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Analyzing Lexical Collocations Usage and Errors in EFL Learners' Academic Writing:

A Study of Master One Learners at University Mohamed Khider- Biskra

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DECLARATION OF INTEGRITY

I, "Brahimi Amani Wafa", solemnly declare that the dissertation titled; **" Analyzing Lexical Collocations Usage and Errors in EFL Learners' Academic Writing: A Study of Master One Learners at University Mohamed Khider- Biskra"**; submitted to the Department of the English language and Literature at Biskra University is entirely my own work, free from plagiarism, and has not been submitted to any other educational institution. I have appropriately acknowledged and cited all sources used, and I have conducted myself with academic integrity throughout the process. I understand the severe consequences of academic misconduct and affirm the authenticity of my dissertation.

Signature

Dedication

With deep affection, I express gratitude to my family, the source of my success and happiness. I dedicate this work to my dear family.

I do offer to gratitude to my father, who has been a wellspring of wisdom and a guiding principle throughout my life. Additionally, I extend my profound appreciation to the person who has demonstrated exceptional generosity, to my mother who upholds me in life through her blessing, praying to God and instructions. She holds my endurance even

before I show it.

To my brother (Amir) and my sisters (Leila, Rakaia), especially my sweetie sister Leila who was by my side through every challenge in this journey. Your wisdom, kindness, and strength have inspired me to persevere and strive for excellence. This work is dedicated to you, with heartfelt gratitude for all the love and guidance you have provided.

I proudly dedicate this work to myself. I will always remember the strength and perseverance I displayed in completing this work, and for diligently working towards achieving two graduation theses both of senior IT technician and Master of English in one year.

I also dedicate this work to my close friends, particularly Boumerzoug Nour, who stood by me throughout the journey of writing this thesis. She always offered her advice and assistance in sourcing materials for this research. I will always remember her unwavering psychological support and encouraging messages that reminded me of my strength.

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Abstract

Mastering collocations extremely enhances writing proficiency for English as foreign language (EFL) learners by improving the naturalness and idiomatic expressions in their language use. The correct use of collocations can elevate the quality of EFL learners' essay writing. Research has demonstrated that EFL learners encounter a range of difficulties that hinder their ability to write proficiently. The present research aims to analyze the use of lexical collocation in academic writing of Master One students at Mohammed Kheider Biskra University; more precisely, it aims to assess both the frequency and accuracy of students' collocation usage. It aims to evaluate the frequency and accuracy of students' use of collocations. To achieve this objective, content analysis was used to analyze data of 30 out of 168 Master One test copies. The results indicated that students extensively use lexical collocation in their writing. Additionally, it is revealed that students have the tendency of using *verb + noun* and *adjective + noun* collocations are most frequently than other types. Regarding collocational errors, it was found that *verb+ noun*, *adjective + noun* and *adverb + adjective* are the most problematic collocational patterns. Moreover, the findings exhibited that the interference of the students' first language, lack of collocational knowledge and overgeneralization are the main reasons behind students' misuse of collocations in writing. Consequently, the present study indicates a clear and methodical instruction of this linguistic aspect of English language proficiency both theoretically and practically.

Keywords: EFL, Lexical Collocation, Writing Proficiency, Content analysis, Collocations Errors.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AW: Academic writing

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

IMRAD: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

L3: Third/ Foreign Language

Vs: versus

%: percentage

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General

Introduction

Introduction

It is widely believed that teachers often give a great deal of importance to grammar and vocabulary teaching rather than combinations of words in classroom instruction. Otherwise, language learning has focused on grammar as the main building block, which has ranked vocabulary in an inferior position to grammar. Thus, this is reflected in curriculums that prioritize grammar rules. However, recent research and practice into classroom instruction emphasize the importance of vocabulary. Hill (2000, p.47) suggested "putting lexis rather than grammar at the center of language teaching is more than just a modest change, it is a revolution" (p.47). Additionally, he noted that the central feature of lexis is collocation and acquiring some vocabulary is needed even to   an intermediate learner in his learning a foreign language. Learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) often rely on rigid grammatical structures and concentrate on individual words because "collocations cannot be divorced from grammatical context"(Hill; 2000, p.52). Consequently, they encounter challenges when it comes to combining words effectively and understanding lexical collocations.

The main cause behind this research is that learners are not fully aware of collocations, and their native language or other languages they know could be getting in the way. For example, English learners in Algeria, who primarily speak Arabic and also know French, might face this challenge. Therefore, this study aims to explain what collocations are and how well learners understand them and use them in their academic writing, essays in particular. By doing this, students will be aware of their errors and be able to produce collocation effectively, and teachers may understand better and get some tips on how to teach collocations. This is important because knowing collocations well is a big part of building vocabulary.

1. Statement of the Problem

The term collocation refers to two words that are linked together, similar to the way English words are closely related. for example, *pay* and the *bill* go together give with an example and *make* with *money*. In addition, many linguists believed that knowing a word included knowing its collocations such Lewis, Hill (2000) and Nation (2001). Despite the fact that mastering collocations in English can be a formidable challenge for language learners, EFL students still struggle to produce proficient written English due to the lack of appropriate vocabulary and incorrect word combinations, exacerbated by a limited grasp of collocation, necessitating focused instruction to enhance their awareness of writing proficiency.

This study aims to examine the utilization of lexical collocation in academic writing by EFL students at the University Mohamed Khider of Biskra. Specifically, it seeks to determine the prevalence of encountered difficulties, as wel as the most frequently utilized collocation pattern and the instances of incorrect usage across various collocation patterns.

2. Objectives of the Study

By evaluating the EFL learners' knowledge of English collocations, this research intends to address such difficulties and improve students' ability to use collocations proficiently like native speakers. Specifically, it aims to assess learners' understanding through examining their knowledge of collocations. The ultimate objective is to help EFL students of English at Mohammed Kheider Biskra enhance their ability of using collocations fluently and accurately just like native English speakers.

3. The significance of the Study.

This study is crucial due to the importance of collocational competence. It can assist learners in developing an understanding of collocations, enabling them to utilize their vocabulary more effectively and sound more natural in their spoken and written communication. For instance, it is preferable to say "*of great importance*" rather than "*of big or high importance*." Based on the findings, recommendations for enhancing instructional methods and materials for teaching collocations will be proposed. The overall goal is to develop learners' skills in employing collocations in a fluent and accurate manner similar to those of native English users.

4. Research Questions

This study addresses the following questions:

- To what extent do EFL students use accurate the lexical collocations in their academic writings?

- What are the specific types of lexical collocations pose the greatest challenges for students in the endavours at MKUB ?

5. Research Methodology

The current study use a qualitative method supplemented by some quantitative data. Specifically, a sample of 30 essays out of 168 written by EFL students will be selected randomly to be examined. The research uses of qualitative content analysis as a research instrument to collect and analyse data from students' essays. Additionally, content analysis gathering data are to identify the patterns and capture the nuances of lexical collocations. Moreover, the analysis data are organized in form of tables. Finally, the results are discussed the prevalent lexical patterns, the types of problematic lexical collocations, and instances of correct and incorrect usage of such collocations

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6. Limitations of study

This study may encounter some difficulties, such as limitation of time and challenges in accessing sources like books or some electronic books which are not available for free.

7. The structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation followed IMRAD division (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), providing a structured and organized division. A General introduction provides a comprehensive introduction to the topic, including statement of the problem, objectives, and significance of the study, research questions, and other introductory aspects. It is followed by the first chapter of "Literature Review", which is divided into two parts and provides definitions of variables and a comprehensive account of the previous studies. Then, the second chapter "Research Methodology" discusses the chosen method, data collection tools and analysis methods third chapter is the analysis and discussion of findings where the findings and results presented, interpreted, and discussed-in the context of research objectives and existing literature. After the Results: Analysis and Discussion chapter, the general conclusion is presented.

Chapter One:

literature Review

Introduction

Mastering collocations is essential for achieving language proficiency, as it as it allows individuals to effectively convey their ideas and thoughts naturally, and it greatly enhances both fluency and comprehension. This chapter includes two parts which are as follows: The first part takes as its major concerns some key issues related to collocation. It provides their origins and developments, definitions, characteristics, types, patterns and the importance. Also, it deals with the concept of collocation and other word combinations; and finally, it discusses the approaches to studying collocation. The second part starts with the definition of the skill of writing and particularly academic writing. It subsequently discusses the relationship between lexical collocation and academic writing, highlighting the main problems faced by students while using lexical collocations. Finally, the chapter reveals the main reasons for students' misuse collocation.

1. Collocation

1.1 Collocation's Origins and their Development

According to Müller (2008, p.4) "The term collocation has its origin in the Latin verb collocare (to arrage, to set in order)". Specifically, the concept of collocation has been known since Palmer's pioneering work in 1938, he was the first to introduce the term collocation in his dictionary under the title of "A Grammar of English words" (Brashi,2009). According to Müller (2008), collocation was first used by the British linguist J.R. Firth in 1951 to describe the co-occurrence of lexical items. Later, he advanced the term to become a key in the technical vocabulary of linguistics.

On the other hand, Firth tried to explain collocation which concerns the meaning of the relationships between lexical words on the syntagmatic relationships; moreover, he illustrated his view with the famous example of "*dark night*" as an (adjective + noun) collocation and argues that the meaning of dark is connected with night. In other words, Brashi (2009, p.23) pointed out that "

any complete description of the meaning of a word would have to include the other word or words that collocate with it". Similarly, this explanation refers to Firth's definition of collocation which is "the company that words keep" (Hill, 2000, p.48). In contrast, Lyons (1966) criticized with Firth's idea that the "word's collocations are part of its meaning". Instead, Lyons suggests that the meaning of a collocation cannot be fully understood by just looking at the individual words within it. He argues that the meaning of one word in a collocation is not necessarily dependent on its connection with the other word(s) in the collocation. This perspective is based on a distributional theory of meaning, which emphasizes the importance of how words are used in context to determine their meanings. Later, Layons (1977, p. 613) explained "There is frequently so high a degree of interdependence between lexemes which tend to occur in texts in collocation with one another that their potentiality for collocation is reasonably described as being part of their meaning" (as cited in Brashi, 2009, p.23). To elaborate this argument, there are certain words that have a strong tendency to appear together in texts, forming collocations, in which these collocations are so closely linked that they can be considered as part of the meaning of the individual words themselves. In other words, the words gain additional meaning or connotations when used in combination with each other, rather than in isolation. So, the importance is considering not only the individual meanings of words, but also their relationships and patterns of usage in language. Consequently, Layons (1977) changed his view and asserted that Firth's theory was well-founded (as cited in Brashi,2009, p.23).

To conclude, many linguists, known as "Neo-Firthians," have expanded and refined Firth's theory of collocations (Brashi ,2009, p.23). They have attempted to limit the scope of collocation definitions to be more precise and understanding the concept. They aim to differentiate collocations from other types of word combinations and to clarify the specific patterns and rules that govern them. This approach helps in identifying the unique characteristics of collocations, making it easier

for learners and researchers to study and apply them effectively. Next, it is important to point out this controversial view in detail.

