

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Master degree in English



An Investigation of Problems Encountered by EFL Learners while

Using Lexical Collocations in Writing and their Causes

The Case of Third Year Students at the English Department of Mohammed

Seddik Ben Yahia University- Jijel

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements
of a Master Degree in English Didactics

Submitted by:

- Imene HAROUCHE

- Meriem LARABA

Supervised by:

Dr. Slimane BOUKHENTACHE

Board of Examiners

Su supervisor: Dr. Slimane BOUKHENTACHE Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel

Examiner: Mrs. Radia KHERBOUCHE Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university, Jijel

Chairperson: Ms. Ilham MELIT Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university, Jijel

Academic Year 2018-2019

Dedication

We owe a debt gratitude to our affectionate parents for their understanding and endless love, those who taught us the value of education and

supported us to become who we are today.

To our sisters and brothers for their support.

To all those who have been supportive, caring, and patient.

To our childhood friends

To all our friends with whom we shared the university life.

To all those who love, support and have been there for us.

Imene and Meriem

Acknowledgements

Above all, we thank Allah for the accomplishment of this work, for giving us ambition, determination and strength to finish it.

First and foremost, our sincere expression of gratitude goes to our supervisor **Dr. BOUKHENTACHE Slimane** who was a source of guidance and wisdom for this research work. We have been incredibly lucky in the readings and comments we have received from him. Without his continuous support, observation and suggestions, this work would have never been completed. All his ideas have proved extremely useful.

Secondly, we thank the board of examiners, namely **Mrs. KHERBOUCHE Radia** and **Ms. MELIT Ilham** for devoting time to examine this piece of research and whose comments will help to reshape it in a better way.

Thirdly, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the students of **Mohammad Seddik Ben Yahia University** for their participation and cooperation.

Last but never least, our appreciations go to all our teachers from our first day in the university until now without exception. To whoever taught us a word.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Abstract

Achieving native-like writing undoubtedly remains a significant difficulty for EFL learners notably on the level of collocations. Remarkably, EFL students make a lot of collocational errors in their writings. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the main problems and their causes encountered by third-year English language students of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University while using lexical collocations in their written productions. This study is based on the assumption that third year students face significant problems in using lexical collocations; also, it is claimed that these problems are primarily caused by lack of collocational competence and L1 interference. To investigate this topic, data were gathered by dint of content analysis and questionnaire. The content was taken from twenty-four exam papers of third-year English students. Likewise, the questionnaire was administered to a sample of sixty third year students. The results yielded by both tools revealed that students make lexical collocation errors to a large extent, especially in *verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* patterns. Also, it was found that L1 interference, lack of collocational competence and learning strategy types are the main reasons behind students' mis-collocations in writing. To overcome the former problems, it was suggested that teachers should raise their students' attention towards the use of collocations through integrating them into their teaching curricula; also, students are required to develop autonomous learning of collocations.

Keywords: Collocation, Lexical Collocation, Collocational Competence, Writing, EFL, Mis-collocation, L1 Interference, Learning Strategy Types.

List of Abbreviations

Adj: Adjective

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: foreign Language

G: Grammatical

L: Lexical

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

Prep: Preposition

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

Vs: Versus

List of Tables

Chapter One	page
Table 1.1: Examples of Lexical Collocations.....	24
Table 1.2: Examples of Grammatical Collocations	24
Table 1.3: Lexical Collocation Patterns.....	25
Table 1.4: Grammatical Collocation Patterns.....	27
Chapter Two	
Table 2.1: collocation errors and Error-free Papers.....	49
Table 2.2: Frequency of Correct and Incorrect Lexical Collocation Use.....	49
Table 2.3: Types of lexical Collocation errors.....	50
Table 2.4: Frequency of Dictionary Use.....	51
Table 2.5: Students' Definition of Collocation.....	51
Table 2.6: Ownership of Collocation Dictionary.....	52
Table 2.7: Frequency of Learning Words in Combination.....	53
Table 2.8: Students' Attitudes towards Acquiring New word Combinations	53
Table 2.9: Frequency of Learning Collocations in Classroom.....	53
Table 2.10: Students' Attitudes towards Problems in Collocations and Writing.....	54
Table 2.11: Kind of Problems in Using Collocations in Writing.....	54
Table 2.12: The Main Cause of Collocation Problems in Writing.....	55
Table 2.13: Teaching Collocations to Enhance Students' Writing Proficiency.....	56
Table 2.14: The Most Effective Method for Learning Collocations.....	57

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	2
Acknowledgement.....	3
Abstract.....	4
List of Abbreviations.....	5
List of Tables.....	6
Table of Content.....	7
General Introduction.....	10
1. Background of the Study.....	10
2. Statement of the Problem.....	12
3. Aims of the Study.....	13
4. Research Questions.....	13
5. Assumption.....	14
6. Significance of the Study.....	14
7. Research Design.....	14
8. Structure of the Study.....	14
Chapter One: Literature Review	
1.1 The Notion of Collocations.....	16
1.1.1 Definition of Collocation.....	16
1.1.2 Origins of collocation.....	17
1.1.3. Approaches to Define Collocations.....	18
1.1.3.1 Lexical Approach.....	18
1.1.3.2 Semantic Approach.....	19
1.1.3.3 Structural Approach.....	20
1.1.4 Criteria of Collocations.....	21

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

1.1.5	Types of Collocations.....	23
1.1.5.1	Lexical versus Grammatical Collocations.....	23
1.1.5.2	Patterns of Collocations.....	25
1.1.6	The Concept of Word.....	27
1.1.7	Collocations and Other Words Combination.....	27
1.1.7.1	Collocations, Idioms and Phrasal Verbs.....	28
1.1.7.2	Collocation Vs Colligation.....	29
1.1.8	Collocational Competence.....	30
1.2	Lexical Collocations and Writing.....	31
1.2.1	The Skill of Writing.....	31
1.2.2	The Relationship between Collocation Knowledge and Writing	32
1.2.3	Importance of Lexical Collocations on EFL learners' Writing Proficiency.....	33
1.2.4	Teaching Lexical Collocations.....	35
1.2.4.1	Teaching Individual Collocations.....	35
1.2.4.2	Making Students Aware of Collocations.....	36
1.2.4.3	Extending What Students Already Know.....	36
1.2.4.4	Storing Collocations.....	37
1.2.5	Problems of Students with Lexical Collocations.....	37
1.2.6	Causes of Students Mis-collocations.....	39
1.2.6.1	Interference of L1.....	40
1.2.6.2	Culture based Knowledge	40
1.2.6.3	Learning Strategy Types	41
1.2.6.4	Lack of Collocational Competence	42
	Conclusion.....	43

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction.....	44
2.1. Research Methodology.....	44
2.1.1 Research Paradigm.....	44
2.1.2 Setting.....	45
2.1.3 Research design.....	45
2.1.3.1 Sample of the Study.....	45
2.1.3.2 Data Gathering Instruments.....	46
a. Content Analysis	46
b. The Questionnaire.....	47
2.1.4 Data Collection Procedures.....	47
2.1.5 Data Analysis Procedures.....	48
2.2. Data Analysis.....	48
2.2.1 Analysis of the Data of Content Analysis.....	48
2.2.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire.....	51
2.3. Data Discussion.....	58
2.3.1. The frequency of lexical collocation errors in students' essays.....	58
2.3.2 Students' Problems in Using Lexical Collocations in Writing.....	58
2.3.3 Main Causes for Students' Mis-collocation.....	60
Conclusion.....	63
Recommendations.....	64
Limitations of the Study.....	64
General Conclusion.....	66
Suggestions for Further Research.....	68
References.....	69

General Introduction

1. Background of the Study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Aims of the Study
4. Research Questions
5. Assumption
6. Significance of the Study
7. Research Design
8. Structure of the Study

General Introduction

English is an international language which has gained widespread popularity since it is regarded as the most spoken language all over the world. As a result, teaching and learning English have become a need for achieving specific purposes in the globalization era. As for EFL learners, one key concept in mastering the language is to possess a good vocabulary. The latter plays a great role in gaining language proficiency for it helps to oil the wheels of fluency, enabling learners to express themselves freely and discuss lengthy thoughts effectively. Also, it partakes a great deal in a better understanding of both written and spoken languages as well as resulting in a more appropriate and accurate output. Nevertheless, vocabulary is treated with considerable neglect in the realm of second/foreign language teaching and learning due to the excessive focus on teaching grammar over lexis. As a consequence, English as foreign language (EFL) learners face a great deal of confusion in learning vocabulary and word combinations especially lexical collocations.

1. Background of the Study

It is only in recent times that the notion of collocation has begun to gain a growing interest in the field of EFL/SLA research. Henceforth, a lot of studies have been pursued within this topic area by various researchers such as (Halliday and Hassan, Hill, Lewis...). However, each researcher viewed collocations from his perspective and tackled different issues related to this zone of interest. The studies that have been conducted on collocations can be classified into different categories; and therefore, it is worthwhile to mention some of those numerous studies; some researchers dealt with collocation and its relation to language proficiency. In this respect, Rahimi and Momeni (2011) carried out a study where they examined "*the effect of teaching collocations on English language proficiency*". They conducted an experimental research and a language proficiency test. The statistical analysis

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the posttest, implying that teaching collocations can improve students' language proficiency. Likewise, Abdaoui (2010) explored the effects of "*Teaching Lexical Collocations to Raise Proficiency in FL Writing*". The researcher collected data employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results of her study revealed that there exists a strong linear correlation between writing proficiency and the use of collocation. Moreover, Allami (2013) dealt with *The Effect of Teaching Collocations on the Speaking Ability of EFL Iranian Learners*. Besides of this, the researcher aimed at exploring the relationship between the students' knowledge and the use of collocations as well as finding out their attitudes towards teaching collocations. To conduct the research, 40 participants were assigned to two experimental and control groups, and a collocation test and an interview were designed. The results of the study revealed that the speaking ability of students who received the treatment of collocation instruction has noticeably improved in posttest. Also, the interview showed that students have positive attitudes towards teaching collocations explicitly.

On another level, some other researchers focused on the investigation of errors in translating collocations from L1 to L2 and vice versa. In this regard, Fanit (2010) conducted a research study in which he sought to explore problems faced by Algerian university students in translating collocation. In collecting the data, the researcher designed a test to examine students' errors in translating collocations. His study revealed two primary sources of errors: the adaptation of literal translation as a translation method and neglect of collocation which belongs to another culture and language. The main conclusion of the research indicated that collocations are both a linguistic and a cultural issue and are not just a matter of replacing words by their equivalents in the target language. Correspondingly, Faris (2013) investigated '*students' difficulties when translating English collocations into Arabic*'. To diagnose these

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

difficulties, the researcher designed a translation test of twenty sentences; each of which includes a collocation. The results obtained showed that the significant obstacle for students is to provide the proper Arabic equivalent collocations. Generalization, variability, and the cultural idiomatic collocations are considered the main problems of students when translating collocations

Overall, the studies mentioned above have all agreed on the idea that collocations are a problematic aspect for EFL learners. The majority of the results showed that there exists a strong correlation between collocations and language proficiency. Even though researchers conducted their studies in different contexts using different methods, they all completed each other and contributed to the emergence of further research.

As for the investigation of difficulties encountered by EFL students in using collocations apart from translation, very little concern has been given to tackle this issue; the majority of the studies done in this topic area have been carried out by Asian researchers. Therefore, the current study approaches the problems of Algerian EFL students in using lexical collocations and seeks to find out reasons for mis-collocations. What makes the present research different and worthwhile is that students' problems with lexical collocations will be identified in their natural production of language. Also, the study attempts to find out the reasons for mis-collocation in writing.

2. Statement of the Problem

As far as English is concerned, the ability to use lexical collocations correctly is a crucial issue for learners. According to the host of research studies that have been done on the subject of collocation errors in EFL/SLA, a lot of students find several difficulties in selecting words that generally collocate together and most of the times misuse them while writing. One illustration of mis-collocation issues can be shown in the lexical collocation *to*

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

take medicines. Nation (2001, p. 328) stated that in some other languages, the word "*medicine*" generally collocates with "*eat*" or "*drink*". This difference proves that collocations are a problematic concept for EFL learners. For instance, Japanese learners frequently use the collocation "*drink medicine*" rather than "*take medicine*" due to the interference of their L1 (Donnellan, 2014, p. 228). The former expression seems to be awkward and sounds unnatural for native speakers. Thus, mastering collocational competence helps a great deal in achieving a native-like production.

Indeed, there are plenty of factors which considerably affect students' use of collocations, such as the interference of mother tongue and the lack of collocational knowledge. Therefore, investigating students' problems in using collocations can be essential in raising their attention towards this concept, which has critical importance in language acquisition.

3. Aims of the Study

The current study aims at investigating third-year English learners' problems while using lexical collocations in their written productions. The primary purpose is to identify, quantify, and classify the main types of problems faced by students when they collocate words together. Also, the study seeks to recognize the main causes that may lead to such kind of issues and to find out solutions for students' mis-collocations as well.

4. Research Questions

The present study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- To what extent do EFL students make lexical collocation errors in writing?
- 2- What kind of problems do learners face while using lexical collocations?
- 3- What are the main reasons behind students' mis-collocations?

5. Assumption

On the light of the research questions, the researchers assume that third-year students encounter many problems in using lexical collocations. Also, it is assumed that two main reasons cause these problems. The first reason is the lack of collocational competence; the second reason is the interference of L1 (Arabic).

6. Significance of the Study

Lexical collocations are considered a complex aspect of EFL/ASL learning. As a result, EFL learners face multiple problems when dealing with them specifically in writing. This issue led to the development of a host of research that has been conducted to investigate issues related to collocations and has tried to find out solutions to this complex phenomenon. Since the current study endeavors to investigate the problems encountered by third-year students in using lexical collocations in writing and reveal their causes, its results may lead EFL learners to recognize their weaknesses in lexical collocation and to make sense of the contributing causes to their problems.

