.	dream
T96	The most important thing should always be working! Only by our hands can we *achieve a big world.	create
T103	*solve the question	answer
T108	I could accomplish my *affairs just with inspiration.	task
T116	Many college *graduations have *got some exploration.	graduates, made,
T3	Edison drew it *as a conclusion of his experiments.	drew a conclusion / took it as a conclusions
T9	Lang Lang, uses his fingers to *convey his emotion and wonderful music.	convey his emotion and create great music
T20	The prison life *gave rise to his inspiration to record an epoch.	The prison life brought inspiration to him.
T21	Even if inspiration has come to you, you have not *compared for it	compared with it
T22	He could *shoot the ball into the wheel	kick / head
T24	When I *learned of his trainings. I knew I was wrong.	I saw his hard training.
T28	The scientists *operate their experiments again and again.	conduct / perform / carry out
T30	He *made all his inspirations into reality by non-stopping experiments.	applied
T33	He *weakens the important influence of hard work.	He makes less impact upon the hard work.
T33	Sometimes perspiration can *make up inspiration	make up for the inadequacy of inspiration
T35	No real success comes from lucky or not every success comes lucky. We can't *deny some special *examples.	No success does come from luck. But, we can not exclude some special cases.
T67	*Look back in *time history, we can find many examples.	looking back on history

T39	If you have some idea in your head, never *miss it.	abandon
T46	Many things I saw or heard *prove it as a truth.	prove it true
T58	Inspiration *makes as equal *effects as perspiration does on success.	Inspiration has as equal effect as perspiration on success
T52	We got to know how to *revise our paintings.	try our paintings once more
T54	illustrate him as a example	describe him as a typical example
T63	We will never *reach our dreams.	reach for / realize our dream
T68	*make your mind open	keep
T69	Beethoven *writer down a lot of good music.	composed, wrote
T95	I think its one's perspiration *causes the differences.	*makes a difference
T98	More and more big companies come to *pay emphasis on the creative people.	put / lay / place emphasis on
T98	I think the inspiration didn't *play only 1% of the role.	make up only 1% of the total
T105	You have to *give your perspiration.	make great effort
T108	I hadn't *relearned some aspects of the *begin and the end of my article.	reflected on some aspects, beginning
T111	He *stepped on the mountain of science.	climbed toward the top of the mountain
T114	The most important thing they think is *making out a good idea.	get a good idea

---

### 2.1.2 Ignorance of Rule Restriction between Synonyms (9 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T3	*build them an image	create
T4	*bring up ideas	come up with
T6	*enhancing my social position	improve

T11	*pay our time on it	spend
T21	These people often *expended more time and perspiration on their own *works.	spend time and energy on their won work
T43	They have made their extreme efforts to accomplish their *goals.	aims
T68	*do a great effort	make
T85	grab the *sense	intuition
T117	How much you paid *decide how much you can *get.	How much you can gain is determined by how much you paid.

## 2.2 Intralingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (9 texts in total)

### 2.2.1 Confusion of those TL Verbs Which are Both Transitive and Intransitive

(5 texts)

Text	LC	Correct form
T61	Most of us may choose to *give up after 5 times.	Most of us may choose to give up the experiment after 5 times.
T65	He who makes a lot of effort but has not enough inspiration only can see the light of success, but he can't *reach.	...but he cannot achieve success.
T56	Maybe everyone of us has inspiration like him to have success. But only he *achieved because of his hard work.	...but only he achieved success because of his hard work.
T69	If you *persist, you can...	If you persist in doing it, you can ...
T87	Many failures occur before the final success. Sometimes, someone *gives up because of the strike of failure.	..., someone gives up his attempts because of the failure.

### 2.2.2 Overgeneralization of TL Grammatical Rules on Part-Of-Speech (2 texts in total)

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T99	want successes	want to succeed
T10	couraged us (courage)	encouraged us

### **2.2.3 False Concepts Hypothesized (2 texts in total)**

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T69	want to be succeed	want to succeed
T22	made him *be the president	made him a president

### **3 Circumlocution Errors (1 text in total)**

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T31	Perspiration makes the average people become successful.	Hard work makes people successful.



## Appendix C: Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors

The following is the presentation of total number of English adjective + noun collocation errors, including interlingual and intralingual errors and other subcategories of errors with specific reference of source of errors.