1.2 **Collocations*: Diverse Definitions**

Many researchers have proposed various definitions to define the concept of collocation, leading to a lack of consensus on a single definition. As a result, linguists working on collocations often consider different perspectives.

To define the concept of collocation, many researchers come out with varied definitions, and studies have been insufficient to provide one single definition. Thus, many linguists who work on collocations cover different notions.

To begin with, the Oxford Collocations Dictionary (2002) defines collocation as a means of combining words in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing. Incorrect combinations such as heavy wind or strong rain do not sound natural in English. At the same time, Wray (2002) includes the notion of collocation in her definition of formulaic sequences. She points out that collocations are ready-made phrases that are stored and recalled from one's memory to be used as wholes and which cannot be generated or analyzed by grammar rules (as cited in Debabi & Guerroudj,2018, p.59).

Firstly, in 1957 the term collocation was first introduced by John Rupert Firth in his article "Modes of Meaning". However, he defined collocation as " abstraction at the syntagmatic level" and it is not directly concerned with the conceptual or idea approach to the meaning of words one of the meanings of night is its callability with dark (Muller,2008, p.14). Subsequently, the paradigmatic relationship between lexical items consists of sets of words belonging to the same class,   which can   be   substituted for one   another   in   a   specific   grammatical

and lexical context. in contrast, the syntagmatic relationship of lexical items refers to the word's ability to combine with other words. For example, "*He enjoyed a delicious meal.* "In this context, "*delicious*" can be substituted with other adjectives that belong to the same class and fit grammatically and lexically, such as "*tasty*," "*scrumptious*," "*savory*," or "*delectable*." Each of these adjectives maintains the sentence's grammatical structure and conveys a similar meaning, demonstrating a paradigmatic relationship. In contrast, the syntagmatic relationship of lexical items refers to the world's ability to combine with other words.

Halliday (1966) noted that "collocations are examples of word combinations; he maintains that collocation cuts across grammar boundaries. For instance, "he argued strongly" and "*the strength of his argument*" are grammatical transformations of the initial collocation argument" (Martynska 2004, p.02). Additionally, he emphasized that the crucial role of collocations in the study of lexis and defined collocation as the syntagmatic relation of linear co-occurrence among lexical items that co-occur together (Brashi,2009). Later, in 1976 Halliday came up with another definition with Hasan. They considered collocation as "lexical cohesion,' which is the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of the vocabulary."(as cited in Loc,2021, p.100).

Also, Cowie (1978) defines it as a co-occurrence of two or more lexical items as realizations of structural elements within a given syntactic pattern. Specifically, Wallace (1982 as cited in Loc, 2021, p.100) supported the previous two definitions and he pointed out that "words seldom occur in isolation.". Collocation is not only essential in language but also a distinctive feature that gives language its specificity and accuracy. Afterward, Szulc (1984) defined collocation as

An ability of lexical items to build steady, conventionalized syntagmatic relationship with other words, for example; putrid, rotten, rancid*,* and addled are synonyms that designate rotten food but they collocate only with a limited number of words*:* putrid fish, rancid butter/oil, addled eggs, and rotten fruit.

Similarly, in Carter's view (1987) collocation is a group of words that recurrently co-occur in a language. Subsequently, Nation (1990) takes a more morphological approach, breaking down the word "collocation" into its Latin roots "col-" meaning "together" and "-loc-" meaning "to place or put". So, for Nation, collocation refers to placing or putting words together.' Meanwhile, Celce 1991(cited by Martynska, 2004) defines collocations as co-occurrence of lexical items in combination, which can differ in frequency or acceptability items that collocate frequently with each other are called habitual, e.g. *telling a story*, whereas those that cannot co-occur are called unacceptable, e.g. *powerful tea* instead of *strong tea*. In 2000, Celce- Murcia (as cited in Loc, 2021, p.100) refers to collocation as" words come together or 'chunks that native speakers can access for comprehension or production." To illustrate Celce's definitions, the former emphasizes the statistical frequency side, while the recent one emphasizes the cognitive processing side, but they are describing the same underlying concept.

Simultaneously, Wray (2002) includes the notion of collocation in her definition of formulaic sequences. She points out that collocation are ready-made phrases that are stored and recalled from one's memory to be used as wholes and which cannot be generated or analyzed by grammar rules (as Guerroudj, 2018, p. 59).

McCarthy (2008) sees collocations as "pairs of words that occur regularly together, with a high degree of probability" (Loc, 2021, p.100). In other words, collocations are commonly defined as a behavior of two or more words occurring together frequently and regularly in a particular context (Durant, 2009). Ultimately, Colin (2019) regards collocation as "the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing" (as cited in Loc, 2021, p.100).

In short, all the aforementioned collocation definitions share the same idea of certain words habitually co-occurring together based on language usage patterns. However, researchers emphasize

different aspects. so, their having varied perspectives makes sense, and no single definition can cover every detail.

1.3 Characteristics of Collocations

According to Bowles and Hugo (2007), there are three main characteristics of collocation: *Non-compositionality, non-substitutability, and non-modifiability*.

Firstly, a collocation is non-compositional which means it is challenging for students to understand the idiomatic meaning of words for example, *to have an itching palm* means to be greedy for money.

Second, non-substitution ability means that learners cannot replace the words in collocation with their synonyms. For instance, "*close the meeting*" collocation; it is incorrect to say "*shut the meeting*" because "*shut*" and "*meeting*" do not collocate, whereas one could say "*shut the door*".

Finally, Collocations are non-modifiable, which means learners cannot be altered by adding extra words. For instance, "*heavy rain*" cannot be modified to "*big rain*" without altering the meaning.

1.4 Types of Collocations

The term collocation has been defined in multiple areas. Scholars have classified from different perspectives and defined the types of collocation. The most common types are: lexical versus grammatical collocations, weak versus strong collocations, and open versus restricted collocations.

1.4.1 Grammatical vs. Lexical Collocations.

Based on the BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English, compiled by Morton Benson, Evelyn Benson and Ilson (1986), collocation is divided into groups including grammatical collocation and lexical collocation.

- **Lexical Collocation**

According to Benson et al., (1986), lexical collocations do not contain grammatical elements but are combinations of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs such as *warmest regards*, and *hopelessly addicted*. However, Benson et al. (1986) have defined lexical collocations as typically composed of two equivalent lexical elements. They involve different pairings of content words, excluding prepositions, infinitives, and relative clauses. In general, lexical collocations do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or relative clauses but consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. There are seven types of lexical collocation, organizing in the table below.

Table 1: Lexical Collocations Adopted from Benson et al. (1986a)

Type	Patterns	Examples
L1	Verb (donating creation or activation) + Noun (pronoun or prep phrase)	Compose music, Make an impression
L2	Verb (meaning eradication or nullification) + Noun	Revoke a license, Demolish a house
L3	Adjective + Noun	Strong tea, A rough estimate
L4	Noun + Verb	Bees buzz, Bombs explode
L5	Noun1 of Noun2	A pack of dogs, A herd of buffalo
L6	adjective + adverb/ adverb + adjective	sound asleep; hopelessly addicted
L7	verb + adverb	anchor firmly; argue heatedly

- **Grammatical Collocation**

Grammatical collocation "as a phrase consisting of a dominant word (Noun, Adjective, Verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause" (Benson et al.,1986, p. xix). This type is characterized by 8 eight basic types of collocations organized in the table below:

Table 2: Grammatical Collocations Adopted from Benson et al. (1986b).

Type	Patterns	Examples
G1	noun + preposition	Apathy toward
G2	noun + to inf	He was a fool to do it
G3	noun + that clause	He took an oath that he would do his duty.
G4	preposition + noun	in advance, at anchor
G5	adjective + preposition	They are afraid of him.
G6	predicate adjective +to inf.	It was stupid for them to go
G7	adjective + that clause	She was afraid that she would fail the exam
G8	There are 19 patterns in G8	

Grammatical and lexical collocations are clearly different from each other; the former contains a main word which can include an adjective, a verb or a noun and a grammatical word which is usually a preposition (Benson, 1989, pp. 593-594) but the latter does not include grammatical words like prepositions.

1.4.2 Strong vs. Weak Collocations.

When the use of one term or a combination of two words demands the existence of the other; this refers to strong collocations. However, the constituent items which can co-occur with a large number of other words indicate weak collocation.

Hill (2000) classifies collocations according to strength into four categories: unique, strong, weak, and medium-strength collocations. Firstly, there are unique collocations. For example, he gives two examples of collocations "*foot the bill*" and "*shrug your shoulder*". The two collocations

are unique because the verbs "foot" and "shrug" are not used with any other nouns like he mentioned such as "*footing the invoice*" or "*footing the coffee*." Secondly, there are strong collocations like "*trenchant criticism*" and "*rancid butter.*" Such collocations are not unique because they can be used for other things that can be trenchant or rancid. Thirdly, weak collocations. Here, Hill (2000) illustrated that there are many adjectives like long, short, large, bad, etc.; they could be made combinations with many nouns such as *red car*, *blue shirt*…etc. However, despite these combinations being easy for the majority of students, they should be aware of their predictable collocations because Hill (2000, p. 64) illuminates that "we need recognise that easy words have many uses; they are part of many weak collocations, but may also be component of many fixed or semi-fixed expressions ". The last type is medium-strength collocations, for instance, "*hold a conversation.*"

According to Hill (2000), the most intriguing type, as reported by students, is medium strength collocation. because of encompassing thousands of word combinations that constitute a significant portion of our speech and writing. This is crucial for enhancing learners' mental lexicons.

1.4.3 Free vs Restricted Collocations.

Wang & Shaw (2008, p.204) define free collocation "as open collocations or free word combinations that consist of items used in their literal senses and freely substitutable". For example, *open the gate, a nice car*. Additionally, "The meaning of a free combination is interpreted from the literal meaning of individual elements" (Farokh, 2012, p.58). Moreover, he specified that free combinations are considered the least tightly linked of all word groupings. Farokh (2012, p.58) states that the individual words within free combinations have the most flexibility to be connected with other lexical items.

Furthermore, Wang & Shaw (2008, p.204) define Restricted collocations as "(fixed combinations or collocations) usually have one item used in a non-literal sense, often a specialized,

or figurative sense, and the other used in its normal meaning such as "*run a company*", "*bitterly contested*". This type of collocation, according to Howarth (1998), may allow for limited substitution in either of its components. As in *make/reach a decision* and *take on an obligation/duty*, or in both components as in *do/carry out research/ a project* (wang et al.,2008). Therefore, the vocabulary choice is less predictable in this category of collocations than in the previous one. Similarly, (Farokh, 2012, p. 58) elaborated "restricted collocation is more limited in the selection of compositional elements and usually has one component used in a specialized context" for example, *perform a task*.

In conclusion, the main distinction between free collocations and restricted ones is that the limitation for the former arises from the semantic characteristics of the two components involved, while the limitation for the latter is a somewhat arbitrary convention of the language. (wang et al., 2008)

1.4.4 Collocation Patterns.

The following tables represent the most common patterns according to Lewis, (2000: p.133) and McCarthy and O'Dell (2005, p. 12).