7. Research Design

The present study will be conducted through the use of a purely quantitative paradigm. To collect data that may help to answer the research questions, the researchers will make use of content analysis and a questionnaire. Firstly, the content analysis will be taken from exam papers of third-year English students; likewise, the questionnaire will be designed to a broader sample of the same population.

8. Structure of the Study

The current research work will be divided into two chapters. The first chapter will concern the theoretical part where the background about collocations will be reviewed in two

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

main sections. As for the second chapter, the practical phase will be exposed in three sections. The first section will discuss the research methodology; the second section will present the analysis of data while the third section will be devoted to data discussion and interpretation.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.2 The Notion of Collocations

1.1.1 Definition of Collocation

1.1.2 Origins of collocation

1.1.4. Approaches to Define Collocations

1.1.8.1 Lexical Approach

1.1.8.2 Semantic Approach

1.1.8.3 Structural Approach

1.1.9 Criteria of Collocations

1.1.10 Types of Collocations

1.1.10.1 Lexical versus Grammatical Collocations

1.1.10.2 Patterns of Collocations

1.1.11 The Concept of Word

1.1.12 Collocations and Other Words Combination

1.1.12.1 Collocations, Idioms and Phrasal Verbs

1.1.12.2 Collocation Vs Colligation

1.1.13 Collocational Competence

1.2 Lexical Collocations and Writing

1.2.1 The Skill of Writing

1.2.2 The Relationship between Collocation Knowledge and Writing

1.2.3 Importance of Lexical Collocations on EFL learners' Writing Proficiency

1.2.4 Teaching Lexical Collocations

1.2.4.1 Teaching Individual Collocations

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

1.2.4.2 Making Students Aware of Collocations

1.2.4.3 Extending What Students Already Know

1.2.4.4 Storing Collocations

1.2.5 Problems of Students with Lexical Collocations

1.2.6 Causes of Students Mis-collocations

1.2.6.1 Interference of L1

1.2.6.2 Culture based Knowledge

1.2.6.3 Learning Strategy Types

1.2.6.4 Lack of Collocational Competence

Conclusion

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1. The Notion of Collocations

This section is notably devoted to the notion of collocation in general. It provides definition, origins, approaches, criteria, and types of collocations. Also, it deals with the concept of word and other word combinations; and finally, it discusses collocational competence.

1.1.1. Definition of Collocations

In its most general sense, the term collocation represents a composition of words that are commonly glued together to convey a specific meaning. Regardless of being a neglected topic in linguistics, collocation constituted the central concern of several scholars and researchers within the field of EFL /SLA who emerged plenty of definitions to explain the nature of this phenomenon. In what follows, a set of definitions that were pointed out by different authors are selected to provide further insight and clarification about the concept of collocations.

In defining collocations, Halliday and Hasan (2001) noted that collocations are "the co-occurrence of lexical items that are in some way or other typically associated with one another, because they tend to occur in similar environments" (p. 317). Along the same line of thought, McCarthy and O'Dell (2005) stated that collocations are "Pair or group of words that are often used together. These combinations sound natural to native speakers" (p. 6). Thus, when English learners do not collocate words appropriately, they may sound wrong to native speakers. For instance, the nouns *car* and *food* naturally collocate with the adjective *fast* (we say: a fast car, fast-food), but not with *quick*. Although *fast* and *quick* are synonyms, we do not say *quick food* because *quick* generally collocates with *meal* not with *food* (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2005, p. 6). Also, collocations were defined by Oxford Advanced Learners'

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Dictionary (2006) as "a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance" (p. 281). To sum up, the previous definitions agree on the idea that the regular tendency of words to appear together is the central meaning of collocations.

1.1.2. Origins of Collocations

Initially speaking, the word collocation was derived and brought into English from the Latin word *collocare* which signifies "to set/arrange together"; (cal: together, locare: to place) (Martynska, 2004, p. 2). However, there is no conclusive evidence that one particular linguist notably pioneered collocations; and researchers within this field did not agree on whom they consider the initiator of this notion. Therefore, various viewpoints concerning the emergence of collocation have been noted.

According to Robins (1967), the concept of collocation has been initially studied 2300 years ago in Greek. At that given point of time, the notion of collocation was used to study semantics and meaning relationships among words (Cited in Namvar et al., 2012, p. 13). In defining collocations, the ancient Greek scholars noted that words "do not exist in isolation, and they differ according to the collocation in which they are used" (Robins, 1967, p. 21). The outstanding work of Greeks on collocation had a significant effect on J. R Firth, a British linguist, who later adopted and developed their thoughts on collocations (Qadar, 2018, p. 42). In this respect, Gitsaki (1999) argued that Firth is widely acknowledged to be the first who emerged "collocation" as a technical concept to linguistics explicitly when he clearly said: "I propose to bring forward as a technical term, meaning by 'collocation', and to apply the test of collocability" (Firth, 1951, as cited in Bartsch, 2004, p. 30). Hence, the considerable contribution of Firth to collocation has gained him the name of *father of collocations*.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Even so, some scholars declared that the concept of collocation has been discussed for a long time ago, but not in its linguistic sense. In this regard, Jaff (2013) argued that "first use of word collocation was by Francis Bacon in his *Natural history* from 1627, but not as a linguistic concept" (i.e., not in its present's sense). Whereas, Mitchell (1971) pointed out that Firth has brought the term collocation from Palmer's work in *Second Interim Report on English Collocations* (1933). That is to say, the term collocation was first coined by Palmer and then introduced to linguistics by Firth.

1.1.3. Approaches to Define Collocations

Throughout history, the notion of collocation has been viewed in a variety of ways by different linguists. The latter emerged different concepts to define collocations. In this regard, views on collocations can be distinguished into three main approaches: the Lexical, Semantic, and Structural approaches.

1.1.3.1. Lexical approach

As the name suggests, the main idea of this approach is that collocations are identified through the co-occurrence of lexical items that are separated from grammar (Vasnoniené and danileviciené, 2012, p. 12). Among those who observed collocations as a lexical phenomenon, we mention Firth (1957), Halliday (1966) and Sinclair (1991). Firth is considered the father of collocations and the initiator of this approach. Later, Firth's ideas were adopted and developed by Halliday and, Sinclair and then were known as "*Neo Firthians*".

Firth's (1957) view of collocation was based on the belief that the meaning of collocation is determined by the co-occurrence of words. In defining collocations, Firth (1957) pointed out that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (p. 195). That is to say, collocations are a *mode of meaning* in the sense that the meaning of a word is known by

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

the other words where it occurs, and those combinations of words are strictly limited (Vasnoniené and danileviciené, 2012, p. 12). Halliday was one of the pioneers who took Firth's perceptions of collocations and introduced some insights to it. Halliday (1966) saw collocations as a syntagmatic relation of lexical items, for example: "*strong, strongly, strength, and strengthened*" can all be considered as the same item; and "*a strong argument, he argued strongly, the strength of his argument and his argument was strengthened*" are its syntactic relation (Halliday, 1966, p. 151). Also, he dealt with the probability of these lexical relations to occur in a given distance. For instance: "I wasn't altogether convinced by his argument. He had some strong points but they could all be met" (Halliday, 1966, p. 151). Like Firth, Halliday (1966) agreed that collocations are a lexical phenomenon rather than a grammatical one (Cited in Jaff, 2013). Following the same viewpoint of Firth and Halliday, Sinclair (1991) agreed that collocations are a matter of lexis. He pointed out that collocations refer to "the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other" (Sinclair, 1991, p. 170). Later, he slightly changed his opinion arguing that grammar should not be totally neglected and considered as a separate part of lexis; and he studied grammar and lexis as two "interpenetrating ways" of looking at language structure (Jaff, 2013).

1.1.3.2. Semantic Approach

The advocates of the semantic approach criticized the lexical approach for being insufficient and unconvincing because it focuses on how words co-occur together without justifying what the reasons behind the frequency of this co-occurrence are (Lyons, 1966, pp. 289-297, cited in Gitsaki, 1996, p. 144). According to the semantic approach, the meaning of lexical items should be semantically appropriate; i.e., their meaning should be related to collocate together; because if there is n semantic property between two combined words, the meaning will be empty. Robins (1967) noted that "words meaning do not exist in isolation,

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

they may differ according to the collocation in which they are used" (p21, cited in Jaff, 2013). That means that he disagreed with the assumption that one word single may affect the meaning of certain collocations.

1.1.3.3. The Structural Approach

The structural approach claimed that "collocation is influenced by structure, and collocations occur in patterns. Therefore, the study of collocation should include grammar" (Gitsaki, 1996, p. 17). In other words, the supporters of this approach saw grammar as a crucial factor which cannot be disconnected from lexis. Moreover, in dealing with collocations, grammar should be included, and unlike the previous approaches, they considered grammar and lexis as two related items. Therefore, they subdivided collocations into two significant categories: lexical and grammatical collocations (Nesselhouf, 2005, p. 20). Kjellmer (1990), Carter (1998) and Benson (1997) are among the pioneers of the structural approach. Each of these latter scholars treated collocation according to his perceptions.

Kjellmer (1990) claimed that individual word classes are divided into *collocational* and *non-collocational*. His study showed that articles, prepositions, singular and mass nouns and the base forms of verbs are collocations; while, adjectives, singular proper nouns, and adverbs are *non-collocational* (Cited in Martynska, 2004, p. 3). Carter (1998) considered collocations as a set of words joined together in a language. He made a distinction between two types of collocations: lexical and grammatical collocations. According to him, the latter does not only consist of grammatical items but also include lexical units which are grouped in a certain manner to form a grammatical collocation. Benson et al. (1997) argued that collocations are words that "... regularly combine with certain other words or grammatical constructions" (p. 20). Benson (1997) took into account both grammatical and lexical

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

collocations and he classified them into categories; for grammatical collocations, he identified eight classes (*noun + preposition, noun + to-infinitive, noun + that-clause, preposition + noun, adjective + preposition, adjective + to-infinitive, adjective + that-clause* and *verb + to-infinitive*); while for lexical collocations, he classified them into seven types (*verb + noun/pronoun/prepositional phrase, verb + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb, quantifier + noun, adverb + adjective, verb + adverb*) (Cited in Jaff, 2013).

1.1.4. Criteria of Collocation

The concept of collocation was marked by a diversity of studies arisen by several scholars. The latter emerged to define and describe the nature of this concept and make it easy to be identified, in which various features of collocation have been noted to differentiate it from other aspects of language. In this regard, the following points are some essential criteria that characterize collocations.

a. Non- Compositionality

Any certain words combination can be *compositional* in the sense that we can easily understand its meaning from the meaning of its components. However, collocations are said to be *non-compositional*. That is to say; we cannot tell what a given collocation exactly means through looking for the meaning of its parts; i.e., when two single words are collocated together, they may convey a different meaning which has nothing to do with the meaning of the collocation (Bowles, 2007, p. 8). For example: "*hot dog*" is a collocation made up of the words: "*hot* = having a high temperature" and "*dog* = a domestic animal". The meaning of these words is totally different from the meaning of "*hot dog*" which signifies "*a small cooked sausage*". A good example of non-compositionality is "*idioms*" such as "it rains cats and dogs" which means "it rains heavily" (Bowles, 2007, p. 8).

b. Non- Modifiability

Collocations are not modifiable; this means that there is no way to add any modification to a specific part of collocation, being it a grammatical transformation, a lexical extension or whatever sort of addition. For example, it is not acceptable to say *mother in laws* instead of *mother in law* as we cannot say *whiter wine* instead of *white wine* (Bowles, 2007, p. 8).

c. Non- Substitutability

A collocation is not substitutable because it is not possible to replace one item of collocation with its equivalent (Bowles, 2007). For instance, *fast* and *quick* are synonyms; however, it is not acceptable to substitute *fast* in *fast-food* with *quick* (*quick food* is not a collocation).

d. Arbitrariness

Collocations are characterized by their arbitrary combination; that is, their composition is automatic and not based on a precise rule or logic, but rather on linguistic convention (Smadja, 1993, p. 5). The arbitrariness of collocation explains very well why we should say *make an effort* but not *do an effort*; "*blond hair*" But not "*blond car*" and "*good morning*" but not "*excellent morning*".

e. Restriction of meaning

According to Sinclair (1991), collocation restricts the meaning of its constituents (cited in Hamid, 2008, p. 30). This means that it limits the meaning of its parts rather than enhancing it (Jaff, 2013). For instance, *rancid milk* is a collocation; the noun *milk* collocates with a big range of adjectives, and when we collocate it with *rancid* for example, we limit its meaning to the milk that is only *rancid* not any other state of milk (Jaff, 2013).

f. Distance

According to Brezina et al. (2015, p. 140), in a collocation, it is not necessary that the first part should directly follow the second part. However, it is possible to find a span of four words or more between both parts. For example:

- It was an auspicious occasion
- The occasion on which it was done was not an auspicious one (Sinclair, 1966, p. 413)

g. Frequency of use

The majority of definitions to collocations approached the frequency of co-occurrence of words as a major feature of collocation. When native speakers of English use an association of words together and frequently, it becomes natural and therefore considered a collocation. For example, *blond* is commonly used with *hair*; when people say *yellow hair*, it is not wrong, but it sounds unnatural to native speakers because it is not a frequent composition (O'Dell and McCarthy, 2008, p. 6).

1.1.5. Types of collocations

Collocations are classified into different types. They have been divided into various dimensions. Some scholars have considered their co-occurrence, partnership, while others considered their use and strength. The most known types are discussed below.