Category of Error	Total Number of Error
The Total Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors	30
Interlingual Errors	7
Intralingual Errors	23

### 1. Interlingual Errors (7 texts in total)

#### 1.1 Interlingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (1 text in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T82	As the tea drink might not be popular, many his idea	companies *company refuse

#### 1.2 Interlingual Errors Found from the Meaning of Word (6 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T38, T51, T75, T98	*good inspiration	great
T52	*proper inspiration	inspiration
T59	*beautiful success	big

## 2. Intralingual Errors (23 texts in total)

### 2.1. Intralingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (4 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T88	*succeeded scientists	great
T94	*hardworked people	industrious
T24	everyone successful	successful people
T10	We try every *reasons to catch our talent.	We try our best to catch our talent. [L, G]

### 2.2. Intralingual Errors Found in the Context (19 texts in total)

#### 2.2.1 Ignorance of Rule Restrictions of TL English (12 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T2	*instant inspiration	a flash of
T59	*sudden inspiration	a flash of
T8	*classical saying	old
T15	*good saying	old
T22	scientific *circle	society / world
T39	*special idea	good
T3	*honorable image	good
T7	*noble invention	great / remarkable
T14	*admired scientist	a respectable / remarkable
T48	*wonderful rank	prestigious
T89	*ready work	pre-work
T14	*smartest scientist	real

### 2.2.2 Errors of Synonyms (7 texts in total)

<b>Text</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>Correct form</b>
T2	*wrong view	false
T14, T111	*common *persons	ordinary / common people (person)
T60	*underlying danger	potential
T87	*many work	much
T87	*final success	ultimate
T72	There are so many *genius	talents

## Appendix D: Noun + Noun Collocation Errors

The following are the sum of number of noun + noun collocation errors including noun + prepositional phrase collection errors under interlingual and intralingual errors, as well as under other subcategories with reference of sources of errors.

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Category of Error	Total Number of Error
The total of Noun + Noun Collocation Errors	28
Interlingual Noun + Noun Collocation Errors	15
Intralingual Noun + Noun Collocation Errors	13

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### 1. Interlingual Errors (15 texts in total)

#### 1.1 Interlingual Errors Found in the Grammatical Structure (5 texts in total)

##### 1.1.1 Errors due to Chinese Coordinate NPs Interference to English + PPs (4 texts in total)

---

Text	LC	Correct form
T 14	the world scientist	the scientist in the world
T 5	intelligence quality	quality of intelligence
T 13	lamp experiment	experiment for lamp
T 57	ancient child	a child in ancient China

---

##### 1.1.2 Confusion of English Part-Of-Speech (1 text in total)

---

Text	LC	Correct form
T35	truth perspiration	real effort

---

## 1.2 Interlingual Errors found from Semantics of Word (10 texts in total)

### 1.2.1 Errors due to Negative Transfer of Chinese Connotations (4 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T82	sunlight of success	the best hope of success
T65, T96	lights of inspiration	Inspiration
T1	Edison, the inventor of the success, there were efforts and diligence	Edison, the inventor of light bulb, There were efforts and diligence in him.

### 1.2.2 Errors due to Chinese Compound (6 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T79	2500 try's failing	2500 failures
T16	developing inspirit	inspiration
T43	new-borns'talence (talent)	infants
T67	*Look back in *time history, we can find many examples.	Looking back on history, we can...
T67	once time	once
T90	He took ten years *time to do...	ten years to do...

## 2. Intralingual Errors (13 texts in total)

### 2.1 Intralingual Errors Found in the Context (11)

#### 2.1.1 Ignorance of Rule Restrictions (10 texts in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T 82	award of success	award available in the success
T 84	talent of act or sing	potential in one's voice and acting
T 99	two side of the success	two factors contributing to success

T 111	mountain of science	cutting-edge of science
T 7	peak of success mountain	peak of success
T 9	process of success	factor contributing to success / key to success
T 10	key of success	key to success
T 10	The necessity to success	key to success
T 102	discrimination of race sexual	racial discrimination and sexism
T6	A mild life is a source of happiness contentment.	A peaceful life is a source of happiness and contentment.[L]

### 2.2.2 Synonymous Error as Ignorance of Rule Restrictions (1 text in total)

Text	LC	Correct form
T66	*opportunities to succeed	chances of success

### 2.2 Intralingual Errors due to Confusion of Word Meaning (2 text)

T116	Many college graduations have *got some exploration.	made
T117	The clever or lucky is not the most important *fact of success.	factor

## Appendix E

### A / Numeral + Quantifying Noun + of + Noun Collocation Errors

[N = 8]

[interlingual: 8]

#### 1. Interlingual Errors in the Grammatical Structure (8 texts)

Text	LC	Correct form
T42	*million of shoot at football match	millions of goals
T9	million premium	a million of premium
T71, T91	thousands of *failure	failures
T71	thousands of *material	materials
T23, T54	*thousand of experiments	thousands
T80	He failed for thousands of *time in the process of inventing the bulb.	times

## Appendix F

### Adverb + Adjective + Noun Collocation Errors

[N = 2]

Interlingual errors: 2

#### 1. Interlingual error (2)

##### 1.1 Interlingual Errors from Grammatical Structure (1 text)

T50 you can find examples too \*numbers to list. examples too numerous to list

##### 1.2 Interlingual Errors due to Chinese Connotation (1 text)

T73 The water became \*totally black                      The water gradually became black.



## Appendix G

### Verb + Adverb Collocation Errors

N = 2

#### 1. Intralingual errors in the Context (1 text)

T60 I extremely agree with it. I strongly agree with it.

#### 2. Circumlocution errors: (1 text)

T21 I agree with what he said without any doubts.

Correct form: I strongly agree with what he said.