Table 3: Collocations patterns according to Lewis (2000, pp. 133-134).

Patterns	Examples
Adjective + Noun	A difficult decision
Verb + Noun	Submit a report
Noun + Noun	Radio station
Verb +Adverb	Examine thoroughly
Adverb+ Adjective	Extremely inconvenient
Verb+ Adjective noun	Revise the original plan
Noun +Verb	The fog closed in
Discourse marker	To put it another way
Multi-word prepositional phrase	A few years ago
Phrasal verb	Turn in
Adjective preposition	Aware of
Compound noun	Five escape
Binominal	Backwards and forwards
Trinomial	Hook, line and sinker
Fixed phrase	On the other hand,
Incomplete fixed phrase	A sort of…
Fixed expression	Not half!
Semi-fixed expression	See you later/tomorrow/on Monday
Part of a proverb	Too many cooks…
Part of quotation	To be or not to be

Table 4: Collocations patterns according to McCarthy and O'Dell (2005, P.12).

Patterns	Examples
Adjective + Noun	We had a **brief chat** about the exams but I did not have time to discuss them properly
Noun + Noun	As Sam read the lies about him, he **felt a surge of anger**
Noun +Adverb	The **economy boomed** in the 1990
Verb + Expression + Preposition	When she spilt juice on her new skirt the little girl **burst into tears**
Verb + Adverb	She **pulled steadily** on the rope and helped him to safety
Adverb + Adjective	They are **happily married**

The five parts of speech: noun, adjective, adverb, verb, preposition can be collocated. It is important to note that Lewis's (2000) patterns and McCarthy & O'Dell's (2005) are similar. Both include patterns like adjective + noun, noun + noun, verb + adverb, noun + verb, and adverb + adjective. However, Lewis's table shows the pattern verb + adjective + noun, while McCarthy & O'Dell's table has verb + preposition + noun. Additionally, McCarthy & O'Dell's table lacks the pattern verb + noun, which is present in Lewis's table. Therefore, a new classification can be inferred from the two tables. Learners should understand that words have their own collocational field, with distinguishable types as outlined by McCarthy & O'Dell (2005) and Lewis (2000).

Table 5 :Collocations Patterns of McCarthy, O'Dell (2005) and Lewis (2000)

patterns	Examples
Verb + Noun	Launch a product/accept Responsibility
Adjective + Noun	Bright colour/square meal /major Issue
Verb + adjective + noun	Take vigorous exercise/make steady Progress
Adverb + verb	Strongly suggest/barely see
Adverb + adjective	Utterly amazed/ completely useless
Adverb + adjective + noun	Totally unacceptable behavior
Adjective + preposition	Guilty of blame for / happy about
Noun + noun (also known as a compound nouns)	Pay packet/ Windows frame

1.5 The Importance of Collocation

Hill (2000, p.53) stated "collocation is important from a pedagogical point of view for many reasons ". Apparently, he suggested nine arguments illustrated the causes of collocation's importance including the following:

a) The lexicon is not arbitrary

According to Hill (2000), lexicalization is not arbitrary and is justified by the way of combining words in collocation which is very important in a language. However, listening and writing skills are totally different in using vocabulary choice because " language was one huge substitution table with vocabulary items merely filling slots in grammatical structures" (Hill, 2000, p.53). To further explain this idea, he explained with examples; that when we think of drinking, we expect verbs like "*have*" along with drinks like *tea* or *coffee*, rather than improbable things like

engine oil. Similarly, with a verb like "*enhance*" it can anticipate its objects being things that can plausibly be enhanced, such as *one's reputation*, rather than arbitrary substitutions. Different verbs constrain the possible objects they can take in conventional collocations. thus; despite this given systematicity in how words habitually go together based on common use, collocations can not be viewed as random or interchangeable. Furthermore, there are inherent limitations governed by predictable combinations we find across language. So, "the very definition of collocation - the way words combine - gives it a status which we cannot deny" (Hill, 2000, p.53).

b) Predictability

Based on the previous data, Collocations are usually predictable patterns based on the meanings of the words. For example, "The present simple is important in classrooms because we can predict its use to an extent which helps learners". (Hill,2000, p.53). As a result; he proposed that learners should be exposed to the predictable patterns in collocations which enable them to infer and predict new collocations.

c) The size of the phrasal mental lexicon

Hill (2000) believes that collocations are important because they make up a huge percentage of language usage and provide a substantial predictability. He states

> Collocation is important because this area of predictability is, as we have seen, enormous. Two, three, four and even five-word collocations make up a huge percentage of all naturally occurring text, spoken or written. Estimates vary, but it is possible that up to 70% of everything we say, hear, read, or write is to be found in some form of fixed expression. (Hill, 2000, p.53).

Collocations are very important due to their ability to enhance predictability in a language. Moreover, in collocation frequently finding combinations of two, three, four, or even five words occur together which form a fundamental component of linguistic interaction. Meanwhile, these

combinations emphasize a big percentage of language usage. Consequently, this acknowledgment emphasizes how collocations have a significant impact on language use and comprehension.

d) The role of memory

According to Hill (2000), the role of memory is a key argument for the importance of collocations. Hill suggests that collocations help language learners and users store and retrieve language more efficiently. When words are learned as part of common collocations, they are more easily remembered and recalled. This is because the brain tends to store and access language in chunks rather than as isolated words. By recognizing and using collocations, learners can improve their fluency and accuracy, as these word combinations are retrieved more quickly and used more naturally in speech and writing. Thus, the role of memory underscores the significance of collocations in language acquisition and proficiency.

e) Fluency

Native speakers can speak quickly because they have a large collection of common phrases they usually can use right. also, they can listen and read at the same speed as talking because they recognize groups of words together instead of each word separately. Notably, learners find this way hard because" One of the main reasons the learner finds listening or reading difficult is not because of the density of new words, but the density of unrecognized collocations"(Hill, 2000, p.54). Ultimately, the main difference between native and non-native speakers is that the former has been exposed to much more English which allows them to recognize and use common word combinations easily and produce language much faster. Therefore; using collocations allows us to think and communicate more easily.

f) Complex ideas are often expressed lexically

According to Hill (2000), complex ideas are frequently expressed using complex noun phrases made up of simple words, rather than using complex grammar. Even intermediate learners

can understand and express complicated concepts whether they are exposed to examples of how multiple simple words can be combined into longer phrases. Thus, focusing more on exposing students to good input examples, rather than just repetitive practice, helps them recognize and produce these longer lexical chunks on their own.

g) Collocation makes thinking easier

"Collocation allows us to name complex ideas quickly so that we can continue to manipulate the ideas without using all our brain space to focus on the form of words" (Hill,2000, p.55). In other words, collocation is considered an important key to fluency. Additionally, he clarified that at an advanced level, despite giving students more opportunities to practice, they do not become more fluent. Conversely, they achieve fluency by acquiring more language chunks for instant recall.

h) Pronunciation is integral

Learning longer expressions as chunks or units, not just words, improves learners' pronunciation skills like stress and intonation when producing language.

> Because learners create much of what they say from individual words, their pronunciation, stress, and intonation, can be difficult for the listener. The great added bonus to knowing a large number of collocations and other longer expressions is that if learners learn the stress pattern of a phrase as a whole, their stress and intonation will be better. (Hill,2000, p.55).

I) Recognizing chunks is essential for acquisition

Hill (2000) pointed out that for students to internalize natural language patterns, teachers should read texts aloud in which they can hear the correct chunking and phrasing. Moreover, Unseen reading aloud should be avoided, as students may chunk words incorrectly if they read each word individually without recognizing multi-word units. Additionally, he explained his idea that input

needs to be correctly stored to be available for retrieval and use. So, students cannot learn from input that they mis-chunked during the reading process.

It seems evidence that recognizing chunks or phrasing is key to acquisition because it determines how well language patterns are internalized and stored for future use through correct processing and chunking of input during reading. (Hill,2000, p.55).

1.6 Collocation and Other Word Combinations

There are other word combinations that EFL learners struggle to distinguish due to their close similarity. These include idioms, phrasal verbs, and colligation.

a) Collocation, Idioms, and Phrasal Verbs

Mastering collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs can significantly enhance a student's proficiency in a foreign language, especially in writing. Hill (2000, p. 50) said, " In one sense all collocation is idiomatic and all idioms and phrasal verbs are collocations is idiomatic and all idioms and phrasal verbs are collocation predictable combinations of different kinds ". That means these word combinations are interrelated. to promote this idea, hill explained each point individually.

Firstly, it is important to take a brief definition of collocation. Michal and O'Dell (2006, p. 03) define collocations as " a pair of words are often used together". Secondly, Hill (2000, p.50) defines idioms as " an expression which is relatively fixed and allows little or no change. It is often metaphorical". He illustrated with examples such as " *he put the cat among the pigeons*". However, Hill clarified that not all idioms are pictorial due to the metaphorical use of some words. While wang and Shaw (2008, P.205) define idioms are fixed phrases whose meanings cannot be easily understood from the literal meanings of their words, like "*sweeten the pill*" and "*kick the bucket*. For

example, *holding your horse* means waiting and calming down. thirdly, " phrasal verbs contain a verb plus one or more particles " (Hill, 2000, p. 51). For instance, *make up a story, put the light out.*

From all these definitions, it is clear that idioms and phrasal verbs have been defined as words that go together as collocation. Therefore; "all collocations are idiomatic and all phrasal verbs and idioms are collocations or contain collocations "(Hill, 2000, p. 51).

b) Collocation and Colligation

Collocation and colligation are related linguistic concepts, but the two are distinguishable. It is important to mention that the term collocation was first introduced by the linguist Firth in 1968. Lewis (2000, p.132) defines collocation as "how words co-occur in natural text in statistically significant ways". He clarified his view that Collocation refers to the natural way in which words co-occur like in Brazil brilliantly called "used language".

According to Martynska (2004, p.04), colligation defines the grammatical company and interaction of words as well as their preferred position in a sentence. Similarly, Lewis (2000, p.137) stated "colligation is the way one word regularly co-occurs with a particular (grammar)pattern". For example, some verbs typically occur with a pronoun, a noun might typically appear preceded by a personal pronoun rather than an article for instance, "*pass my/your driving test" or "it's my / your / our responsibility to… ", but I will take responsibility for…*" (Lewis, 2000, p.137). Besides, there is another difference between the two terms "collocation" and "colligation" that has been pointed out so that one should not think that they are the same. Colligation are more general than collocation; "some descriptive linguists use the term colligation not for word +pattern but for the more general pattern + pattern" (Lewis, 2000, p137). He illustrated with an example, "verb of motion" + "directly particle" which covers all combinations such as *run away, rich out; hurry down*, etc. Additionally he states that " Colligation generalizes beyond the level of individual collocation" . For example, a *bunch of grapes/bananas/flowers* are three separate collocations, but the last one can be generalized

to a bunch of (flowers). To further illustrate, we commit crimes has changed, so the collocation of committing suicide has become an exception to the colligation commits a crime.