1.1.5.1. Lexical versus Grammatical Collocations

According to Benson, Benson, and Ilson (1986), English collocations are categorized into two classes: lexical and grammatical. The difference between both of them is that the former consists of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs as principal words whereas the latter is made up of adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and nouns combined with a preposition or a grammatical structure. So, the main difference is that lexical collocation does not include any

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

grammatical word (prepositions, particles), but only lexical words which are considered the main part in the collocation. In the following two tables, examples of each type are given.

Table 1.1: *Examples of Lexical Collocation*

Type of lexical Collocation	Examples
Verb + Noun	Take a break.
Adjective + Noun	Pretty girl.
Noun + Verb	Bird sings.
Noun + Noun	Bus station
Adverb + Adjective	Extremely beautiful.
Verb + Adverb	Speak quickly.

Table 1.2: *Examples of Grammatical Collocation*

Types of grammatical Collocation	Examples
Noun + Preposition	Friend with.
Adjective + Preposition	Found of.
Preposition + Noun	For someone.
Verb + Preposition	Look at.
Noun + That + Clause	The day that we Passed together.

The above tables show that the first table consists only of lexical words *nouns*, *adjectives*, *verbs*, and *adverbs*. While the second table shows that the dominating word on each example is a *preposition*, which is a grammatical word. As a result, a collocation is grammatical when it includes a *preposition* or *that + clause*.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

1.1.5.2. Patterns of Collocations

Different linguists classified collocations into different types, each one of them presented a model for collocations. According to Benson, Benson, and Ilson (1986), collocations are divided into two types, lexical collocations that contain seven types, and grammatical that consists of eight types, as they are presented in the tables below:

Type	Structure	Examples
L1	Verb (donating creation or activation) + Noun (Pronoun or prep. Phrase)	Compose music, inflict a wound, set a record
L2	Verb (meaning eradication for nullification) + Noun	Break a code, reverse a decision, reject an appeal
L3	Adjective + Noun	Strong tea, a formidable challenge
L4	Noun + Verb	Alarms go off, blood circulates,
L5	Noun 1 of Noun 2	A pride lions, a bouquet of flowers
L6	Adjective +adverb Adverb + adjective	Sound asleep, Hopelessly addicted
L7	Verb +adverb	Affect deeply, apologize humbly, appreciate sincerely

Table 1.3: Lexical collocations Pattern (taken from Benson et al. 1986).

Type	Structures	Examples
G1	Noun + Prep	Apathy Toward
G2	Noun + To infinitive	He was a full to do it

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

G3	Noun + that clause	He took oath that he would do his duty
G4	Prep + Noun	In advance, at anchor
G5	Adjective + preposition	They are afraid of him
G6	Predicate adjective + to Infinitive	It was a stupid for them to go
G7	Adjective + that clause	She was afraid that she would fail the exam
G8	Subject + verb +object (or) Subject +verb + object + object	He sent a book to his mother He sent his mother a book
	Subject+ verb +object (or) Subject + verb + object + object	She bought a shirt for her husband She bought her husband a shirt
	Subject +verb+ preposition. Object (or) verb + subject + object preposition. Object.	He came by train We invited them to the meeting
	Subject + verb + to Infinitive.	They began to speak
	Subject+ verb Infinitive.	He had better to go
	Subject +verb +verb-ing	They enjoy watching television
	Subject + verb + object to Inf.	She asks me to come
	Subject + verb +object + verb-ing	I caught them stealing apples
	Subject +verb + possessive verb-ing	Please excuse me waking you so early
	Subject + verb + (o) that – clause	They admitted that they were wrong
	Subject + verb +object to be c	We consider her ten pounds
	Subject + verb + object c	She dyed her hair red
	Subject + verb object + object	We bet her ten pounds
	Subject + verb (object) adverb	He carried himself well
	Subject + verb (object) wh- word	He wants what I want
Subject (it) verb + object to Infinitive. (or)	It surprised me to learn of her decision	

	S (it) verb + object that(clause)	It surprised me that our offer was rejected
	Subject + verb + clause (adjective or noun)	She was enthusiastic (a good girl)
	Subject + verb + clause (adjective)	The flowers smell nice

Table1.4: Grammatical Collocations Pattern (Taken from Benson et al. 1986).

1.1.6 . The Concept of Word

Since collocations consist of words, it is necessary to give the concept of word considerable regard in our research by providing its definition, categories, formation and relations. The term word is referred to as "the minimal free form" (Bloomfield, 1926, p. 156); that is to say, a word is the smallest meaningful unit in a language consisting of one or more morphemes and which can stand on its own.

- **Word Categories**

Words, which are also named *parts of speech*, are categorized into nine classes: *nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, articles, and interjections*. Thornbury (2002) divided word categories into two classes: *grammatical/ functional words* and *content words*. While functional words include *prepositions, conjunctions, articles, pronouns, and interjections*, content words consist of *nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives* (Thornbury, 2002, P. 4).

1.1.7. Collocations and other word combinations

There are some other word combinations that EFL learners cannot make a distinction in using them since they are near similar to each other, which are idioms, phrasal verbs and colligation.

1.1.7.1. Collocations, Idioms, and Phrasal Verbs

Collocation, idiom and phrasal verb are expressions which are often used by native speakers in their daily life. However, it is difficult for EFL learners to distinguish between the three; some of them think that they can be used interchangeably. Therefore, it is interesting to define each term in order to figure out the relation that may exist between these terms. According to Seidl and MacMordie (1978), “an idiom is a number of words which are taken together, mean something different from the individual words of the idiom when they stand alone” (p. 4); which means a group of words that stand together to give a figurative meaning that has no relation with the literal meaning of words; for example, “*it is not a rocket science*” which signifies *it is not complicated*, “*break a leg*” means *good luck*. Thus, only native speakers can use and understand them easily. Besides, Crystal (1991) defined phrasal verb as “a type of verb consisting of a sequence of a lexical element plus one or more particles” (p. 263). Most of the time, phrasal verbs consist of a *verb + prepositional adverb* (particle); for instance, *take off*, *give up*...etc. For collocations, as it was previously mentioned, they are a group of words that go together and have a meaning that is different from these words when they stand alone. Finally, it can be said that those three terms commonly have an idiomatic, figurative, and metaphoric meaning that may not be understood by EFL learners from the first time, and not in a specific context because all of them include words that are combined together. In this respect, Hill (2000) said that “...in a sense, all collocations are idiomatic and all phrasal verbs and idioms are collocations or contain collocations” (Cited in Lewis, 2000, p. 51). Therefore, EFL learners should pay attention when dealing with collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs; and should know how to make a distinction between them.

1.1.7.2. Collocation vs. Colligation

Collocation and colligation are two interrelated terms in linguistics which were coined by J. R. Firth in 1957. Since the two concepts are quite similar in spelling and meaning, one may face a great deal of confusion in making the distinction between them. Thus, in what follows, an insight about the main difference between collocation and colligation is provided, driving more attention towards colligation in particular.

As a starting point, Lehecka (2015) pointed out that "collocation and colligation refer to the likelihood of co-occurrence of (two or more) lexical items and grammatical categories" (p. 1). On the one hand, Halliday and Hasan (1976) defined collocations as the "lexical items that regularly co-occur" (p. 287). On the other hand, Hoey (2001) noted that colligation is "the grammatical company a word keeps and the position it refers" (p. 234). To put it simply, a collocation is concerned with the combination of words at the lexical level; i.e. lexical items. However, a colligation mainly refers to the composition of words or word classes at the grammatical level; (i.e. combination of a word + a grammatical structure).

Lewis (2000) forwarded that "colligation is the way one word regularly co-occurs with a particular (grammar) pattern" (p. 137). That is to say, whereas a collocation is the combination of *word + another word*, a colligation is the association of *pattern + pattern*. For example, a *verb + a clause*, *adjective + ing clause* (like in: I heard you coming) (Dellar, 2015). In the same way, Marco (1999) proposed a cut-off distinction between two combinations. He referred to lexical combinations, i.e. *word + word* as collocations and the grammatical combinations, i.e. *verb + clause*, *phrase or preposition* as colligation; meaning that he considered colligations as *grammatical collocations* (Baleghizadeh and Bakhshian, 2011, p. 103).

1.1.8. Collocational Competence

In its literal meaning, competence reflects a person's package of skills, knowledge, and attitudes, which enable him to act in different situations successfully. In linguistics, competence is "a person's subconscious knowledge of the rules governing the formation of speech in their first language" (Concise Oxford English Dictionary: Luxury Edition, 2011, p. 292). The term competence has been widely utilized in the field of EFL/ESL in general and in linguistics in particular. Linguistic competence and communicative competence are two famous concepts that have been discussed by different linguists. However, the concept of collocational competence has been treated with considerable neglect. It was only forwarded by Lewis in (2000) when he noted: "we are familiar with the concept of communicative competence, but we need to add the concept of collocational competence to our thinking" (p. 49).

Collocational competence, according to Heikkila (2005) is "the ability to accurately combine chunks of language thus enabling production of fluent, accurate, and stylistically appropriate speech" (p. 1, as cited in Abdaoui 2010). To put it simply, collocational competence helps a great deal in achieving a native-like fluency. Lewis (2000) argued that the lack of collocational competence leads students to commit grammatical mistakes and generally produce long utterances because they do not know "the collocations which express precisely what they want to say" (p. 49).

In recent years, many researchers raised their attention to the investigation of collocational competence in EFL/ESL learning and teaching (e.g. Hosseini & Akbarian (2007), Arani, and Ghaffarof (2013) and El-dakhs (2015). The majority of the results obtained revealed that collocational competence is much related to students' language quality in writing/speaking and language accuracy. Furthermore, it was argued that collocational

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

competence fosters language proficiency for learners; and therefore, it is highly recommended that teachers should focus on teaching collocations and shed light on the significance of collocational competence in achieving communicative competence, language fluency, and accuracy.

1.2. Lexical Collocation and Writing

This section sheds light on lexical collocations and the skill of writing in particular. It starts by defining both concept and then, stating the relationship between them. Afterward, it exposes the importance of lexical collocations on EFL learners in writing and deals with teaching collocations. In addition, it tackles EFL learners' problems with lexical collocations; and finally, it reveals the main reason behind students' mis-collocation. .

1.2.1. The Skill of Writing

Different skills should be integrated into the process of learning a foreign language; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The latter is considered an essential skill that should be enhanced by EFL learners. Writing is an act of communication that allows learners to express themselves adequately, and this skill is not innate, learners should practice it in order to master its rules correctly, and to improve their level, which means EFL learners must make an effort to learn how to write in a good way.

The skill of writing is not easy to master by both native speakers and non-native speakers, because writers must be competent enough to write something valuable and beneficial. So, writing is a complex skill where the writer is required to have a basic knowledge about a lot of things such as punctuation, words spelling, grammar, writing structure, and to have good amount of vocabulary knowledge that allows him to express himself correctly. Learners should know how to integrate all of them in order to achieve a cohesive and coherent paragraph in appropriate English.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

In terms of education, writing has a vital role in teaching and learning. Nowadays, it is taught as a fundamental module for EFL learners, where teachers seek to teach their students the basic rules of language (lexical and grammatical) that they may need to create a well-formed paragraph. Also, writing contributes to language development; as long students write as they acquire new words and knowledge which may help in developing their language and writing skill at the same time, Harmer (1998) stated that “the mental activity we have to go through in order to construct properly written texts is all part of the ongoing learning experience” (p. 79).

To sum up, writing skill has a crucial role for EFL learners; hence they should work on improving it with all its basic knowledge to be more creative in their writing and to develop their language use.

1.2.2. The Relationship between Collocation knowledge and Writing proficiency

Collocation awareness plays a vital role in expanding learners' vocabulary knowledge and consequently results in a more accurate written production. Therefore, raising collocational awareness of EFL learners is highly recommended to foster their writing fluency because "knowing a word is definitely much more than simply knowing what it means" (Kàroly, 2005, p. 58); i.e., it is not sufficient to know the meaning of words in isolation; we have to know also how words are combined and which words collocate together to apply them correctly in writing. L2 scholars confirmed that collocations are of critical Importance at the productive level, especially in writing. In this regard, Gledhill (2001) emphasized that collocations "...are a key part of the writing process, and it is impossible for a writer to be fluent without a thorough knowledge of the phraseology of the particular field he or she is writing in" (p. 1). In other words, Collocations are used by native speakers

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

naturally. Therefore, EFL writers should be aware of the natural position of words in the target language to achieve native-like fluency.

The relationship between collocation knowledge and writing skill attracted the attention of many researchers of EFL/SLA such as Hsu (2007), Adelian (2015), and Abu Ashiba (2017). The overall results of the latter studies revealed that there exists a positive correlation between Collocation knowledge and language proficiency in writing. Researchers agreed that collocational competence helps to a great extent in enlarging learners' vocabulary size and therefore enhances their writing skill.

1.2.3. Importance of Lexical Collocations on EFL Learners' Writing Proficiency

One of the crucial aspects of learning a foreign language is lexicon. Vocabulary is considered as the most necessary element to master any language appropriately either in isolation or in combination with other words as the case with lexical collocations, where the learner should know all the words that tend to co-occur together. According to Lewis (2000), collocation knowledge demands more than knowing the meaning of words in isolation, but to know how to associate them meaningfully, which means the way of combining words is what makes collocations important.

Pawly and Syder (1983) noted that lexical items are more important than grammatical ones; that is why learners should acquire as much as a possible lexicon to have the ability to use English correctly. One aspect of language that helps EFL learners to be more competent in writing is learning lexical collocations that have a significant role in improving EFL learner's level; they make learners' production sound natural. Along the same line of thought, McCarthy and O'Dell (2007), Nation (2001) stated that a key element of natural fluency in English is mastery of collocations in both their oral and written forms (cited in Zabalawi, 2017).

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Collocational knowledge can increase students' vocabulary skill, and they can acquire more than two words per one lexical collocation since it consists of a group of words, not only one word; and that is called vocabulary development. So, learning vocabulary will help learners to know how to use words in context correctly, because a lot of them know the meaning of a specific word, but they cannot use it meaningfully in a context, as they will be able to link different items appropriately in their production, where they may achieve proficiency in language use. According to MacCarthy (1990), "collocation is an important organizing principle in the vocabulary of any language" (p. 12).

Lexical collocations are important; Hill (2000), mentioned that they raise learner's thinking speed and allow them to communicate efficiently, speak quickly, and fluently because of the already-made chunks that exist in their mental lexicons (Cited in Hammadi, 2015). Therefore, acquiring a good number of lexical collocations will enhance learners' fluency in English and lead them to participate and interact with others without any hesitation, but with self-confidence. Moreover, Hill (2000) claimed that "collocations help to identify and produce complex ideas without using all our brain space to focus on the form of the words" (p. 55, cited in Hammadi, 2015). They can read faster and comprehend better, since they have already known the lexical collocation and its meaning, as they will gain more time because they do not stop and search for the collocations' meaning. Besides, according to Hill (2001), one reason that lexical collocations are important is that they can help to improve the role of memory which means when learners read texts or hear audios some words will stick in their memory and they can retrieve them easily from the mental lexicon. So it will be easy for them to deal with lexical collocations. In the same vein, Nattinger (1998) stated that "words that are naturally associated in a text are more likely to be learned than those having no association" (cited in Koç, 2006). That is to say, learning words in combination is more helpful for students than learning words in isolation.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

To sum up, lexical collocations are a crucial aspect in language learning, for that it is necessary to pay more attention and include them in the teaching program since they can help EFL learners to enhance their skills and achieve fluency in their learning process. Thus, it is the teachers' role to deal with collocations in the classroom to motivate students and facilitate their learning.

1.2.4. Teaching Lexical Collocations

Vocabulary is the key to learning any foreign language because it is the most needed aspect to master that language either in speaking or writing. One way to make EFL learners acquire a useful vocabulary is teaching them collocations, which consist of more than a word, and this is an advantage for EFL learners to widen their vocabulary and collocational knowledge at once. Hill (2000) mentioned four strategies for teaching collocations (cited in Lewis, 2000), which are as follows.

1.2.4.1. Teaching Individual Collocations

Teachers should teach collocations at the classroom as a part of the lesson, presenting them in their appropriate context to be well understood for learners. Also, students should be aware that there are restricted words used only with some collocations. Hence they should acquire the meaning of the whole collocation, not the meaning of words separately. Moreover, when teaching new words individually, teachers should make students notice the common collocations in relation to the individual words, for instance, if they teach the word *belief*, the common collocations of that word should be taught, for example, *strong belief*, *have a belief*...etc. So, according to Lewis (2000) the rule is that “never teach new word -particularly a noun- without giving a few collocates” (p. 60); because knowing the meaning of the word only will not be helpful for EFL learners to learn lexical collocations unless they know how the word is used. As a result, each time a new word is taught, it should be followed by its

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

common collocations in order to facilitate the process of learning lexical collocations for EFL learners.

1.2.4.2. Making Students Aware of Collocations

Lexical collocations are a neglected aspect in language teaching, and most of EFL learners are not familiar with their use. Therefore, it is the teachers' duty to make their students aware of lexical collocations and how to be used. Teachers should use some tips in class to make their students aware of collocations. On the simplest level, they may support learners to widen their thinking concerning vocabulary; instead of using one word in writing, they should use full expressions containing two or three words together such as *well organized*, *save time*, *beautiful weather*. Moreover, teachers could give students a text and ask them to take out all *adjective + noun* collocations as a kind of classroom exercise, or suggest a word that is known by students and ask them to think about all possible collocates of that word, and this activity helps in awareness-raising of students. Consequently, following these tips, EFL learners can practice and memorize lexical collocations unconsciously.

1.2.4.3. Extending what Students already know

EFL learners are already familiar with the use of English vocabulary and may be some collocations. Teachers should evaluate students' collocational competence in order to know what they need to teach to extend their knowledge concerning lexical collocations. Teacher should spend more class time with students to teach the more common collocations that they do not know, particularly, teaching the de-lexicalised which are "verbs used with a noun phrase with the general meaning of performing the action indicated by the noun" (An ELT Glossary); for example *get*, *take*, *do*, *make*...these verbs are commonly used as a part of lexical collocations. Hill (2000) mentioned that "Students who know 2000 words and six collocations with each, know 1200 expressions, for example, knowing the de-lexical verb make students

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

know the lexical collocations *make a mistake, make a meal, make a trouble*" (Cited in Lewis, 2000, p. 60). Consequently, learners' knowledge about lexical collocations will be extended and enhanced to a better level.

1.2.4.4. Storing Collocations

All students may have problems in memorizing and remembering information, and this is problematic. So the best way for EFL learners to store what they have been taught is making a notebook to write down the essential notes, as it is a good way for students to learn new words and lexical collocations easily. In this small notebook, they can organize the items which they need to look at again in their free time or when they are in need to. This tip can motivate EFL learners to learn new lexical collocations which may help in their daily life or in the classroom since it is considered as a part of the learning process.

One way to store collocations in a notebook in a well organized way is to group each type into categories (sections), for example, giving examples about lexical collocations (happy marriage, very good, go home); mentioning key words of collocations that are difficult to distinguish such as *speak, talk, and say / do, make*; dividing collocations according to their use such as collocations for holidays, collocations for the classroom, and collocations for work. As a result, this organization may help EFL learners to revise and retrieve their notes on the book easily.

1.2.5. Problems of EFL Learners with Lexical Collocations in Writing

Lexical collocations are considered as a problematic aspect for EFL learners. A lot of students find difficulties in using lexical collocation in writing, and even when they read or listen, they cannot get the exact meaning in context. This is due to collocations' characteristics such as words combination and the co-occurrence of items. Nesselhauf (2003) found that the restricted collocations which contain fixed elements cannot be substituted by any other word

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

even synonyms; they are the most problematic collocations rather than the less restricted ones. EFL learners fail to choose the appropriate collocated word, and ask the question why it is ‘*make a mistake*’ not ‘*do a mistake*’, since both verbs ‘*do* and *make*’ are close in meaning but unfortunately there is no convincing answer except that it is arbitrary. According to Lewis (1997), collocations are arbitrary which means learners cannot generalize and assume that the words used in a pattern in one way will be similar in another way (pattern) (cited in Koç, 2006).

Also, the majority of learners do not know what words can be combined together. Hassan and Halliday (1976) stated that ‘collocations are the most problematic part of lexical cohesion’ (p. 288); that is why they fail to associate words appropriately in the context. Furthermore, the vast number of lexical collocations exists in English make students confused about what collocation they should memorize and what they should not. In this regard, Bahns (1993) reported that ‘The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English offer over 70000 combinations and phrases under a total of 14000 entries and Collins COBUILD English words in use gives about 1000000 collocational examples grouped around 5000 headwords from the core vocabulary of modern English’ (p. 59). Therefore, it is difficult for teachers too to teach that enormous number of lexical collocations in the classroom, because of the limited time.

Moreover, learning words in isolation may be a problem for EFL learners to learn. According to Deveci (2004), EFL learners memorize words in isolation. Hence, they cannot use collocations meaningfully; and that may be due to their lack of collocational competence to combine words appropriately. Also, Nakamura (2003) stated that EFL learners build their vocabulary skill by listing to single words and memorizing them to be used in as single items in their production. In the same vein, Unver (2008), Shitu (2015), and Darvishi (2011) found that the main reason of learners’ mis-collocation is due to the acquisition of L2 items individually, without taking the use of collocations into consideration, they ignore that learning words combination may enhance their vocabulary knowledge. In this regard, EFL learners

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

should give more importance to learning words in combination rather than isolation in order to widen their collocational competence and use it efficiently.

In the same respect, some researchers noted that EFL learners have problems in using lexical collocations and associating words that fit with each other, particularly in the use of sub-types of lexical collocations. Biskup (1992) tested EFL German learners production in order to investigate which sub-type they misuse (is it *verb + noun*, *noun + verb*, *noun + noun*, *adjective + adverb*, or *verb + adverb*?). She found out that students experienced difficulty in the use of *verb + noun* collocation and that it is due to the fact that EFL learners rely on their L1 and translate verbs to L2, which are completely different in use. Furthermore, Chen (2002) conducted a study with high school participants in order to investigate their collocational errors in writing, he found that students made 125 lexical collocations errors in their writing assignment, and the most frequent sub-types of errors were *adjective + noun*, and *verb + noun* collocations, and it was found that the main reason behind these errors is due to the fact that teachers neglect to teach collocations for EFL learners. However, Brown (1974) argued about the importance of teaching collocations for EFL learners, especially for advanced learners at universities in order to decrease their problems while they use lexical collocations, especially in writing.

1.2.6. Causes of Students' Mis-collocations

There are a lot of factors that influence EFL learners while they use lexical collocations in writing, and the following factors are the common ones.

1.2.6.1. Interference of L1

Mother tongue language is a source of lexical collocation problems for EFL learners. It refers to the influence of L1 while using the target language. Learners tend to transfer the linguistic features of their mother tongue when they come to express their thought in writing,

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

and this leads them to commit an infinite number of errors either in words use or in the structure of sentences (Darvishi, 2011). Also, Unver (2018) claimed in her study that L1 has a negative influence on students' acquisition of lexical collocations, because both languages do not have the same collocations neither semantically nor culturally. Similarly, Nesselhauf (2003) reported that the lack of collocational competence in the target language induces EFL learners to make a literal translation from L1 into L2, and this is completely incorrect because there is no relation between Arabic and English language. In the same vein, Doughty and Williams (1998) stated that "a learners' previous linguistic knowledge influences the acquisition of a new language in a principled, if not straightforward" (p. 26). Therefore, EFL learners misuse lexical collocations in their writing due to the negative influence of their mother tongue.

1.2.6.2. Culture-based Knowledge

Language and culture are strongly inter-related because language itself represents the beliefs and customs of a significant culture. One source of lexical collocation problems for EFL learners is culture-based knowledge. According to some researchers like Biskup (1992), Alpaslan (1993), and Telya et al. (1998), learners who come from different cultural backgrounds deal differently with the use of collocations and this is due to the change of language use that differs from one culture to another. When EFL learners lack the cultural competence of the target language, they misuse lexical collocations, especially the metaphoric and strong collocations. Huang (2001) stated that some lexical collocations have a restricted meaning in some languages. Thus, EFL learners cannot understand them due to their culturally specific concept; they use collocations incorrectly (cited in Hammadi, 2010). EFL learners struggle to deal with lexical collocations in the target languages which sound vague for them because of the lack of their cultural awareness concerning L2. As a result, the use of collocations will be inadequate by them, even if the collocation is grammatically correct, it will

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

be culturally incorrect. In order to overcome this obstacle, EFL learners are highly recommended to pay attention to the cultural differences between L1 and L2.

On the other hand, teachers should direct their learners by making them familiar with the most common used lexical collocations in their cultural context in order to reduce student's problems with lexical collocations in writing.

1.2.6.3. Learning Strategy Types

Another significant factor that affects EFL learners' use of lexical collocations negatively is the learning strategy types that they adopt in their learning process. One common strategy that students depend on is synonym strategy, which is the act of substituting a word by its equivalent. Zughoul and Abul-Fattah (2003) reported that EFL learners are imposed to substitute words of lexical collocations by their synonyms, when they are not aware of the exact word of collocation, or basically because of the frequent use of bilingual dictionaries that give the synonym of words without mentioning their contextual use in the target language. However, lexical collocations cannot be replaced by synonyms or near-synonyms, particularly the strong and restricted lexical collocations. For example, some students say *quick food* instead of *fast food*; even though the adjectives *fast* and *quick* are synonyms, they cannot substitute each other, because the collocation will be meaningless in the target language. According to MacCarthy (2010), a collocation "is often how the words collocate with other words that can show up differences" (p. 32). Therefore, synonyms are not perfect to be used interchangeably.

Moreover, paraphrasing is another used strategy by EFL learners when they fail to express their thought idiomatically using collocations. Taiwo (2004) stated that "people have the ability to say what they need" rather than saying "freedom of expression" (p. 4); (i.e. students produce long sentences instead of using one lexical collocation, and that is due to their insufficient collocational knowledge). Furthermore, the use of paraphrasing leads to the lexical

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

and grammatical incorrectness (Zughoul and Abdul-Fattah, 2003). Also, Huang (2001), Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah (2003) have all considered overgeneralization as a negative strategy in using lexical collocations. Students extend their L1 features and rules to the target language that are entirely different either in words meaning or sentences structure. Consequently, according to these researchers, the previous strategies are useless for EFL learners to learn the appropriate use of lexical collocations.

1.2.6.4. Lack of Collocational Competence

Learning a foreign language needs different competencies that should be integrated together. The new competence that was introduced by Lewis (2000) is the collocational competence, when he said that “we are familiar with the concept of communicative competence, but we need to add the concept of collocational competence to our thinking” (p. 49). Collocational competence is the ability to combine chunks appropriately in order to master language fluently (Heikkila, 2005, as cited in Abdaoui, 2010). Unfortunately, most EFL learners are not familiar with that concept; thus, they mis-collocate words together. Taiwo (2004) believed that the lack of collocational competence leads EFL learners to commit plenty of lexical collocational errors that may affect their communication more than the grammatical errors (cited in Bahardoust, Moeini, 2012, p. 66). The lack of collocational competence may be due to the learners’ unfamiliarity with the use of TL or maybe because of the insufficient vocabulary knowledge. The lack of collocational competence may negatively affect learners’ proficiency in writing; according to Hill (2000), “students tend to create longer utterances because they do not know collocations which express precisely what they want to say” (cited in Lewis, 2000, p. 49). Also, the studies of Unver (2008) and Shitu (2015) found out that students lack collocational competence because they learn words in isolation and separately rather than learning them as collocations. As a result, it is essential to make learners aware of

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

words that associate together in order to recognize and utilize them appropriately in their written production.