1.7 Approaches to Studying Collocation

Previous studies have investigated different aspects of the phenomenon of collocation. These studies can be classified in terms of three main approaches to collocation research: the lexical approach, the semantic approach, and the structural approach.

a. The Lexical Composition Approach

Durga and Rao (2018) regards the lexical composition approach as "lexical analysis as independent from grammar and considers lexis an autonomous entity, choosing its collocations which can be enumerated and classified in lexical sets"(p.4). In other words, lexical analysis in linguistics views lexis, or vocabulary, as an independent aspect of language that is separate from grammar. It considers lexis to be an autonomous entity that chooses its collocations and associations relatively freely, not restricted by rules of grammar. however, lexical analysis focuses on enumerating and classifying words into lexical sets based on their semantic meaning and typical collocations. Some examples, *spick* and *span*, *rancid butter*, *fast food*, and *black coffee*. Here, the relationships between words are identified based on their typical usage together, not syntactic rules.

b. The Semantic Approach

The semantic approach aims to identify semantic features from the meaning of lexical units to predict their collocations (Durga & Rao ,2018). For example, one can "*pay attention or a visit*" but not "*pay a greeting or welcome*", and in the same way "*die*" and "*pass away*" have the same meaning. "*Pass away*" refers to human beings, but the word, die is used for all living beings- persons, animals, and plants. In this vein, Martynska (2004, p.03) pointed out "This approach goes beyond the sheer observation of collocations and tries to determine their specific shape". He clarified that supporters of this approach seek to analyze collocations from a semantic perspective, distinct from

grammar. Their primary objective is to determine why words collocate with specific ones. This question still represents a challenge for linguists today.

c. The Structural Approach

Rao (2018, p.04) cconsiders "the structural approach tries to establish patterns of collocations that include grammatical and lexical words alike". This can be presented in a group of word forms like *drinks, drinker*, and *drinking*. However, Mitchell (1971) abstracts the common elements of each word form and labels that as *root*. For example*, drink*, and the associations of different roots, for instance, "*drink*" and "*heavy*" as "*collocations*", such as "*heavy drinker*" or "*drink heavily*" (as cited in Rao, 2008, p.4). For example; *command devotion*, *give a loud laugh*, *take off*, *take away*, and *sit down*. furthermore, According to Martynska (2004), collocation is determined by the structure and occurs in patterns. Therefore, Gitsaki (1996) asserts that the examination of collocation must encompass grammar (as cited in Martynska, 2004, p.3). in other words, collocation refers to the tendency for certain words to frequently occur together in language. These word pairs or groups have a strong tendency to co-occur due to the structure and rules of a language. Collocations can occur in patterns such as adjective-noun pairs "*strong coffee*" or verb-noun pairs "*make a decision*".

2. Writing and Lexical Collocation

2.1 Skill of Writing

In general, writing is a given chance for oneself to be able to express his its own ideas in a particular subject. Similarly, Nunan (2003) defined writing as "is the way of thinking to create some ideas, express the sentences into a good writing and those ideas"(as cited in Faroha, Muslem and Fajrma, 2016, p.35). However, mastering any foreign language requires developing proficiency in the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Specifically, Harmer noted that " writing is considered as a crucial skill to be learnt especially for EFL learners"(as cited in Faroha et al., 2016,

p.35). In other words, mastering writing is an important skill for English as foreign language learners.

Another definition of writing is by Bryne (2007). He sated that writing is believed to be one of the most difficult skills to learn, as it is a productive skill in language acquisition. Gangal (2011, p.03) approved that "writing is the most difficult skill for a learner to require". Hence, this activity is a progressive process that requires several steps to be completed.

2.2 Stages of writing

According to Harmer (2004), the writing process involves four main stages: planning, drafting, editing, and final version. Firstly, the planning stage which the writer brainstorms ideas and decides on the purpose, audience, and structure of his/her writing. Secondly, the drafting stage that involves creating the initial draft of a written piece that a writer had planned before. Next is the editing stage, where the writer reviews their draft incorporates feedback and improves their writing by making revisions. Moreover, errors are identified and corrected as the draft is rewritten into a cleaner form. Finally, the writer completes the final version stage by incorporating all changes from the previous stages to polish their writing into a complete, well-organized piece. Thus, each stage that follows helps the writer progress from coming up with an initial idea to finishing a piece of writing (as cited in Faroha et al., 2016).

In university, "good writing skills are needed for all the students in order to accomplish their educational and employable requirements (Durga & Rao,2018, p.2). Moreover, not only will help them complete the final project in the form of writing thesis, but they are also expected to further develop their ideas through writing that can be read and utilized by the community. Concluding, Durga and Rao (2018) listed some of the reasons showing the importance of writing skills:

• To write technical documents, research papers, and put forth the right facts and information.

• In searching and obtaining a job.

• To make presentations and reports, etc.

• For improving communication skills.

• For improving creativity, exploration, and essential for self understanding.

2.3 Academic Writing

Academic writing is not simply choice, it is not merely another mode of expression. Similarly, Singh and Lukkarila (2017, p.04) assert " academic writing is more than just another way to write. Building upon this understanding, academic writing serves as the primary tool through which scholars share their research, communicate with others in their field, and add to what learners know as Burke (2010) pointed out " academic writing is what academics do most, through publishing, communicating, and contributing to their knowledge" (as cited in Yuvayapan & Bilginer,2020, p.596).Hence, it serves as a means to establish credibility within the academic community, it represents specialized knowledge within a discipline and facilitates interaction with readers (Yuvayapan& Bilginer,2020) .In this respect, "academic writing practices of various kinds are central to the enterprise of higher education. It is largely through these writing practices that universities achieve their central objectives, and the success of institutions and individualises measured against them" (Tusting et al.,2019, p.1). In other words, academic writing is essential in higher education as it plays a crucial role in achieving the goals of universities.

The success of both institutions and individuals is often determined by their ability to effectively engage in academic writing practices. However, according to Chauhan (2022), academic writing relies on clear, focused, and formal language in Standard English. It also adopts a technical, objective, impersonal style, conveying information succinctly, logically, and with careful

organization. Consequently, scholars have shown that many aspects are necessary in academic writing including chunks and prefabricated units, which are of great importance to students' written production and the use of lexical collocations makes their writing effective and articulate.

2.4 Lexical Collocation in Academic Writing

As mentioned before, writing is one of basic skills needed by learners. Particularly, writing effectively in second language or foreign language presents a formidable challenge to achieve their proficiency in this skill. For example, L2 writers need huge vocabulary to express one's self or to share their own ideas. In other hand, vocabulary choice is very important due to the different semantic of these words in each context. Specifically, the significance of using and mastering language such as words or lexical collocation, is essential for enhancing writing proficiency.

Measuring writing progress usually involves choosing vocabulary because the quality of vocabulary and writing are developing together. Similarly, Laufer (1994, p.21) explained that "writing progress can be measured through lexical progress since lexical quality and writing quality are interconnected". He pointed out that good writing is not just dependent on vocabulary; there are other factors that play a role as well. However, "rich vocabulary is likely to have a positive effect on the reader." (pp. 21-22). Therefore, when improving vocabulary, writing gets enhanced in any language. For academic writing, learners need rich vocabulary and familiarity with academic language to enhance their writing skills. However, Leki and Carson (1994) found that" second language learners see lack of vocabulary as the major factor affecting the quality of their writing". In other words, the insufficient vocabulary knowledge in any language impacts negatively the quality of students's writing and it is considered problematic as some researchers affirmed. Nation (2000, p.227) stated that "clearly vocabulary plays a significant role in the assessment of the quality written work." Additionally, he confirmed " in Laufer's studies show that university students generally show progress in this area by an increase in the amount of academic vocabulary in their

academic writing. "(p.227). Besides, introducing EFL learners how to properly combine academic words or simply collocations help them to be accurate in academic writing.

The relationship between lexical collocation and academic writing is significant. However, it has been discussed in various aspects by many scholars such as (Wei & Lei, 2011). They stated that "collocation is a must for scholarly writing, and a non-native writer with insufficient collocation knowledge will have difficulties and some infelicities regarding their academic positions while composing a scientific writing."(as cited in Demir,2012, p.300). Besides, lack knowledge of collocations can lead to inappropriate word combinations which can hinder clarity and coherence in writing, in which McArthur (1992) stated that using collocations incorrectly is a clear indication of being non-native in academic writing. As a result, writers looking to improve their writing skills need to have a good understanding of collocations (Sung, 2003). Otherwise, they may make collocation mistakes that could negatively impact the quality of their writing (Sung, 2003). Clearly, Granger and Bestrewn (1998) found that less experienced student writers often rely too much on common collocations in their writing, while more experienced student writers tend to use less common, but strongly connected (as cited in Arifin and Abdi,2020, p.276).

Briefly, the key role of collocations in academic writing is summarized in achieving nativelike fluency, clarity, and conciseness of written ideas.

2.5 Students 'Lexical Collocation Problems

Many of learners find difficulties in using collocations correctly to produce the target language's skills accurately, especially writing skills. Similarly, Kan noted that Collocations are important since they make the spoken and written language stimulating and interesting (as cited in Brashi, 2009, p.24). In which means, learning collocations is not as easy for EFL/ESL learners as it

is for native English learners However, this is due to collocations' characteristics including word combinations and the degree of substitution ability.

Firstly, EFL learners struggle to use lexical collocations correctly and associate words that fit together properly. Thus, they fail to choose the appropriate collocated word and they do not know which words can be combined. Accordingly, Halliday and Hasan (1976) pointed out that collocation is "the most problematic part of lexical cohesion" (as cited in Brashi, 2009, p.24). So, it may be considered as evidence that the issue does not only depend on just EFL learners, even native speakers struggle to collocate specific words in more formal written contexts, depending on their education and writing experience. In this respect, learning words in isolation may be a problem for EFL learners. Hence, Fierce et al. (1984) highlighted the significance of acquiring new words through typical collocations. Besides, it is preferably to learn new words with their common collocation as well. Faerch et al., (1984, p. 95) noted "having a word in one's vocabulary entails understanding its most prevalent collocations."

Secondly, linguists' views have been varied in term of substitution collocation ability. In this sense, a collocation is mainly a lexical relationship between words. Benson (1986, as cited in Brashi,2009,p.23), viewed that "This lexical relationship is said to be subject more to arbitrariness arising from common usage than from rules", this illustrated that collocations are word combinations that are commonly used together in a language, even though there may not be a clear reason why they go together such as "*make a decision*" or "*take a shower*," where these words have become associated with each other through frequent use rather than any strict grammatical rule. In contrast, Hill (2000, p. 53) assumed "collocation is not arbitrary". This explained that collocations can not be viewed as random or interchangeable.

Furthermore, it is important to note that collocations are arbitrary and have varying degrees of restrictions which cause problems for learners. Besides, they cannot assume patterns are

generalizable or not. specifically, Nesselhauf (2003, p.224) clarifies "word combinations are not in fact clearly delimitable and any attempt to do so involves both theoretical and practical problems". In other hand, some scholars distinguished collocation from other types and namely "arbitrary restriction on substitutability", this clarifies this criterion implies that collocations are distinguished by restrictions on the substitutability of elements, where the limitation is either due to semantic properties or is somewhat arbitrary. To further this idea, Nesselhauf (2003) gave an example, in the combination of "read a newspaper". The reason that substitutions resulting in combinations such as "*drink a newspaper*" or "*read water*" do not make sense in English because they require specific semantic properties to be grammatically correct. For example, the verb "drink" typically requires a noun with the semantic property of liquid (such as water or juice) to make sense. Similarly, the verb "read" typically requires a noun with the semantic property of containing written language (such as a book or newspaper). Therefore, combinations like "drink a newspaper" or "read water" do not fit these semantic properties and are unlikely to be used in English.

In conclusion, many learners struggle with using collocations correctly, especially in writing. This is due to the specific combinations and limited substitutability of words in collocations. Besides, EFL learners often fail to choose appropriate word pairings, a challenge also faced by native speakers in formal contexts. in which, learning words in isolation worsens this issue, underscoring the need to learn vocabulary through common collocations. Moreover, the arbitrary nature of collocations, based on usage rather than rules, further complicates their mastery. Thus, understanding and effectively using collocations are essential for language proficiency.

2.6 Causes of Lexical Collocation Errors among Algerian EFL Learners

There are various strategies that EFL learners depend on when learning collocations in general and lexical collocations in particular in order to produce them accurately. The main types of learning strategies.

a) Interference of L1

L1 interference refers to the use of the first language knowledge when speaking and writing in L2 production. Bian (2013, p.200) stated that "The influence of native language on foreign language learning has aroused widespread attention of the researchers." The influence of one's mother tongue leads to difficulties in effectively using collocations in English writing. In this sense, the reason behind the collocational errors in writing among EFL students can be attributed to the interference of their native language which leads them to make mistakes in how they use collocations in English. Also, Ünver (2018) claimed in his 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. Because most of learners rely on their first language to produce the target language information. Besides, Nesselhauf (2003) found that EFL learners who lack proficiency in collocations in the target language, tend to directly translate phrases from their native language into English. Therefore, this is incorrect because Arabic and English are unrelated language

b) Interference of French as a Second Language

French, which is a legacy of French colonialism in Algeria, heavily influences the speech of Arabic-speaking students. As a result, code switching/mixing is common in Algerian society, where speakers interchangeably use Standard Arabic, French, and low Arabic (Darja), which may be substituted by Tamazight, Torguiya, Mzabiya, or Chaouiya in certain regions. The interference of French in English production is assured, given their shared Latin roots. However, French transfer can be positive when words have similar meanings in both languages, such as "*presentation*," "*introduction*," "*conclusion*," "*innovation*," etc. Conversely, it can be negative with false friends, like "*actually/actuellement*," "*to assist/assister*," etc. Therefore, teachers must educate learners about false friends to prevent mixing English words with those that have different meanings in French.

Algerian learners of English face a two-dimensional challenge: transfer from both Arabic and French, compounded by the influence of informal Arabic or Darja, including its sub-types: Tamazight, Torguiya, and Chaouiya. In such a multilingual society, completely avoiding negative transfer is difficult.

c) Learning Strategy Types

There are several factors that may influence EFL learners' performance in using correct collocations while writing, and the following factors are the common ones.

Synonymy Strategy

when EFL learners are not aware enough in using the correct collocations; this strategy will be used as substitute; in which it is an act of replacing a term with its equivalent synonym. In this context, Phoocharoensil (2011) reported that some EFL learners, within the process of learning lexical collocation, apparently may try substituting a synonym for a word in L2 because they are unaware of constituting a collocational violation. In this respect, Nation (2001) confirmed that there are very limited number of synonyms in English which can occur in the same grammatical pattern. In other terms, words that are very similar in meaning do not always have the same grammatical collocation. (as cited in Phoocharoensil, 2011, p.106). Therefore, synonyms are not perfect to be used interchangeably.

Repetition and Overgeneralization

There are other two strategies used by learners relied who have limited L2 collocation capacity. EFL learners use synonymy strategy due to their fear of producing L2 wrong collocation. Therefore, to avoid this risk, learners tend to repeat the limited number of familiar collocations (as cited in Phoocharoensil, 2010, p. 107). On other hand, overgeneralization is a common strategy used by EFL learners, which could be one of the reasons for the deviation of collocations that could create one deviant structure in place of two regular structures. Once the writer learns a set of rules, he

overuses one form of and underused the other. For example, the learner writes "*I will make the decision tomorrow*", instead of "*I will take/ make the decision tomorrow*". Here, the learner overuses the collocation "*make a decision*" and underuses "*take a decision*", even when "*take*" would be more appropriate in the given context. This is because after learning "*make a decision*", the learner incorrectly generalizes that only "*make*" can be used with "*decision*", and without realizing "*take*" is also a valid option according to the rules of the language.

d) Lack of Collocational Awareness

Another crucial aspect impacting the misuse of lexical collocations by EFL learners is the restricted or absent collocational proficiency. Various studies by linguists such in Lewis (2000) has demonstrated that numerous EFL learners struggle significantly with collocational understanding. For example, Eidian et.al (2014) carried out an experimental study where they examined the effect of lexical collocation awareness on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill the statistical analysis shows that an experimental group outperformed the central group in the post-test implying that raising collocations awareness improves students' writing proficiency.

Thus, teaching collocations is essential for improving students' ability to use correct word combinations in writing. This skill is vital for enhancing language proficiency, especially in writing tasks.

Conclusion

Collocations are crucial to enhance language. However, this study has examined the notion of collocation, characterized by habitual word pairings that enhance fluency and comprehension with specify focus on the six types of collocations including grammatical and lexical collocation in addition of the importance of collocations. Recognizing and studying collocations significantly improves language proficiency and natural usage. Additionally, academic writing is vital for scholarly communication and success in higher education. Mastery of collocations enhances writing

quality, while deficiencies can lead to errors. Challenges include L1 and L2 interference, synonymy, overgeneralization, and lack of collocational awareness. Targeted teaching strategies can improve EFL learners' writing skills and their ability to use accurate and effective word combinations.

Chapter Two:

Research

Methodology

Introduction

While the first chapter of the study is devoted to the theoretical part, the second chapter deals with the practical phase of the present research work. The researcher describes the research methodology that includes research design, sample of the study, content analysis, data collection procedures. Finally, it includes with data analysis procedures.

1. Research Design

This present research work investigates the students' effective use of lexical collocation in essay writing. To investigate this topic, the researcher adopts a qualitative approach, involving one data gathering tool.

Scholars have suggested different definitions for qualitative research. For example, Stephe et al., (2011, p.1) defined qualitative research "as contrastive with quantitative studies, places more emphasis on the study of phenomena from the perspective". Besides, Hignett and McDermott (2015) state "Qualitative research is concerned with the understanding of meaning." (p.1). Conversely, quantitative research focuses on numerical data and statistical analysis to quantify phenomena and establish patterns or relationships between variables. In otherterms, qualitative research is a suitable way to study things in the natural context. It lets the researchers get very involved in a particular field. With this method, researchers preferably use content analysis to gather information from texts. Content analysis is a useful tool for finding out what texts are about. So, it's a good method for answering many research questions. According to White and Marsh (2006), "Content analysis is a flexible research method that can be applied to many problems in information studies, either as a method by itself or in conjunction with other methods."(p.22).

Concluding, content analysis is a versatile research method that can be used to address a wide range of issues within information studies. It can be employed as a standalone method or

combined with other research methods to enhance the depth and breadth of analysis. Besides, this flexibility allows researchers to adapt content analysis to various research contexts and objectives, making it a valuable tool for examining different types of data and research questions.

2. Sample of The Study

The population chosen for this present research consists of Master 1 English students at Mohammad Kheider University of Biskra; since the researcher can not deal with the whole population (n =168); a sample of 30 test papers were gathered to be analysed, seeking some degree of representativeness. The sample was selected randomly. This selection assumed that Master One student, in particular, are more familiar with the process of writing, especially writing essays compared to other levels and they can include collocations more often in their writing. Moreover, Master 1 students had been exposed to collocations as part of their instruction in the course of language mastery in which they are supposed to have some familiarity with collocations' types and issues.

3. Content Analysis

Content analysis is the primary instrument for collecting data for the current study. In this respect, content analysis can be either qualitative or quantitative, depending on the aim of the researcher. In this sense, Neuendorf (2002) Offered the following definition that content analysis is an in-depth analysis using quantitative or qualitative techniques of messages using a scientific method (including attention to objectivity, intersubjectivity, a prior design, reliability, validity generalizability replicability and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the message are created or presented (as cited in Marla & Nell,2020, p.28). Throughout this research, researchers adopted a qualitative content analysis to assess the meaning of given patterns, words, or perceptions in a certain obtained data. In terms of definitions, White and Marsh (2006, p. 34) defined "Qualitative content analysis follows from a humanistic, not a positivistic, tradition. It is inductive.". In other words, qualitative content analysis

is based on the subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals. As the researcher delves into the data and examines it to identify concepts and patterns, some unexpected patterns and concepts may surface, warranting attention. Consequently, the researcher might modify their focus and research inquiries to investigate these newfound patterns. Moreover, Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 1278) defined qualitative content "as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns, whether this data that could be in verb; print, or electronic form and might be obtained from narrative responses". Similarly, qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (Weber, 1990).

Therefore, qualitative content analysis is highly effective for examining the use of lexical collocations in essay writing based on mentioned features. As it described by the previous linguists, follows an inductive, humanistic approach, allowing for flexible and emergent pattern identification. It involves the subjective interpretation of text data through systematic coding and theme identification, and it goes beyond mere word counting to classify large amounts of text into meaningful categories. Moreover, it emphasizes its scientific rigor, ensuring objectivity, reliability, and validity. Thus, these features make qualitative content analysis an invaluable tool for this study.

4. Data Collection Procedures

The recent study is based on qualitative data collection and it is used to examine students' use of lexical collocation in essay writing. Therefore, researchers used tests' papers of papers of Academic Writing module; 30 copies have been randomly chosen to investigate the use of lexical collocation in the natural production of Master one students.

5. Data Analysis Procedures

As it is mentioned previously, the analysts used content analysis to collect data which is obtained from this tool and are analyzed qualitatively. Content analysis is concerned with the collection of Test papers from different groups of Master one students in order to find out the frequency of the use of lexical collocation and to figure out if they use them correctly or not. After that, the correctness of lexical collocation will be checked using some Online Dictionaries: OZDIC and Oxford Learners' Dictionaries then, the collocations found will be classified according to their type, use/misuse and the correct form is to be suggested using frequencies in tables.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined the research methodology adopted in this study to investigate the students' use/ awareness of lexical collocation in essay writing. A qualitative research paradigm was deemed most appropriate to achieve the aim of this study. Specifically, a qualitative content analysis was utilized as the main research instrument to collect and analyze data. However, by adopting this research methodology, the researcher was able to gain an in-depth understanding of how collocations are employed in academic writing. Thus, the use of content analysis as the primary data collection and analysis tool also ensured the study followed a systematic, rigorous process to transition from the textual data to answers for the research problem and this provides a solid methodological to effectively present the findings, analyse them and discuss their implications in the upcoming chapter.