Conclusion

The general objective of this chapter is to provide the reader with the necessary literature review that is related to the present topic. The chapter compromises two main sections. The first section was mainly concerned with the notion of collocation. It has started by defining the concept, revealing its origins, listed its different approaches and highlighting its significant features. Subsequently, it has exposed the different types and patterns of collocations. Then, it has discussed the concept of word dealing with its definition, formation, categories, and meaning relations. Afterward, it has shown the difference between collocations and other word combinations like idioms, phrasal verbs, and colligation; and finally, it has dealt with the concept of collocational competence. However, the section takes at its major concern lexical collocation and the skill of writing. It started by defining the two concepts and then, showing the relationship between them. Subsequently, it highlighted the importance of lexical collocation on the writing ability of EFL learners; provided tips for teaching collocations; discussed the main problems faced by students while learning lexical collocations; and finally, it revealed the primary reasons for students' mis-colloction.

Chapter Two

Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion

2.1. Research Methodology

2.1.1 Research Paradigm

2.1.2 Setting

2.1.3 Research design

2.1.3.1 Sample of the Study

2.1.3.2 Data Gathering Instruments

a. Content Analysis

b. The Questionnaire

2.1.4 Data Collection Procedures

2.1.5 Data Analysis Procedures

2.2. Data Analysis

2.2.1 Analysis of the Data of Content Analysis

2.2.2 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

2.3. Data Discussion

2.3.1. The frequency of lexical collocation errors in students' essays

2.3.2 Students' Problems in Using Lexical Collocations in Writing

2.3.3 Main Causes for Students' Mis-collocation

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Conclusion

Recommendations

Limitations of the Study

General Conclusion

Suggestions for Further Research

References

Chapter Two

Research Methodology and Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

While the first chapter of the study is devoted to the theoretical part, the second chapter concerns the practical phase of the present research work. First of all, the researchers describe the research methodology that includes research paradigm, setting, sample, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, along with the limitations of the study. Secondly, the researchers analyzed data from the used instrument. Finally, they dealt with data discussion and interpretation.

2.1. The Research Methodology

This part deals with the research methodology that expounds the research paradigm, the setting, the sample of the study, data-gathering tools, data collection procedures, along with data analysis, and the limitations of the study.

2.1.1. Research Paradigm

The current research attempts to investigate the main problems and causes encountered by EFL students in using lexical collocations. To investigate this topic, the researchers adopted a purely quantitative approach, involving two main tools. The quantitative data were taken from twenty-four exam papers and a questionnaire administered to sixty third-year students of English. In terms of definitions, Bhat (2019) stated that “quantitative research is defined as a systematic investigation of phenomena by gathering quantifiable data and performing statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques”. In other words, the quantitative paradigm investigates phenomena through measurement and statistics; i.e. using numerical data. Data collection is based on structured methods and pre-designed data. In terms of aims, the researchers made use of a quantitative approach for the

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

following reasons; firstly, content analysis is used as a primary tool in this research. It is descriptive in nature; and thus it is the best fit tool to investigate the use of lexical collocation in EFL learners' natural production of language. Secondly, the questionnaire is used to enrich the study, support the finding of content analysis, and reveal causes of mis-collocations. The use of the questionnaire helps to strengthen the interpretation of content analysis, and it is likely to be easier and practical because it consumes little time and effort.

2.1.2. Setting

The present research investigates problems encountered by EFL learners in using lexical collocations in writing. The study took place at the English department of Mohammad Seddik Ben Yahia University, in Jijel.

2.1.3. Research Design

To conduct the current study, the researchers adopted a research design which includes the sample of the study and data collection instruments.

2.1.3.1. Sample of the study

The population of the present research work is third year English students at Mohammad Seddik Ben Yahia University; since the researchers cannot deal with the whole population; twenty four exam papers and sixty students were chosen to participate in the study. The sample was selected randomly. This selection was based on the assumption that third year students ,in particular, are more familiar with the process of writing; and they are supposed to have a better level comparing to the other levels, and they can include collocations more often in their writing.

2.1.3.2. Data-gathering Instruments

The present research is conducted through the use of two different instruments, a content analysis of essays was produced by third-year students and a questionnaire that was designed to the same sample.

- **Content Analysis**

Content analysis is the first instrument for collecting data about the current topic. In its most common sense, content analysis can be either qualitative or quantitative, depending on the aim of the researcher. It is a research method which aims at identifying the issue, interpreting findings, and drawing out conclusion through analyzing content in its different forms such as texts, documents, transcripts in their formal settings. In the present study, the researchers adopted a purely quantitative content analysis. In terms of definitions, Coe and Scacco (2017) argued that “quantitative content analysis is a research method in which features of textual, visual, or aural material are systematically categorized and recorded so that they can be analyzed”. That is to say, content analysis is a systematic method for analyzing data that comes from both written and oral productions. In this respect, Boettger and Palmer (2010) stated that “in quantitative research, content analysis evaluates texts for predefined terms or phrases and uses inferential statistics to make conclusions about their presence” (which means that it seeks at identifying the presence and frequency of certain aspects that are predetermined in order to quantify and classify them). What makes quantitative content analysis different from the qualitative one is that the former examines the explicit criteria of content, whereas, the latter explore the implicit criteria of the content (Boettger and Palmer, 2010). Therefore, it is worth saying that quantitative content analysis is likely to be suitable for the present study since it helps to identify lexical collocation errors in the natural use of language by EFL learners relying on predetermined features.

- **The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is the second tool for collecting data in the current study. It is an instrument that is widely used by researchers to collect quantitative data from a specific population in a short time. According to Bell (1999) “a questionnaire is essentially a structured technique for collecting primary data. It is generally a series of written questions for which the respondents have to provide the answers” (Cited in Ben Beiske, 2002, p. 16). The questionnaire was chosen to tackle this research because it is practically suitable to collect data quickly from a large number of participants in a short period, as it provides quantitative data that can be analyzed manually and easily. Moreover, one characteristic of the questionnaire is anonymity and privacy, where the participants feel at ease in answering the questions truthfully and honestly. Therefore, the results will be more accurate and valid for the researcher.

Concerning the structure, the questionnaire consists of eleven questions that were designed to investigate and elicit EFL learners’ collocational problems in writing and their main reasons. Also, it attempts to know the most effective method for learning collocations according to third-year participants. The questions consist of two main types; closed-ended and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions are easy to answer; the participants can answer by *Yes* or *No*. However, in the open-ended questions, the participant can select one of the appropriate suggestions as he can provide the researcher with other suggestions or other reasons from his own point of view that can be beneficial for the researcher.

2. 1.4. Data collection procedures

As far as content analysis is concerned, the researchers have used exam papers of the TEFL module; twenty four copies have been randomly chosen to figure out lexical collocation errors in the natural production of third year students. Afterwards, a questionnaire

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

was submitted at the end of the second semester to only three groups out of eight groups that were randomly chosen to complete the questionnaire. The respondents completed the questionnaire at the end of their sessions, and they handed it back immediately.

2. 1. 5. Data Analysis Procedures

The researchers used two different instruments in collecting data; a content analysis and a questionnaire; and hence, both data were analyzed quantitatively. As far as content analysis is concerned, data was collected from twenty-four TEFL exam papers of third-year students, and were analyzed quantitatively. As a starting point, the researcher extracted all lexical collocations that appeared in the papers and classified them into categories according to the BBI dictionary (1986) classification of lexical collocations. After that, the correctness of collocations was checked using Oxford Collocation Dictionary and Google Search; and then, the errors of mis-collocation were identified, counted manually, and classified in categories in simple tables (depending on the pattern of lexical collocation). As for the questionnaire, the data obtained from closed questions and open-ended questions have been analyzed manually. In this regard, the frequency of items was counted, and the results obtained from the questions were organized and presented in simple tables using numbers and percentage.

2.2. Data Analysis

In this regard, the results obtained from both content analysis and the questionnaire will be presented in details. Firstly, the results yielded by content analysis are discussed; and secondly, the findings that resulted from the questionnaire are presented.

2.2.1. Analysis of the Data of Content Analysis

In order to investigate the topic at hand, twenty four exam papers written by third year students of English at Mohammad Seddik Ben Yahia University were gathered randomly and

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

analyzed. The main aim of content analysis is to identify lexical collocation errors made by third year students in their natural production of language and to quantify the frequency of these errors. The analysis of essays revealed the following results which will be represented in forms of tables.

Table 2.1: *collocation error papers and error-free papers*

Exam Papers	Number	Percentage
Papers containing Errors	19	76%
Error-free papers	5	24%
Total	24	100%

The table above represents the analysis of the number of papers that contain lexical collocation errors and the number of error-free papers. The table indicates that the majority of essays include lexical collocation errors with a percentage of 76% of the total number of papers. Therefore, the results reveal that most of third year students have problems with lexical collocations and they make a lot of errors while writing.

Table 2.2: *frequency of correct and incorrect lexical collocations use*

Lexical Collocations	Number	Percentage
Correct Lexical Collocations	43	42.6%
Incorrect Lexical Collocations	58	57.4%
Total	101	100%

As shown in the above table, a considerable number of lexical collocation errors were detected in the essays produced by third year students. Accordingly, 58 collocation errors

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

were made by students while only 43 lexical collocations were used accurately. Hence, it can be said that third year English language students make lexical collocation errors to a large extent.

Table 2.3: *types of lexical collocation errors*

Patterns of lexical Collocations	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Verb + Noun	32	55
Noun + Noun	06	10%
Adjective + Noun	12	21%
Verb + Adverb	03	5%
Adverb + Adjective	01	2%
Noun + Verb	04	7%
Total	58	100%

The table above shows the analysis of lexical collocation errors that are detected from students' essays. According to the results obtained, *verb + noun* are considered the most common type of errors committed by students with a percentage of 55% of the total number of errors. Moreover, *adjective + noun* type is the second common type which represents 21%; while *noun + noun*, *verb + adverb*, *adverb + adjective* and *noun + verb* were less encountered with a percentage of 10%, 5%, 2% and 7% respectively. Therefore, the analysis indicates that *verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* collocations are the most problematic types for third year English students.

After providing a detailed presentation of the results obtained from content analysis, the following part will be devoted to the presentation of the results yielded by students' questionnaire.

2.2.2. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

After collecting and counting data from the students' questionnaire, the researchers attempted to analyze their answers in order to get significant results that may help them to get answers for the research questions.

Question 01: How often do you use your English-English dictionary?

Table 2.4: *Frequency of Dictionary Use*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Never	03	5%
Rarely	17	28.4%
Sometimes	22	36.6%
Often	13	21.6%
Always	05	8.4%
Total	60	100%

The participants were asked to rate their use of English-English dictionary. As it is shown in the table, the majority of students (36.6%) sometimes use the English-English dictionary. Seventeen (28.4%) students said that they rarely use it. However, only five students always use the English dictionary.

Question 2: Among the following statements, which one is the appropriate definition of collocation?

Table 2.5: *Student' Definition of Collocations*

Options	Percentage
a/ An expression that is spoken in a particular area and which uses some of its own words, grammar, and pronunciation.	10 16.7%
b/ A phrase that consists of a verb + preposition, an	10 16.7%

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

adverb or both.		
c/ A natural composition of words that co-occur together because of their habitual use.	40	66.6%
Total	60	100%

This question aims to see whether or not students have an idea about what collocations mean. According to the statistics above, the majority of students (66.6%) defines collocations as “a natural composition of words that co-occur together because of their habitual use” which is the correct definition of collocations. However, twenty students choose either collocations are “an expression that is spoken in a particular area and which uses some of its own words, grammar, and pronunciation” or collocations are “a phrase that consists of a verb + preposition, an adverb or both”, and these last two definitions have no relation with the definition of collocations.

Question 3: Do you have a collocation dictionary?

Table 2.6: *Ownership of Collocation Dictionary*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	11	18.3%
No	49	81.7%
Total	60	100%

The majority of students (81.7%) claimed that they do not possess a collocation dictionary. However, eleven students claimed that they own a dictionary for collocation. This indicates that only a few students know the advantage of having a collocations' dictionary.

Question 04: How often do you learn words in combination such as: heavy rain, make the bed, commit a crime...?

Table 2.7: *Frequency of Learning Words in Combination*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Never	0	0%
Rarely	19	31.7%
Sometimes	24	40%
Often	13	21.6%
Always	04	6.7%
Total	60	100%

The participants were asked how often they learn words in combination. (40%) sometimes learn words that are combined together, 31.7% students claimed that they rarely learn words in combination. As a result, most of students prefer to learn words in isolation rather than learning them in combination.

Question05: How do you find acquiring new word combinations?

Table 2.8: *Students' Attitude towards Acquiring New Word Combinations*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Easy	28	46.7%
Difficult	32	53.3%
Total	60	100%

As it is shown in the table above, thirty-two students found that acquiring new words combination is difficult for them, while twenty-eight students claimed that it is easy to acquire new word combination.

Question 06: How often does your teacher make you notice words that are generally used together like: heavy traffic, make money, get a home...?