Chapter Three:

Results Analysis

& Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the findings obtained from the data analysis in this study. This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the collected data, focusing on addressing the research questions and objectives by presenting the results. This chapter aims to provide a full study of Investigate of the effective use of collocations among EFL students' essay writing at Master one linguistics learners at Mohammed keheider

Biskra and raise the students' writing by learning collocations to develop their collocational competence.

1. Analysis of the Data of Content Analysis

In order to investigate the topic at hand, 30 exam papers written by Master one students of English during the academic year 2023/2024 at Mohammad Kheider University were gathered randomly and analyzed. The main aim of content analysis is to identify the frequency of lexical collocation use and examine the correct and incorrect ones in students' written production. The analysis of exam papers will be presented in form of tables.

1.1 Analysis of types of lexical collocations in students' essays (See Appendix C)

In this regard, the data reveals that students are able to use lexical collocations in their writing essays. However, the most frequently used type was *adjective + noun*, while *adverb + verb* type was less frequent. For each type, the analysis discusses the correct and incorrect use in students' essays, the common combinations, and the overused patterns. The data shows that students were competent in using lexical collocations in their essays. However, the combination of adjective-noun was more frequently utilized compared to the *adverb + adjective* patterns.

✦ Verb + Noun Lexical Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

    The analysis reveals that students frequently use *verb + noun* collocations correctly, such as "*achieve goals*" and "*improve skills*." However, incorrect uses are also common such as "*make success*" instead of "*achieve success*".

- **Common Combinations**

    Examples of commonly used combinations include "*achieve objectives*", "*take notes*," and "*face challenges*".

- **Overused Patterns**

    Students tend to overuse verbs like "*achieve*", "*prepare*", and "*fill*" paired with nouns like "*objectives*", "*exams*," and "*gap*", leading to repetitive expressions.

✦ Adjective + Noun Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

    Many *adjective + noun* collocations are used correctly, such as "*various resources*" and "*new hobbies*". Incorrect uses include "*bad memorization*" in place of "*poor memorization*", highlighting the need for more precise language.

- **Common Combinations**

    Examples of frequently used combinations include "*important skills*", and "*new materials*".

- **Overused Patterns**

Adjectives like "*important*", "*good*", and "*effective*" are often overused, resulting in less varied descriptions.

⬩ Noun + Verb Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

Students correctly use *noun + verb* collocations like "*students learn*" and "*teachers help*".

Incorrect combinations include expressions "*student will get*" rather than "*student will achieve*", indicating need of clarity.

- **Common Combinations**

Examples of commonly observed combinations include "*students learn*", "*taking notes help*", and "*strategies help*".

- **Overused Patterns**

Nouns like "*students*", "*teachers*", and "*strategies*" are frequently paired with verbs like "*learn*", "*use*", and "*help*", showing a reliance on familiar collocations.

⬩ Noun + Noun Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

Most of learners were using accurately this type such as "*academic performance* " and "*critical thinking*", while incorrect uses like "*study tips* " are noted instead of "*study skills* ".

- **Common Combinations**

Examples of frequently combinations include "*learning strategies*," "*academic success*" and "*key terms*"

- **Overused Patterns**

Nouns like "*learning*", "*critical* "and " *academic*" are often overused in *noun + noun* collocations, indicating a narrow range of vocabulary.

⬥ Adverb + Adjective collocations:

EFL learners failed in producing combinations according following this pattern. Also, most students overused "*very*" and some incorrect adverbs usage, leading to make erroneous expressions in using this kind of lexical collocation. For example, " *very useful*" instead of " *highly useful*".

⬥ Adverb + Verb/Verb + Adverb Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

Learners succeed to some extent in using this type including "*easily remember*", and "*affec*t *positively*," while incorrect uses such as "*fastly improve*" are observed instead of "*rabidly improve*".

- **Common Combinations**

Examples of frequently combinations are "*easily understand*" and "*improve academically*"

- **Overused Patterns**

Adverbs like "*easily*", and "*definitely*" are often overused, indicating a lack of diverse adverb choices.

⬥ Noun of Noun 2 Collocations:

- **Correct and Incorrect Use**

  Most of students were aware in using thoroughly correct combinations like "*period of time*" and "*point of view*" are common, whereas incorrect uses such as "*point of familiarities*" it is unclear and does not convey a meaning, need improvement such "*point of familiarity*" or "*area of familiarity*" depends on the context.

- **Common Combinations**

  Examples of commonly observed combinations include "*amount of time*", " *point of view*" and *"way of thinking*".

- **Overused Patterns**

  Nouns like "*period*", "*point*", and "*part* " are frequently used in noun of noun 2 collocations, leading to repetitive patterns.

  Each type of lexical collocation presents unique challenges and patterns in students' writing. By identifying correct and incorrect uses, common combinations, and overuse patterns, educators can better understand students' strengths and weaknesses.

Table 6: Some examples of the students' production of correct and incorrect lexical collocations including suggestions for incorrect types.

Types of Lexical Collocation		Correct type	Incorrect type	Suggestions for incorrect type
Verb + Noun	Make lessons		✓	Prepare lessons
	Avoid feelings		✓	Manage feelings
	Improve study	✓		
Adjective + Noun	Good method		✓	Effective method
	Short time		✓	Limited time
	Crucial role	✓		
Verb + Adverb	Very effective		✓	Highly effective
	Really effective		✓	Highly effective
	Clearly difficult		✓	Obviously difficult
Verb + Adverb OR Adverb + Verb)	Improve academically	✓		
	Understand easily	✓		
	Fastly improve		✓	Rabidly improve
Noun of Noun 2	Way of thinking	✓		
	Point of familiarities		✓	Point of familiarity
	Point of view	✓		

The table above highlights some examples of students of correct and incorrect types of lexical collocation, including some suggestions for incorrect types.

1.2 Frequency of Lexical Collocations Use in Students' Writings

Table 7: Frequency of Lexical Collocations Use in Students' Writings (30 Test papers)

Types of lexical collocations	Frequency of use	Correctness	
		Correct types	Incorrect types
Adjective + Noun	132	89	43
Verb + noun	74	50	24
Noun + Verb	61	57	4
Noun + Noun	45	37	8
Noun of noun 2	21	19	2
Adverb + verb/verb + adverb	16	15	1
Adverb+ Adjective	6	0	6
Total	355	267	88

The table above representing the analysis of lexical collocations in the analysis of lexical collocations in students' essays reveals significant insights into their usage and accuracy. With a total of 355 occurrences, students demonstrate extensive use of various collocation types but only 267 occurrences are correct, indicating potential for enhancement in which students can improve their accuracy and fluency in using lexical collocations. *Adjective + noun* combinations are particularly prevalent with 132 instances, which suggest that students frequently rely on these constructions to add descriptive detail to their writing. However, many of these instances reveal a

pattern of incorrect usage, it has a substantial error rate of 32.6%. This finding points to the problem which students are struggling with appropriate *adjective + noun* pairings. Similarly, *verb + noun* collocations used 74 times but their incorrect use shows a 32.4% error rate and, indicating a need for better understanding of *verb+ noun* pattern. In contrast, *noun + verb* and *adverb + verb/verb + adverb* collocations have high correctness rates respectively of 93.4% and 93.8%. Indeed, they are used more accurately, suggesting that students produce skillfully these types. Notably, the use of *adverb + adjective* collocations is consistently problematic, it stands out with a 100% error rate which indicates fundamental misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about how to properly use that collocation.

These findings underscore the importance of focused teaching strategies to address the common errors in *adjective + noun* and *verb + noun* collocations, as well as the significant challenges posed by *adverb + adjective* combinations. Overall, the qualitative analysis emphasizes the need for enhanced accuracy in specific types, particularly *adjective + noun*, *verb + noun*, and *adverb + adjective* to improve students' proficiency in using lexical collocations effectively.

2. Data Discussion

The second part of this chapter is mainly devoted to the interpretation and discussion of the results yielded by content analysis. The findings will be discussed in relation to the following research questions that have been posed in the introduction.

2.1 The Frequency of Lexical Collocations Use in Students' Essays

Results concerning the first question of the study is about the finding the extent to which master one students are able to produce lexical collocation as they are writing in the language. to this end, the frequency of lexical collocation occurrences in the student's corpus had been examined with reference to OZDIC and Oxford Learners' Dictionaries.

Table 7 illustrates the frequency of the use of lexical collocations written in the corpus. The table analysis shows the frequency of using lexical collocations that were detected from   learners' essays. Results revealed that master one students use lexical collocation extensively. The total frequency of 355 instances were classified across various types. Therefore, this indicates a high level of engagement with lexical collocations in their writing.

The finding aligns with the previous studies such as Duong and Nguyaen' study (2021). Their study examined the soundness of using collocations by English major juniors to enhance their academic writing with aim of proportion of students' collocation use in English as a foreign language. Also, the outcomes of the present study are consistent with Hamdi et al., (2013). They confirmed that there is a significant use of collocation in students' writing. In contrast, the outcomes contradicted with Durrant and Schmitt (2009) who observed low frequency combinations use in writing in his study. Similarly, the same conclusion was disclosed by Latah et al., their study investigated learners ' collocation use in writing.

On other hand, the outputs demonstrated the mostly common use types were   *verb + noun*, *adjective + noun*, *noun + noun* and noun+ *verb* with a frequent of   132,74,61,45 respectively, among various categories of collocations. While *noun of noun 2* (21), *adverb+ verb/verb+ adverb* (16) and *adverb +adjective* scored 6 less encountered. Similarly, these findings coordinate the results by Chang (2018) study that *adjective + noun*, *verb + noun*, *noun + noun* patterns were the commonly produced by Korean learners occupying almost three- fourth of total lexical collocation. Besides, the finding is analogous to that of Wu et al. (2010) reporting the highest frequency in verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations in L2 student essays writing. Moreover, the results of this study concur with the search of Hsu (2007) that revealed that EFL students produced high frequency of *verb + noun, adjective + noun* and a low number of *noun of noun 2*, *adverb +*

adjective, *verb + adverb*. Here are some examples of these patterns such as *achieve success*, *clear ideas*, *face problems, ultimately achieve, critical thinking*.

2.2 Types of Problematic Lexical Collocations

The second research question is about types of lexical collocations which are problematic for students, leading to the deviant use of lexical collocation so, as to specify the difficulties of Master one's use of lexical collocation in foreign language essay writing.

To investigate learners' use of lexical collocation in their writing, analyzing students' papers has shown that first pattern *adverb+ adjective*, followed by *adjective + noun* and *verb+ noun* are the most types showing incorrect use. This finding aligns with the conclusions of earlier studies such as Harta, Bay and Ali (2021). Their research identified similar collocation errors in students' argumentative essays based on the frequency of their occurrences in the writing. Moreover, it is found that the majority of students encountered 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 in the use of word combinations that go together due to the fact that collocations are arbitrarily associated with each other, and there are no fixed rules for learning them.

- **Adverb + adjective**

Despite the fact that data exhibit *adverb + adjective* collocation was less used which scored 6 (instances)out of 355 totals of lexical collocation, the outcomes indicates this pattern had a 100% error rate among EFL students **(See Appendix C),** highlighting a significant issue in their understanding and usage of these combinations. However, the common problem is that students struggle with selecting the appropriate adverb to enhance adjectives which leads to incorrect collocations. As having been noted by Benson et al., (1997) that this type of collocation, the adverb takes a role as a collocator of the base adjective for example, *deeply absorbed* the adverb *deeply* is

collocator of the adjective *absorbed*. All know that adverb serves to describe a verb which is frequently called adverb of manner. It is evident confirms the conclusion of Harta et al. (2021). In analyzing lexical collocation errors in students' writing, one of their results shows that one common error is the combination of *adverb + adjective*. similarly, Dr Mohammed (2023) reported that this pattern was one of the mistakes students make in using collocation in narrative essays writing at undergraduate level.

Here are some errors that students have done. For example, "*very useful*" instead of "*highly useful*" because learners extremely overuse of Basic Intensifiers, they get familiar using "*very*" rather than more formal alternatives such as "*highly*"; therefore, it makes more suitable sense for academic contexts. Another example indicates lack of precision such as "*clearly difficult*" instead of "*obviously difficul*t". Moreover, clearly and obviously are interchangeable but the former is less emphatic. Furthermore, most of the *adverb + adjective* lexical collocations presented in the table **(See Appendix C**) are semantically transparent where the meaning of the whole expression can be easily inferred from the meanings of its individual parts. Collocation meaning can be predicted by parsing the combination into its constituents and analyzing their meaning separately. For instance, "*highly effective*" as the suggested correction of "*very effective*". This combination represents something vital. To produce an academic essay, the adverb *very* should be replaced by *highly* to greatly strengthen the meaning of the adjective.

✦ **Adjective + noun**

Although the study reveals the majority use   type *adjective+ noun* of lexical collocations by Master's level students, learners encounter problems when it comes to putting these two items together to form meaningful collocation. Moreover, the indications suggest that the second most erroneous category identified in the analyzed sample with 43 incorrect patterns. The incorrect *adjective + noun* collocation could be further classified into three types:

Arbitrary Restrictions: students may not know that adjectives and nouns may have specific pairing conventions that are not always semantically logical. For example, a learner used *good methods* instead of *effective methods*. although *effectiv*e and *good* are both adjectives but "*effective*" is the conventional adjective for describing *methods* that work well. Also, other student used "*strong engagement*" instead of "*active engagement*" since "*active*" is the conventional adjective for "engagement".

Incorrect Adjective Choice: It refres to the situation the students opted for using the wrong adjective that do not typically collocate with the noun. Besides, this observation is in harmony with the view of Harta et al., he suggested that the wrong choice of adjectives may be due to the fact that this type of restriction is arbitrary that is not semantically motivated. Such this idea is also asserting by Martelli (2004) in her research that Italian advanced students committed errors of adjective + noun combination because the arbitrary nature of language convention. For example, the distinction between the tight condition as an error while strict condition is considered non-error; this is not the result of the semantic features of the two adjectives but from a rather arbitrary language convention Some examples of this error, in one of essay 's learner employed "*strong skills*" rather than "*developed skills* ". However, "*developed* " is more appropriate in context, while "*strong*" suggests power which is not typically used with "*skills*."

Ambiguity: For this type learners used adjectives that are too vague or broad in their essay's writing, which leads to unclear meaning to the combination. For example, the reason why the *good technique* is considered error while *effective technique* is not an error; is that "*good*" is broad and could mean many things (*pleasant, satisfactory, high quality*), whereas "*effective*" specifically means that the technique works well for its intended purpose.

✦ **Verb + Noun**

The examination of learners' papers demonstrated the misuse of type *verb + noun* of lexical collocation. Additionally, findings show 24 out of 50 errors in *verb + noun* combinations, suggesting that students struggle to understand the nuances of word combinations and face challenges when it comes to choosing which verb co-occurs with noun.

These results are consistent with other researchers' outcomes such in Harta et al., (2021), identifying this type represents the highest number of errors in lexical collocation production found in students' essays, with a rate of 32 errors. This also corresponds with Do and Le (2023) in their study of analyzing lexical collocation in essay writing by EFL learners. their research's finding rates 44% out of 100% incorrect lexical collocations types. The data provides some errors that students make in the writing. For example, one student wrote "*capture informations*". learner was relied on his first language for both "*capture*" instead of "*gather*", and "*informations*" rather than "*information*"(inappropriately overgeneralizing the plural form of nouns inappropriately), leading to errors in new or unfamiliar contexts.

This finding indicates that the learner had trouble choosing appropriate combination of *adverb + adjective, adjective+ noun* and *verb + noun*, which significantly contribute to their inappropriate use of lexical collocations in English writing. Moreover, one possible reason to explain the above-mentioned finding is that students might have learned and acquired the vocabulary of the language individually; this always happens among English language learners as asserted by Shooshtari (2013) who said "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 acquire words individually, they still struggle to combine them properly.

2.3Students' Correct and Incorrect Use of Lexical Collocations in Their Writings

After finishing the process of analyzing all the thirty copies of the students' essays, it was found that there were 267 correct and 88 incorrect lexical collocations. Looking at the results of lexical collocations use, it could be seen that the frequency of correct collocations was greater than incorrect ones. Indeed, there was a significant difference between the correct and incorrect lexical collocations. The outcomes of this inquiry have demonstrated that students' lexical errors and problems are mainly caused by three main reasons, which are stated in what follows.

- **Interference of L1**

It has been revealed that the interference of L1 is the primary reason behind students' incorrect collocation. indeed, through the observations of essay's analysis are revealed that their mother tongue influences their way of thinking in English 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 "*these strategies help us to understand the complicated books*" in which in Arabic signifies"هذه الاستراتيجيات تساعدنا في فهم الكتب الصعبة." instead of saying "*these strategies assist us in comprehending challenging books*". Another student wrote "*teacher gives the students the most important ideas in the lesson*" which signifies in Arabic "يقوم المعلم بإعطاء الطلاب أهم الأفكار في الدرس" rather than saying "*the teacher presents/ provides the students to the main ideas of the lesson.*" Also, a learner wrote "*taking notes is a good way to capture all informations*" in place of " *taking note is an efficient way to gather information*". The current results appear to be similar to the previous studies such in Abdul Ridha and ALRiyahi (2011), Phoocharoensil (2013), Shitu (2015) and Dukali (2018). Taken together, it can be said that students rely on L1 knowledge to write in the target language due to the lack of collocation knowledge.

- **Lack of collocational competence**

No wonder that inadequate mastery of collocation frequently leads students to commit erroneousness because it is probably not the main concern on English language teaching as a foreign language, especially in writing essays. As it was found in content analysis, a large number of students appeared to have limited knowledge of collocations because students are not constantly exposed to English collocation. Therefore, many learners of English Department learners make many collocation errors. for example, a student wrote "consume time" in place of "spend time" another student wrote: "*make lessons*" instead of "*prepare lessons*"; someone else wrote "*avoid feelings*" rather than "*manage feelings*". 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.

This   perspective was upheld by Lewis (2000), he argued that that EFL learners are not familiar with the concept of collocational competence; therefore, they fail to combine chunks appropriately.

Lack of collocation competence   was a major reason for 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. Similarly, Shitu's study (2015) concluded that the lack of collocation knowledge is generally manifested in the students' lack of adequate and appropriate words for self expression.

- **Overgeneralization**

Overgeneralization is yet another causal factor of lexical collocation error identified in students' essays. This occurs due to learners' faulty understanding of distinctions in the target

language which is being learned. In other words, EFL students generalize one word that can be utilized to express many different things. For example, students may prefer to use a verb give instead of allocate and a verb have instead of Possess. It represents that students may assume that such verbs are not delexically verbs which do not carry much meaning on their own; therefore, they freely overuse those verbs to collocate with some nouns. This can lead to incorrect use or awkward phrasing in their writing. Here are some examples; a learner wrote "*give time*" as alternative of "*allocate time*". Another student wrote gain points in place of earn points "*have artistic sense*" rather than "*Possess artistic sense*" .This results provides a substantial evidence for many researchers including Zughol and Abdul Fattah (2001), Duan and Qin (2012), Shitu (2015) with Al-Khresheh (2016) who had concluded that many EFL students make collocational errors due to generalizing acquired foreign language knowledge and formulating rules from previous learning experiences to apply these rules to a new language. Therefore, they tend to extend the use of certain grammatical rules, expressions, or linguistic items into different contextual uses in the target language in which it should not be applied.

In contrast, the last finding regarding the use of lexical collocation in students' writing is the frequency of correct lexical collocations (267 occurrences) outnumbers the frequency of incorrect lexical collocations (88 occurrences). It seems that students have knowledge of lexical collocations and were able to produce correct collocations with 75.21%. Furthermore, the study has presented valuable evidence indicating that learners   are capable of generating diverse and accurate lexical collocations. For example, *critical thinking, fill a gap, academic performance, point of view, poor information, students acquire.* Moreover, the learners found it easier to produce some types of lexical collocations in appropriate way with less deviant form. For example, *noun +verb* produced exclusively with the frequency of 61 and 4 deviant form. This finding supported the results of the research done by Chang (2018) that showed that Korean learners found it easier

to retain the *noun + noun* combinations as a whole chunk when encountering them in reading, perceiving that both constituents are equally important in representing the meaning. Also, as it shown in table 7 the students had the ability to use correct *verb+ adverb/adverb + verb* pattern with the frequency 16 and one deviant form. Likewise, Harta et al., they found the same conclusion, which indicates one erroneous in *verb + adverb* type of the lexical collocations. In fact, Master one students to a large extent used correct collocations but, in some cases, they did not have a leading and decisive role in creating correct collocations. This finding may be interpreted by referring to the results obtained by Highuchi (1999) which demonstrate many Japanese EFL learners dislike making errors in their production; as a result, they often stick to writing simple combinations to avoid making mistakes.

Conclusion

The present chapter dealt with data analysis in which it presented and described the results of data from qualitative content analysis. Also, it has been notably concerned with data discussion and interpretation. Researchers discovered that first-year Master's students utilized a range of lexical collocations in their writing. According to these findings, the most frequent types of errors made by students include adverb +adjective, adjective + noun, and verb + noun errors. Besides, the results showed that lexical collocation errors are mainly due to the interference of L1, lack of collocational competence, and overgeneralization. Additionally, students' performance of using lexical collocations was to a large extent acceptable, but some students performed better than others. Therefore, this fact revealed that Master 1 students do not share the same capacity though they belong to the same level.