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Table 2.9: *Frequency of Learning Collocations in Classroom*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Never	04	6.7%
Rarely	25	41.6%
Sometimes	22	36.7%
Often	07	11.7%
Always	02	3.3%
Total	60	100%

As it is presented in the table above, teachers do not always make their students notice words that are used together, twenty-five students claimed that teachers rarely make them notice the combined words, and twenty-two students said that teachers sometimes draw their attention to the words that go together. However, seven students said often.

Question 07: Do you have problems in writing concerning words combination, i.e. to find a difficulty in choosing the appropriate collocations?

Table 2.10: *Students' Attitudes towards Problems in Collocations and Writing*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	39	65%
No	21	35%
Total	60	100%

According to the table above, the majority of students (65%) stated that they have problems in choosing the appropriate words that should be combined, however, twenty-one students claimed that they face no problem concerning words combination.

Question 08: what kind of problems do you encounter when using collocations in writing?

Table 2.11: *Kind of Problems in Using Collocations in Writing*

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Options	Number of students	Percentage
a/ I cannot remember all combinations of words that fit each other .	22	37%
b/ I usually learn words in isolation.	14	23%
c/ It is somehow confusing to differentiate between words that have a close meaning like : do and make, have and get...	24	40%
Other problems : we do not study collocations at class we, have never dealt with them. - There are no fixed rules for learning collocations		
Total	60	100%

As stated in the table above, students encounter different problems while using collocations. Twenty four students said that their problem with collocations is that they cannot differentiate between words that share a close meaning, twenty two find it difficult to remember collocations, and fourteen chose the habit of learning words in isolation as their main problem with collocations.

Question 09: What was the main cause of these problems?

Table 2.12: *The Main Cause of Collocational Problems in Writing*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
a/ Lack of collocational competence (i do not know how to combine words together).	16	26.7%
b/ Interference of L1 (I combine words As I do in Arabic).	24	40%
c/ Culture-based knowledge.	07	1.6%
d/ Learning type strategies (the use of synonyms, overgeneralization, paraphrasing...).	09	15%
e/ Other reasons : teachers do not give importance to teach vocabulary or collocations at the classroom.	04	6.7%
Total	60	100%

The above table shows that 40% students stated that the major reason of collocation problems in writing is due to the fact that they combine words as they do in their first language (Arabic), and 26.7% of them claimed that it is because of the lack of collocational competence. However, the other reason added by four students was that they have never studied collocations and because teachers have never given importance to teaching vocabulary and collocations.

Question 10: Do you think that teachers should teach you collocations to promote your writing proficiency?

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Table 2.13: *Teaching Collocations to Enhance Students' Writing Proficiency*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	41.7%
Agree	34	56.7%
Disagree	01	1.6%
Strongly agree	0	0%
Total	60	100%

It is observed from the table above that 41.7% of the whole number of the sample strongly agreed that their teachers should teach collocations, and more than half of percentage (56.7%) agreed. However, only one student disagreed. As a result, the majority of students feel the need to be taught collocations in order to raise their proficiency in writing.

Question 11: Which method do you think is more effective for learning collocations?

Table 2.14: *The Most Effective Method for Learning Collocations*

Options	Number of students	Percentage
a/ Translation from L1 to TL and vice versa.	12	20%
b/ Using collocation dictionary.	20	33.3%
c/ Through exercises (matching, multiple choice, and gap filling)	16	26.7%
c/ Noting down collocation in notebook to revise them later.	12	20%
e/ Other suggestions: watching movies, extensive reading, chatting with native		

speakers, memorizing words

in combination.

Total

60

100%

According to participants' opinions about the most effective method for learning collocations is that the majority (33.3%) agree on using collocation dictionary. Also, sixteen students presenting (26.7%) have been attracted by learning collocations through exercises as a second method. Therefore, all students agreed on a particular method that may be easy and effective for them to learn collocations. Moreover, other students suggested watching movies, extensive reading, chatting with native speakers on the internet, and memorizing words in combination, also may be helpful to learn collocation.

2.3. Data Discussion

The third part of this chapter is mainly concerned with the interpretation and discussion of the results yielded by content analysis and questionnaire. The findings will be discussed in relation to the following research questions that have been put before:

- 1- To what extent do third year English students make lexical collocation errors in their written productions?
- 2- What kind of problems do third year students face while using lexical collocations in writing?
- 3- What are the main reasons behind students' mis-collocation?

2.3.1 The frequency of lexical collocation errors in students' Essays

The findings of the present study have indicated that third-year students are not competent enough in using lexical collocations. The results obtained from both instruments demonstrated that students commit lexical collocation errors frequently, and the majority of them produce a considerable number of incorrect lexical collocations. Moreover, the results

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

have revealed that most students do not usually learn words in their combination with others. Therefore, it can be said that students' limited knowledge of collocations justifies their regular misuse of lexical collocations.

2.3.2 Students' Problems in Using Lexical Collocations in Writing

What kind of difficulties students face when using lexical collocation is considered a core question in the current research. The analysis of students' papers has shown that lexical collocations are a problematic aspect for students and notably '*verb + noun*' and '*adjective + noun*' patterns which were the most common types of errors determined in the study. Also, it was found that the majority of students encounter a great deal of difficulty in learning words in combinations with others. A likely explanation for these problems is that students find it quite challenging to remember all word combinations that go together. This is mainly due to the fact that collocations are arbitrarily associated with each other, and there are no fixed rules for learning them.

Accordingly, it was found that students are not aware of the appropriate use of words that collocate together; and thus, a considerable number of lexical collocation errors were identified. For instance, some students said "*say utterances*" instead of "*produce utterances*"; "*set the difference*" instead of "*show the difference*"; "*right meaning*" instead of "*exact meaning*"; "*get a relationship*" instead of "*make a relationship*" and "*sacrifice efforts*" instead of "*make efforts*". The latter errors make it possible to say that students are used to learning words in isolation and collocations are treated with considerable neglect by teachers.

Additionally, students in this study appeared to have a great deal of confusion in differentiating between words that have a close meaning such as "*do*" and "*make*", "*have*" and "*get*". According to what has been found in content analysis, a lot of students committed plenty of errors in the use of the former words; examples of these errors are "*do a*

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

comparison" instead of "*make a comparison*" and "; "*good-organized*", "*give the difference*" and "*solve the task*" instead of "*well-organized*", "*show the difference*", and "*complete the task*". To conclude, it can be said that the results and findings of the study are quite similar to the problems mentioned in the theoretical phase.

The problems that appeared in this study were in support of the results that have been discussed in the review. *Verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* are the common types of errors that have been found in similar studies such in Demi (2017), Biskup (1992), and Chen (2002). According to their findings, these kinds of problems may be due to the fact that EFL learners are used to learn words in isolation. In this regard Shooshtari (2013) claimed that "learners usually learn L2 words in single format without attending to ways through which words group together". (p. 772). That is to say, when learners master single words, they still find problems in combining them properly.

2.3.3 The Main Causes of Student' Mis-collocation

The contributing factors to students' problems with lexical collocations are another central concern of this study. The results of this inquiry have demonstrated that students' lexical errors and problems are mainly caused by three main reasons, which are stated in what follows.

1. Interference of L1

It has been revealed that the interference of L1 is the primary reason behind students' mis-collocation. The results yielded by students' questionnaire showed that a large number of students claimed that their mother tongue influences their way of thinking in TL to a great extent. Hence, when they come to express their thoughts in writing, they associate words as they do in Arabic. Correspondingly, the findings of content analysis validated this result; a considerable number of errors have been detected such as "*old knowledge*" which in Arabic

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

signifies "معلومات قديمة" Instead of saying "*previous knowledge*". Another student wrote "*fell in errors*" instead of "*commit errors*". This mis-collocation came from the interference of Arabic and negative transfer.

As shown in the literature, the current results appear to be similar to the previous studies such as, Darvishi (2011), Biskup (1992), and Lewis (1997). The latter researcher argued that "Second language learners often rely on their native language in trying to communicate. They thought that there exists a one-to-one correspondence between L1 and L2 lexical items" (Shooshtari, 2013, p. 772).

2. Lack of Collocational Competence

The findings of the study have shown that students' incompetency in collocations causes lexical collocation errors. Based on students' questionnaire, lack of collocational competence was ranked the second reason for mis-collocation in writing. As it was found in content analysis, a large number of students appeared to have limited knowledge of collocations. A student wrote "*collect new vocabulary*" instead of saying "*acquire new vocabulary*" another student said: "*govern the language*" instead of "*master the language*"; someone else wrote "*make the birth*" instead of "*give birth*". These latter examples clearly show that students are not capable of producing well-formed and accurate collocations to express their thoughts; and hence, they fail to produce native-like writing.

As mentioned in the literature, Lewis (2000) argued that EFL learners are not familiar with the concept of collocational competence; therefore, they fail to combine chunks appropriately. Lack of collocational competence was a primary reason for mis-collocation in many previous studies such in Unver (2008), and Darvishi (2011). According to their findings, the researchers claimed that students lack collocational competence because they consider words as single items; and thus, they acquire them separately. Shooshtari (2013)

pointed out that "...even after the learners have mastered single lexical items, they still face difficulty using it properly" (p. 772).

3. Learning Strategy Types

The results obtained from the students' questionnaire revealed that a good number of students selected learning strategy types, which are synonyms, paraphrasing, and overgeneralization as one of the contributing factors to their difficulties with lexical collocations. Accordingly, the use of such strategies was found in their written productions. Some students used synonyms to substitute words that fit each other in collocations. For instance, instead of saying "*sense of responsibility*", one student replaced *sense* with its equivalent *feeling*; and he wrote: "*feeling of responsibility*". Some other students used the strategy of paraphrasing, where they produced long sentences that can be expressed in one collocation. For example, a student wrote: "*to make someone's number in the rejection list*". This sentence can be shortened in one two words which are "*to reject a number*". Furthermore, it was found that some students overgeneralized the use of one word to other word combinations. For instance, many students generalized the use of the action verb "*to do*" with a large number of inappropriate words such in "*do an error*", "*do a comparison*" and "*do a lesson*".

As stated in the theoretical part, a host of research such in Zughoul and Abdul-Fattah (2003), Taiwo (2004), and Huang (2001) revealed that EFL learners use some strategies to enhance their acquisition of vocabulary, such as the use of synonyms, paraphrasing, and overgeneralization. However, these strategies appeared to negatively affect students' use of collocations instead of helping them improve.

4. Less Contributing Factors to Students Mis-collocations

After stating the main reasons behind students' main problems with collocations, the following reasons are found to be of less contribution to students' mis-collocations.

According to the results, culture-based knowledge is ranked the least reason behind students' mis-collocation in writing. This result was similar to the findings obtained by some researchers such as Biskup (1992), Alpaslan (1993) and Telya et al. (1998). EFL learners should be aware that the use of word combinations differs from one language to another due to social conventions; and thus, they have to be mindful of the target culture. Moreover, the questionnaire revealed that some students added that their problems with collocations are mainly because teachers do not give much importance to teaching collocations and vocabulary in the classroom.

Conclusion

The present chapter is mainly devoted to the practical part. It dealt with the research methodology used to conduct the present study; it has presented the research paradigm, setting, sample, research tools, data gathering procedures, data analysis along with the limitation of the study. Then it dealt with data analysis, where it presented and described the results of data gathered by means of content analysis and questionnaire. Finally, it has been notably concerned with data discussion and interpretation. The results and findings of the research indicated that third-year students encounter a variety of problems while using lexical collocations in writing. According to the findings, the most common types of errors committed by students are '*verb + noun*' and '*adjective + noun*' errors. The results showed that lexical collocation errors are mainly due to the interference of L1, lack of collocational competence, learning strategy styles, the neglect of teaching collocation and culture-based knowledge.

Recommendations

Based on the present research findings that have revealed the main problems and causes of students' mis-collocations, it is worthwhile to consider the following suggestions by both teachers and learners in order to raise students' collocational awareness.

On the one hand, the results of the study recommend that the instruction of collocations should be included in teaching curricula both implicitly and explicitly. Instructors should raise their students' attention toward the appropriate use of collocations through:

- Making them notice words that go together and not only focusing on teaching words in isolation.
- Underlying and highlighting collocations in texts and ask students to repeat them. Such strategies have a beneficial role in enhancing learners' vocabulary and collocation knowledge.
- Correcting students' oral and written productions in terms of word combination use.
- Drawing students' attention toward the differences and similarities of collocations between L1 and L2 and providing the appropriate equivalent of collocations in both languages through translation tasks.
- Teaching collocations through exercises like gap filling and matching words that generally collocate together.

On the other hand, students should develop their collocational competence independently outside the classroom through the following tips:

- Using a collocation dictionary to check the accurate collocation and which words are generally used together.
- Noting down collocations that have been acquired in the classroom to revise them at home.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- Extensive reading of books and novels in English can be useful for mastering collocational competence and language proficiency as well.
- Exposure to the target language through watching English series, movies, programs, listening to English songs and chatting with native speakers which should enable students to acquire collocations naturally as native speakers.

Limitations of the study

When conducting this study, the researchers encountered a number of limitations which are stated as follows.

- One of the limitations was the lack of relevant and original resources at the library of University, and even most of the electronic books were not available for free.
- The researcher attempted to add an additional instrument which was an interview for teachers because they are expected to know more about their students' level, their problems in writing, and their use of word combination. The interview was dropped out because teachers refused to be interviewed.

General Conclusion

Learning English as a foreign language is somehow complicated for EFL learners since it is based on the integration of the four skills (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) to master that language appropriately, without neglecting some other aspects of language such as grammar, lexis, pronunciation, punctuation, and culture. Although EFL learners are familiar with some of these skills and aspects, they cannot achieve proficiency in writing, and this is due to the lack of vocabulary knowledge which plays a vital role in students' production either in the classroom or in their daily life interactions with others.

Learning vocabulary is one way to enlarge EFL learners' language development. Moreover, learning words in combination such as collocations which refer to the association of words that generally fit with each other may help students build better knowledge of lexicon as well as enhancing their ability in using English appropriately especially in writing, where their production seems to be more authentic using the appropriate collocations. However, most of EFL learners face problems in learning and using lexical collocations in their writings, and this is due to the main feature of collocations which is the arbitrariness of the co-occurrence of lexical items together. There is no fixed rule to be followed to choose the appropriate collocates; this is the main problem for EFL students. The factors that lead third-year License students to mis-collocation are also a main concern of this investigation.

The current research work is composed of two chapters. EFL learners' problems in writing with lexical collocations and causes were revealed in the first chapter. The second chapter dealt with the practical part that consisted of three sections; the first section exhibited the research methodology used to investigate this research. Afterward, the second section provided the analysis of the results gathered by means of content analysis and students' questionnaire. Finally, the discussion and interpretation of the overall results from the two

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

instruments in relation to the research questions were discussed. Moreover, some recommendations were suggested to solve lexical collocations problems in writing and enable EFL learners to use lexical collocation correctly.

From the research results, it can be said that third-year English students encountered difficulties with lexical collocation in writing to a large extent, especially with the two types *verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* collocations; and it may be due to the wrong choice of the appropriate verb that should be collocated with the noun, especially with verbs that are similar in meaning such as *do* and *make*, *have* and *get*. Also, perhaps, students substitute adjectives by synonyms that are meaningless when they are collocated; for example they say *ancient man* instead of *old man*. In addition, it is confirmed that the main causes of these problems are as follow. Firstly, the interference of L1 is the main reason why learners make lexical collocation errors due to their unfamiliarity with collocation use in English, as they rely more on their mother tongue in thinking and expressing their ideas during their written production; and consequently, they misuse lexical collocations. Secondly, the lack of collocational competence which leads learners to commit errors because they do not know how to combine and choose words that fit with each other. Finally, students' learning type strategies is one of the contributing causes of mis-collocations; the use of words synonym, overgeneralization of rules, and long paraphrasing are the most used strategies for learning that lead to the misuse of lexical collocations by third year students.

Suggestions for Further Research

On the basis of what has been found in the present study, it is suggested to conduct further research with the following recommendations:

5. Remarkably, most of research dealt with lexical collocation and its relation to writing; so, future researchers are suggested to deal with the effects of lexical collocations on the EFL learners speaking skill.
6. Future researchers who attempt to work on the same topic are supposed to use another instrument, which is teachers' interview, in order to investigate the topic from teachers' perspectives.
7. Since lexical collocations consist of seven patterns, it is noteworthy to work on one or two particular patterns in investigating their use by EFL learners either in writing or speaking.

References

- Abdaoui, M. (2010). *Teaching lexical collocations to raise proficiency in foreign language writing*. (Magister Thesis). Guelma University, Algeria.
- Abu ashiba, A. A. (2017). *The impact of verb-noun collocations in the paragraph writing of Palestinian EFL learners in Gaza Universities*. (Master Dissertation). Al-Azhar University, Gaza.
- Adelian, M. Nemali, A. Fumani, M. R. (2015). The effect of Iranian advanced EFL learners' knowledge of collocation on their writing ability. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(5), 974-980. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/0505.12>.
- Al-Dakhs, D. A. S. (2015). Collocational competence in English language teaching: An overview. *Arab World English Journal*, 6(1), 68-82. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.2834432
- Allami, H. (2013). The Effect of teaching lexical collocations on speaking ability of Iranian EFL learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(6), 1070-1079 DOI : 10.4304/tpls.3.6.1070-1079.
- Alpaslan, E. C. (1993). *A Comparative study of collocations in Turkish and English with special emphasis on lexical collocations*. (Master Dissertation). Hacettepe University, Turkey.
- Alqahtani, M. (2015). The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught . *International Journal of Teaching and Education*, 3(3), 21-34. DOI: 10.20472/TE.2015.3.3.002.
- Bahardoust, M. & Moeini, M. R. (2012). Lexical grammatical collocations in writing production of EFL learners. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 5(1), 61-86.
- Bahns, J. (1993). Lexical collocations: a contrastive view. *English Language Teaching*

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

Journal, 47(1), 56-63. Retrieved from

www.academia.edu/2003681/lexical_collocations_a_contrastive_view

Baleguizadeh, S. & Bakhshian, A. N. (2011). The effect of context on EFL learners' recognition and production of colligations. *Journal of Language and Linguistics Studies*, 7(1), 100-111.

Bartsch, S. (2004). *Structural and functional properties of collocations in English, A corpus study of lexical and pragmatic constraints on lexical co-occurrence*. Tübingen, Verlag Gunter Narr.

Beiske, B. (2002). *Research methods uses and limitations of questionnaires, interviews, and case studies*. Retrieved from <http://m.grin.com/document/15458>

Benson, M., Benson, E., & Ilson, R. (1986). *The BBI combinatory dictionary of English: A guide to word combinations* (1st ed.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Benson, M., Benson, E., & Ilson, R. (1997). *The BBI dictionary of English word Combinations*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Bhat, A. (2019). *Quantitative research: definition, method, types and examples*. Retrieved from [http:// www.questionpro.com/blog./quantitative-research](http://www.questionpro.com/blog./quantitative-research)

Biskup, D. (1992). L1 influence on learners' renderings of English collocations: A Polish/ German study. In P. Arnaud & H. B. joint (Eds.), *Vocabulary and applied linguistics* (pp. 85-93). London: Macmillan.

Bloomfield, L. (1926). A set of postulates for the science of language. *Language*, 2(3), 153-164. DOI: 10.2307/408741

Boettger, R. K. & Palmer, L. A. (2010). Quantitative analysis: its use in technical

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

communication. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*. 53(4), 346-356.

DOI: 10.1109/TPC.2010.2077450.

Bowles, H. (2007). *Analysing and teaching meaning*. Retrieved from:

http://www.uniroma2.it/didattica/englishSSIS/deposito/Lesson_2.ppt

Brezina, V., McEnery, T. & Wattam, S. (2015). Collocations in context: A new

perspective on collocation networks. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*,

20(2), 139-173. DOI: 10.1075/ijcl.20.2.01bre

Carter, R. (1998). *Vocabulary – applied linguistic perspectives* (2nd ed). New York:

Routledge.

Chang, L. H. (2011). Integrating collocation instruction into a writing class: A case

study of Taiwanese EFL students' writing production. *Airiti Library*. 8(2), 281-303.

DOI : [10.29888/KUASJHSS.201112.0006](https://doi.org/10.29888/KUASJHSS.201112.0006)

Chen, P.C. (2002). *A corpus-based study of the collocational errors in the writings of*

EFL learners in Taiwan. (Master Thesis). National Taiwan Normal University,

Taipei, Taiwan.

Coe, K. & Scacco, M. (2017). *Content analysis, qualitative*. Retrieved from

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0045>

Crystal, D. (1991). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Oxford: Oxford Blackwell

Press.

Danilevicienė, L. & Vazonienė, R. (2012). Different approaches to

the concept of collocation in English: Why learn collocation?. *Social*

Sciences, 4(87), 20-26.

Darvishi, S. (2011). The investigation of collocation errors in university students'

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- writing majoring in English. *International Conference on Education, Research and Innovation IPEDR*, 18, 52-55.
- Dellar, H. (2015). *Colligation and a bottom-up approach to grammar*. Retrieved from: <http://www.leoicon.blogspot.com/2015/10/colligation-bottom-up-approach-grammar.html>
- Deveci, T. (2004). Why and how to teach collocations. *English teaching forum online*, 26, 131-143.
- Donnellan, M. (2015). An analysis of collocations in an authentic text. *Kwansei Gakuin University Humanities Review*, 19, 227-243.
- Doughty, C. & Williams, J. (1998). Pedagogical choices in focus on form. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 197-261). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fanit, R. (2010). *Problems in translating collocations*. (Master dissertation). Mentouri University, Constantine, Algeria.
- Faris, A. A. H., & Sahu, R. A. (2013). The translation of English collocations into Arabic: problems and solutions. *Journal of the College of Arts*, 64, 51-65.
- Firth, J. (1957). Modes of meaning. In J. Firth (Ed.), *Papers in Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gitsaki, C. (1996). *The Development of ESL Collocational Knowledge*. (Doctoral Thesis). University of Queensland. Brisbane, Australia. Retrieved from www.cltr.uq.oz.au:8000/users/christina.gitsaki/thesis/contents.html
- Gitsaki, C. (1999). *Second language lexical acquisition: A study of the development of collocational knowledge*. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Gledhill, C. J. (2000). *Collocations in science writing*, Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- Halliday, M.A.K. (1961). Categories of the theory of grammar. *Word*, 17, 241-292.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1966). Lexis as a linguistic level. In C.E. Bazell, J.C. Catford, M.A.K. Halliday & R.H. Robins (Eds.), *In memory of J.R. Firth* (pp.148-162). London: Longman.
- Halliday, M. A. K. & Hassan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- Hammadi, F. Z. (2015). *Collocations as erroneous patterns in EFL learning*. (Masters' Dissertation). Telmcen University, Algeria.
- Harmer, J. (1998). *How to teach English: An introduction to the practice of English language teaching*. UK: Pearson Education.
- Head. (2019). In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved 18 April 2019 from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/head>.
- Heeyoung, K. , Jungok, B. (2012). The relationship of collocational competence with reading and writing skills. *English Teaching*, 67(3), 95-119.
- Hill, J. (2000). *Revising priorities: From grammatical failure to collocational success*, London: Commercial Color Press. P.L.C.
- Hoey, M. (2001). *Textual interaction. An introduction to written discourse analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Hornby, A.S. (2006). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English*. Oxford: University Press, UK.
- Hosseini, B. M.S. & Akbarian, I. (2007). Language proficiency and collocational competence. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 4(4), 35-58.
- Hsu, J. Y. (2007). Lexical collocations and their relations to the online writing of Taiwanese college English majors and non-English majors. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 4(2), 192-209.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- Huang, L. (2001). Knowledge of English collocations: An analysis of Taiwanese EFL Learners. *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education*. 6(1), 113-129. Retrieved from <http://searcheric.org/scripts/seget2.asp>
- Jaff, D. Q. (2013). *Collocation in English language*. (Doctoral thesis). Koya University. Iraqi Kurdistan.
- Karoly, A. (2005). The importance of raising collocational awareness in the vocabulary development of intermediate level learners of English. *Eger Journal of English Studies*, 5, 58-69.
- Kjellmer, G. (1990). Patterns of collocability. In J. Aarts, & W. Meijs (Eds.) *Theory and practice in corpus linguistics* (163-178). Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Koç, G. (2006). *Developing collocational awareness*. (Master Thesis). Bilkent University, Ankara.
- Lehecka, T. (2015). Collocation and colligation. In J. O. Ostman, & J. Verschueren (Eds.), *Handbook of Pragmatics Online* (pp. 1-23). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. DOI: 10.1075/hop.19.col2.
- Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach*, London: Language Teaching Publications.
- Lewis, M. (2000). *Teaching collocation: Further development in lexical approach*, London: Commercial Color Press. P.L.C.
- Marco, M. J. (1999). The different levels of language patterning. *EPOS*, 15, 313-334.
- Marks, J., & Wooder, A. (2007). *Check your vocabulary for natural English collocations*. London: A & C Black.
- Martynska, M. (2004). *Do English language learners know collocations?* *Investigationes Linguisticae*, 11(1), 1-12.
- McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- McCarthy, M. J. & O'Dell, F. (2005). *English collocations in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, M., & O'Dell, F. (2007). *English collocations in use*, Cambridge: C.U.P.
- Mitchell, T. F. (1971). *Linguistic 'Goings on': collocations and other lexical matters arising on the syntagmatic record*. *Archivum Linguisticum*, 2, 35-69.
- Nakamura, L. (2003). *Teaching collocation to children: Raising young learners language awareness*. Retrieved from <http://www.davidenglishhouse.com/en/resources/snakes/winter2003:features/nakamura.pdf>
- Namvar, F., Mohdnur, F., Ibrahim, N. & Mustafa, J. (2012). Analysis of collocations in the Iranian postgraduate students' writings. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 18(1), 11-22.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nattinger, J. R. (1988). Current trends in vocabulary teaching. In Carter, R., & McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary and Language Teaching* (pp. 62-82). New York: Longman.
- Nesselhauf, N. (2003). The use of collocations by advanced learners of English and some implications for teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 24(2), 223- 242.
- Nesselhauf, N. (2005). *Collocations in a Learner Corpus*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Nordquist, R. (2018). *Types of word formation in English*. Retrieved from <https://www.thought-formation>.
- O'Dell, F., & McCarthy, M. (2008). *English collocations in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- Pawly, A., & Syder, F. H. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Native like selection and Native like fluency. In J. C. Richards, & R. W. Schmit (Eds.), *Language and Communication* (pp. 191-225). London: Longman.
- Qader, D. S. (2018). The role of teaching lexical collocations in raising EFL learners' speaking fluency. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*, 46, 42-52.
- Rahimi, M & Momeni, G. (2011). The effect of teaching collocations on English language Proficiency. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31(12), 37-42.
- Robins, R. H. (1967). *A short history of linguistics*. London: Longman.
- Seidl, J., & McMordie, W. (1978). *English idioms and how to use them*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Shitu, F. M. (2015). Collocation errors in English as ESL essay writing. *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business, and Engineering*, 9(9), 3270-3276.
- Shooshtari, Z. G. (2013). Lexical collocation instruction and its impact on Iranian non-academic EFL learners' speaking ability. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(4), 767-776.
- Sinclair, J. M. (1966). Beginning the study of lexis. In C. E. Bazell et al. (Eds.) *In Memory of J. R. Firth*, (pp. 410-430). London: Longman.
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Smadja, F. (1993). Retrieving collocations from texts: Xtract. *Computational Linguistics*, 19(1), 143-177.
- Sung, J. (2003). English lexical collocations and their relation to spoken fluency of adult nonnative speakers. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 4(2), 192-209.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- Taiwo, R. (2004). Helping ESL learners to minimize collocational errors. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 10(4). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/>
- Teliya, V., Bragina, N., Oparina, E., & Sandomirska, I. (1998). Phraseology as a Language of culture: Its role in the representation of a collective mentality. In A. P. Cowie (Ed.), *Phraseology: theory, analysis, and applications* (pp. 55-75). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Thorburry, S. (2002). *How to teach vocabulary*. Harlow: Longman.
- Unver, M. M. (2018). Lexical collocations: Issues in teaching and ways to raise awareness. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3, 115-118.
- Waite, M. (Ed). (2011). *Concise oxford English dictionary: luxury edition*. Oxford: OUP.
- Wehmerier, S. (Ed.). (2005). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (7th Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zabalawi, R, (2017). English collocations: A novel approach to teaching the language's last bastion. *Journal of Ampersand*, 4, 21-29.
- Zughoul, M. R., & Abdul- Fattah, H. (2003). Translational collocational strategies of Arab learners of English: A study in lexical semantics. *Babel*, 49(1), 59-81.

Appendices

Appendix A

Criteria of Content Analysis

In order to identify and classify types of lexical collocation errors made by third-year students, the analysis of content was based on predefined criteria which are lexical collocation patterns as suggested by BBI dictionary (1986).

Type	Structure	Examples
L1	Verb (donating creation or activation) + Noun (Pronoun or prep. Phrase)	Compose music, inflict a wound, set a record
L2	Verb (meaning eradication for nullification) + Noun	Break a code, reverse a decision, reject an appeal
L3	Adjective + Noun	Strong tea, a formidable challenge
L4	Noun + Verb	Alarms go off, blood circulates,
L5	Noun 1 of Noun 2	A pride lions, a bouquet of flowers
L6	Adjective +adverb Adverb + adjective	Sound asleep, Hopelessly addicted
L7	Verb +adverb	Affect deeply, apologize humbly, appreciate sincerely

Lexical collocations Pattern (taken from Benson et al. 1986).

Appendix B

TEFL Exam Questions

Question01: teaching any language aspect (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) or skill (e.g., speaking, listening, reading, and writing) involves organizing it into different steps. Choose any aspect of language or language skill and outline the procedures for teaching in a communicative way stating the objectives behind each step and the type of activities that could fit within it.

Instruction: Answer the question in a form of a composition that is to be contained in this answer sheet.

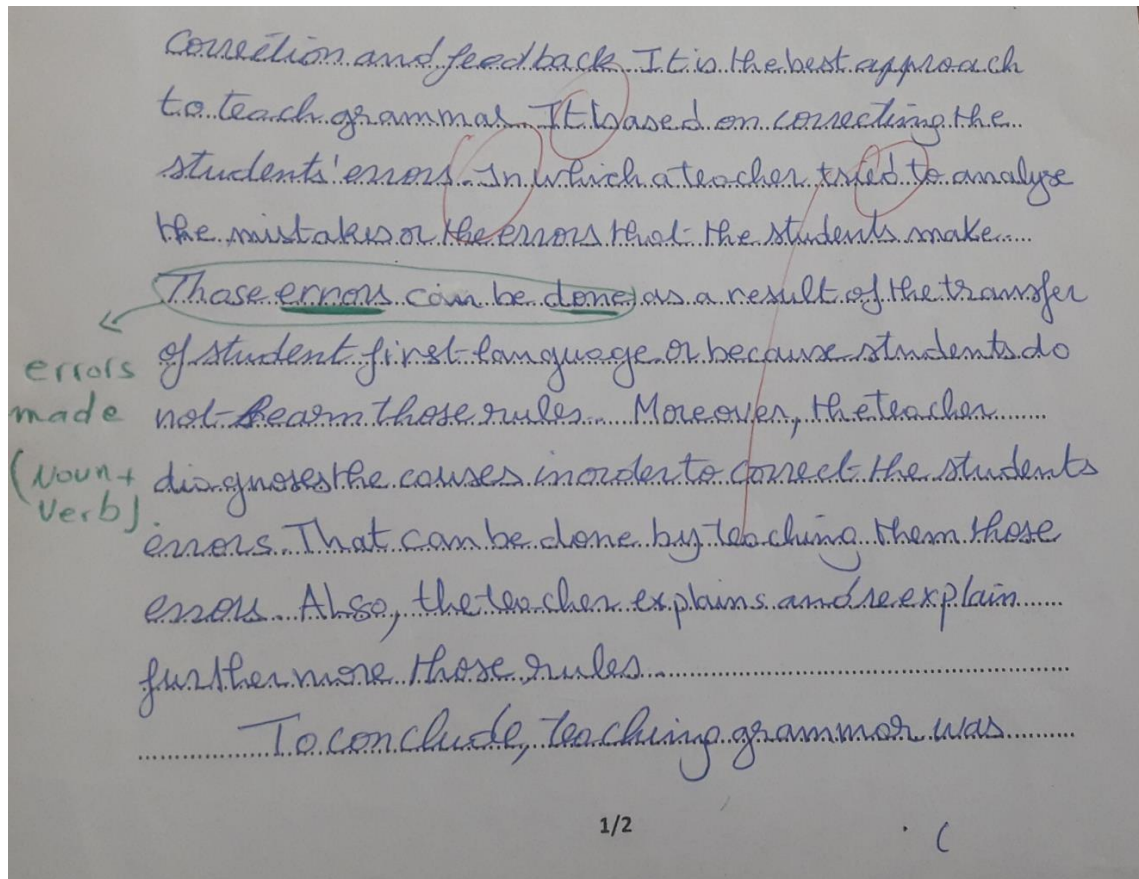
Question02: Answer the following question in a form of an essay.

The end of 1970s and the beginning of 1980s in history of EFL had been marked by the advent of communicative language teaching (CLT)

Explain the major factors that contributed to the move from the teaching of language form to the teaching of language meaning.

Appendix C

Examples of Lexical Collocation Errors in Students Essays



LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

...caption This is what we called universalization. Use the appropriate words in communication relying on its contextualization. Teaching vocabulary didn't pay attention to grammar mistakes. As teacher we should deal with the constructive analysis, range, value and building capacities or how to form new words. As learners to learn vocabulary we have to make a link between old knowledge and new one. Learn new devices that help in producing new words... ex: suffixes, prefixes. Use dictionaries and memorize new words using dictionaries, watching educational subtitled videos. Use a notebook and write down the important words. We can also name articles of everyday life in order to memorize its names. The teaching of vocabulary is organized in three major steps. First, presentation it deals with context. Second, practice which focuses on the teaching learning steps to collect new vocabulary. Third, is revision which is figured out by discussion in classroom. From teacher and student's collaboration and interaction we learn more vocabulary. To sum up, to be a better English speaker it is enough to master...

Previous Knowledge (adj + Noun)

acquire new vocabulary (Verb + Noun)

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLEMS AND CAUSES IN WRITING

give birth (verb + noun) -

of the U.S. as an international power emerging (make the birth of more
needs to learn language to communicate. First was focus on making
a special structure to be used). Secondly the same of Asian people to America
lead them to learn special skills in order to help them to be able to communi-
cating to their situation and that there wasn't sufficient to
master the language as a block of meaning so after the failure of
audiolingual method and the oral situational method in
the other hand the influence of sociolinguist was an important
factor that called for the importance of meaning rather than form
also the Europe Council brought the idea of threshold which
focus only in the needs of student to communicate ^{project}...

Appendix D

Students' Questionnaire

Dear participants,

This questionnaire aims at measuring students' knowledge and use of collocations. The gathered data will help to enrich our research about "collocational problems in EFL learners' written productions. Please answer the following questions as thoughtfully and specifically as possible.

Would you please tick (✓) the corresponding answer or fill in the information where necessary

1. How often do you use your English-English

dictionary?

a- Never

b- Rarely

c- Sometimes

d- Often

e- Always

2. Among the following statements, which one is the appropriate definition of collocation?

a- An expression that is spoken in a particular area and which uses some of its own words, grammar, and pronunciation.

b- A phrase that consists of a verb + preposition, an adverb or both.

c- A natural composition of words that co-occur together because of their habitual use

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

3. Do you have a collocation dictionary?

Yes No

4. How often do you learn words in combination with others such as: heavy rain, make the bed, commit a crime...?

a-Never

b-Rarely

c-Sometimes

d- Often

e- Always

5. How do you find acquiring new word combinations?

Easy Difficult

6. How often does your teacher make you notice words that are generally used together like: heavy traffic, make money, get a home...?

a- Never

b- Rarely

c-Sometimes

d- Often

e- Always

7. Do you have problems in writing concerning word combinations, i.e. to find a difficulty in choosing the appropriate collocations?

Yes No

8. What kind of problems do you encounter while using collocations in writing?

a- I cannot remember all combinations of words that fit each other.

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

- b- I usually learn words in isolation.
- c- It is somehow confusing to differentiate between words that have a close meaning like: do and make, have and get...

Other reasons:
.....

9. What is the main cause of these problems?

- a- Lack of collocational competence (I do not know how to combine words together)
- b- Interference of L1 (I combine words as I do in Arabic)
- c- Culture-based knowledge
- d- Learning type strategies (the use of synonyms, overgeneralization, paraphrasing...)

Other reasons:
.....

10. Do you think that teachers should teach you collocations to raise your collocational awareness in writing?

- a- Strongly agree
- b- Agree
- c- Disagree
- d- Strongly disagree

11. Which method do you think is more effective for learning collocations?

- a- Translation from L1 to TL and vice versa
- b- Using a collocation dictionary

LEXICAL COLLOCATION PROBLESM AND CAUSES IN WRITING

c- Through exercises (matching, multiple choice, and gap filling...)

d- Noting down collocation in a notebook to revise them later

Other suggestions:

.....

Résumé

Cette étude vise à explorer les problèmes rencontrés par les étudiants de Troisième année anglais langue étrangère à l'Université Mohammed Siddik Ben Yahia, Jijel quand ils viennent d'utiliser les collocations lexicales lors de leur production écrite. Il repose également sur la supposition que ces difficultés sont dues à plusieurs raisons, notamment: le manque d'efficacité dans l'utilisation des collocations lexicales et leur dépendance à la langue maternelle lorsqu'ils utilisent une langue étrangère. Afin de parvenir au résultat de la supposition précédente, les collocations lexicales ont été extraits des papiers d'examen des étudiants, en plus d'un questionnaire destiné également aux étudiants de troisième année de la langue anglaise, qui ont eu des difficultés à utiliser deux types de collocation lexicale: verbe+ non et adjective + verbe. Les principales causes de ces problèmes étaient: l'influence de la langue maternelle, le manque d'efficacité dans l'utilisation des collocations lexicales et le type de stratégies sur lesquelles ils s'appuient dans leur production écrite. Afin de diminuer ces difficultés, les enseignants d'anglais sont encouragés à attirer l'attention de leurs étudiants sur la façon d'utiliser les collocations lexicales en les intégrant au programme d'enseignement. Aussi, les étudiants sont conseillés à développer leur propre auto-apprentissage de collocations lexicales.

Mots Clés: Collocations, Collocations Lexicale, Influence de la Langue Maternelle, Stratégies d'Apprentissage, L'écrit.

المخلص

من بين الاهداف التي يسعى طلبة الانجليزية لتحقيقها هي إتقان اللغة الأجنبية بنفس مهارة الناطقين الأصليين لها، خاصة فيما يتعلق بتركيب المفردات و المتلازمات اللفظية لذلك أجريت هذه الدراسة للتحقق من المشاكل التي تواجه طلاب السنة الثالثة لغة انجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحي بجيجل في استعمال المتلازمات اللفظية اثناء إنشاءاتهم الكتابية، كما أنها تقوم على الإعتقاد أن هذه المشاكل تعود لعدة أسباب منها: قلة الكفاءة في إستعمال المتلازمات اللفظية اعتمادهم على اللغة الأم عند استعمال اللغة الأجنبية. للوصول إلى نتيجة الإعتقاد السابق تم استخراج المتلازمات اللفظية من أربع و عشرين ورقة إختبار الطلبة من أجل تحليلها، إضافة إلى إستبيان الذي وجه لستين طالبا من السنة الثالثة. و من خلال النتائج المحصل عليها تبين أن طلبة السنة الثالثة لغة إنجليزية يواجهون صعوبات في استعمال نوعين من المتلازمات اللفظية الا و هما الإسم +الفعل و الصفة + الإسم، و تبين كما تبين ايضا أن الأسباب الرئيسية لهذه المشاكل هي: تأثير اللغة الأم، قلة الكفاءة في استعمال المتلازمات اللفظية، بالإضافة إلى نوع الإستراتيجيات المعتمدة من طرف الطلبة في إنشاءاتهم الكتابية. و للتقليل من هذه المشاكل يُفترَح على أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية توعية طلبتهم فيما يخص كيفية إستخدام المتلازمات اللفظية من خلال دمجها في المنهج التدريسي، كما يجب على الطلبة تطوير تعليمهم الذاتي بالنسبة للمتلازمة اللفظية و كيفية استخدامها بطريقة صحيحة

الكلمات المفتاحية: المتلازمات اللفظية، الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التعبير الإنشائي، الكفاءة في توظيف المتلازمات

اللفظية، تأثير اللغة الأم، إستراتيجية التعلم