General

Conclusion

General Conclusion

In conclusion, mastering vocabulary is essential in language acquisition, with a particular emphasis on understanding and using appropriate vocabulary in context. However, vocabulary acquisition is a critical aspect of language learning, often considered one of the most challenging language components for learners. Thus, it is crucial to focus on vocabulary awareness and the importance of incorporating multi-word phrases, such as collocations, into language use. In the present study the researcher has delved into exploring the impact of utilizing lexical collocations in essay writing for Master 1 students due to its significant role in enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

The present work comprises three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the review of the related literature; it comprises two parts. The first part discusses the notion of collocation, while the second part reviewed lexical collocation and writing. On the other hand, the second chapter describes the research methodology employed in conducting this study. Subsequently, the third chapter deals with data analysis and discussion of results. The results obtained are analyzed by means of qualitative content analysis, followed by the interpretation and discussion of the results obtained by qualitative content analysis. Finally, some recommendations were proposed and some limitations of the study were identified.

The findings suggest that Master's level students frequently utilize lexical collocations in writing, particularly adjective + noun, verb + noun, and noun + verb patterns. Also, the learners use of lexical collocations were checked through the use of OZDIC and Oxford Learners' Dictionaries. Nevertheless, instances of inappropriate collocation use were attributed to factors such as first language interference, a lack of collocational competence, and overgeneralization, resulting in errors due to difficulties in selecting and combining words that fit with each other.

Limitations of the Study

This study has encountered a number of limitations which are stated as follow:

One of the limitations that the researchers confronted during this study is that online sources and concrete books were hardly found. Additionally, there are some electronic books which are not available for free.

The researcher attempted to add another instrument to enrich the data. But, the suggestion could not be applied because students were in stuck preparing for their exams.

Delay in obtaining the sample for processing.

The findings of using small size sample may not be representative of the broader students. Also, the selected essays can unintentionally affect the overall validity and reliability of the study' findings.

The reliance on qualitative content analysis may heavily influenced by the researcher perspectives. However, the study presents valid results but it lacks the numerical data that could support more definitive conclusions or broader comparisons. The absence of quantifiable measures also limits the ability to test hypothesis statically.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been suggested

Teachers should help students recognize the importance of effectively utilizing collocations in the language use. Also, giving feedback on collocational errors is crucial because it will improve learners' collocational competence.

Activities and exercises that enhance students' understanding of collocations to ensure familiarity with nuances; therefore, the making of errors will be minimized.

Making learners notice words that go together and not only focusing on teaching words in isolation.

students should use certain collocation dictionary to check the accurate collocation and which words are generally used together.

future research should aim to have a larger and more diverse sample to have a valid representativeness of the findings.

In this study only one instrument was used. future research may get benefit from employing additional instruments such as a questionnaire or conduct interviews with professors to offer a more balanced perspective on the research questions.

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Appendices

List of Appendices

Appendix A: The seven Types of Lexical Collocation as suggested By Benson et al., (1986)

All possible lexical collocations use in the student's essays will be classified according to the seven subtypes of lexical collocation which are listed in table below**.**

Type	Patterns	Examples
L1	Verb (donating creation or activation) + Noun (pronoun or prep phrase)	Compose music, Make an impression
L2	Verb (meaning eradication or nullification) + Noun	Revoke a license, Demolish a house
L3	Adjective + Noun	Strong tea, A rough estimate
L4	Noun + Verb	Bees buzz, Bombs explode
L5	Noun1 of Noun2	A pack of dogs, A herd of buffalo
L6	adjective + adverb/ adverb + adjective	sound asleep; hopelessly addicted
L7	verb + adverb	anchor firmly; argue heatedly

Appendix B: Test Question

Students were asked to write an essay includes two bodies paragraphs with conclusion, according to this introduction.

Many students dread them, but tests are an integral part of the educational experience. To be prepared for the various exams they must endure over the years of their education, students must develop study skills that help them learn a range of new academic materials efficiently yet with

maximum comprehension. A wide of variety of study skills and can aid students as they achieve their objectives in all of their classes.

Appendix C: All lexical collocations types that used in 30 essay students

Types of lexical collocations	Correct type	Incorrect type	Suggestions for incorrect types
(Verb + Noun)			
Find the point		✓	Identify/get the point
Like techniques		✓	Apply techniques
Help students	✓		
Have artistic sense		✓	Possess artistic sense
Draw the content	✓		
Draw the characters	✓		
Make lessons		✓	Prepare lessons
Avoid feelings		✓	Manage feelings
Capture ideas		✓	Gather ideas
Capture informations		✓	Gather information
Review the main points	✓		
Achieve objectives	✓		
Develop skills	✓		
Organize thoughts	✓		
Enhance creativity	✓		
Improve study	✓		

Achieve goals	✓		
Improve skills	✓		
Avoid stress		✓	Manage stress
Understand lessons	✓		
Prepare for exams	✓		
Gain information		✓	Acquire information
Have chance		✓	Have a chance
Pass the exam	✓		
Enhance students 'skills		✓	Develop students 'skills
Give way		✓	Provide a way
Face challenges	✓		
Develop intelligence	✓		
Recall information	✓		
Take notes	✓		
Get information	✓		
Get ideas	✓		
Fill a gap	✓		
Recall thoughts	✓		
Reduce stress	✓		
Manage time	✓		
Improve critical thinking	✓		
Get grades	✓		
Use materials	✓		

Save information		✓	Retain information
Consume time		✓	Spend time
Create answers	✓		
Get benefits	✓		
Make schedule	✓		
Give time		✓	Allocate time
Gain time		✓	Save time
Acquire informations	✓		
Recall lessons	✓		
Organize ideas	✓		
Enhance level		✓	Improve level
Memorize information	✓		
Do tests	✓		
Achieve grades	✓		
Grasp information	✓		
Gain points	✓		
Take advantage	✓		
Get a good average	✓		
Get points	✓		
Get marks	✓		
Acquire information	✓		
Catch information	✓		
Make flashcards	✓		

Get enough sleep	✓		
Collect ideas	✓		
Have techniques	✓		
Achieve success	✓		
Get skills	✓		
Have a role		✓	Play a role
Have scores		✓	Earn scores
Take point		✓	Earn point
Get objectives		✓	Achieve objectives
Apply knowledge		✓	Use knowledge
Give information		✓	Provide information
Make success		✓	Achieve success
(Adjective + Noun)			
Known techniques		✓	Common techniques
Important points		✓	Main points
Easy way		✓	Simple way
Organized way	✓		
Good method		✓	Effective method
Good marks		✓	High marks
Important techniques		✓	Essential techniques
Important ideas strong	✓		
work		✓	Hard work
Strong skills		✓	Developed skills

Better performance	✓		
Effective learning	✓		
strategies	✓		
Professional career	✓		
Effective methods		✓	Useful method
Suitable time		✓	Appropriate time
Best techniques	✓		
Crucial role	✓		
High scores	✓		
Online videos		✓	Educational videos
Online sources	✓		
Effective notes strong		✓	Useful notes
engagement		✓	Active engagement
Crucial studying skill	✓		
Academic performance	✓		
Strong skills		✓	Developed skills
Good researcher		✓	Skillful researcher
Various resources	✓		
Educational videos	✓		
Simple way	✓		
Good technique		✓	Effective technique
Bad memorization		✓	Poor memorization
Wasting time	✓		

Writing skills	✓		
Academic life	✓		
Strong study		✓	Rigorous study
New materials	✓		
Positive attitude	✓		
Recorded lessons	✓		
Various techniques		✓	Different techniques
New hobbies	✓		
Academic setting	✓		
Different capacities		✓	Varied capacities
Effective interaction	✓		
Different knowledge		✓	Various area of knowledge
Effective participants		✓	Engaged participants
Academic goal	✓		
Educational objective	✓		
Many strategies		✓	Several strategies
Different digital	✓		
platforms	✓		
Academic level		✓	Educational level
Online discussions	✓		
Developed research		✓	Advanced research
Positive impact	✓		
Helpful exercises	✓		

Useful exercises	✓		
Short time		✓	Limited time
Positive results	✓		
Good average	✓		
Important effect	✓		
High points		✓	High scores
Different categories	✓		
Important information	✓		
Balanced life style	✓		
Active reading	✓		
Healthy habits		✓	Beneficial habits
Complicated books		✓	Challenging books
Online courses	✓		
Academic services	✓		
Different concepts	✓		
Well prepared	✓		
Needed informations		✓	Required information
Successful use	✓		
Artistic sense	✓		
Different ways	✓		
Small note book	✓		
Clear plans		✓	Well-structured plans
Organized life	✓		

Old knowledge		✓	Prior knowledge
Old company	✓		
Academic years	✓		
New materials	✓		
Efficient way	✓		
Important ideas	✓		
Creative way	✓		
Various ways	✓		
Sufficient study	✓		
Intelligent learners	✓		
High chance	✓		
Specific details	✓		
Poor information	✓		
Beneficial strategy	✓		
Academic improvement	✓		
Academic purposes	✓		
Academic journey	✓		
Successful path	✓		
Effective time		✓	Productive time management
management	✓		
Important skills	✓	✓	Major problem
Serious problem			
Immediate solution	✓		

Several techniques	✓		
Suitable schedule	✓		
Difficult parts	✓		
Famous technique		✓	Known technique
Effective technique	✓		
Essential ideas	✓		
Different kinds	✓		
Different colors	✓		
Proper schedule		✓	Suitable schedule
Common techniques	✓		
Fundamental techniques	✓		
Better understanding	✓		
Regular way	✓		
New things	✓		
Active reading		✓	Interactive reading
Simple way	✓		
Effective strategy	✓		
Academic performance	✓		
Great results		✓	Excellent results
Big difference	✓		
Helpful notes		✓	Useful notes, Beneficial notes
Connected ideas	✓		
Fully involved	✓		

Important skill	✓		
Simple exam		✓	Easy exam
Related ideas		✓	Linking ideas
Sufficient material	✓		
Academic skills	✓		
Clear ideas	✓		
Important information	✓		
Important skills	✓		
Huge effort		✓	Considerable effort
Active method		✓	Effective method
(Noun + Verb)			
Students learn	✓		
Student will get		✓	Study will achieve
Students will reduce	✓		
Techniques help	✓		
Processes will help	✓		
Students face	✓		
Students improve	✓		
Teachers use	✓		
Students assist	✓		
Students participate	✓		
Technique helps	✓		

Students make	✓		
Strategies help	✓		
Students act	✓		
Student explains	✓		
Students need	✓		
Students like	✓		
Students try	✓		
Flashcards help	✓		
Mind mapping involves	✓		
Students avoid	✓		
Study skills improve	✓		
Students avoid	✓		
Studies showed	✓		
Student collects	✓		
Student gathers	✓		
Student searches	✓		
Student increase	✓		
Students follow	✓		
Student finds	✓		
Student use	✓		
Taking notes enhance	✓		
Student acquires	✓		
Strategies help	✓		

Student need	✓		
Students take	✓		
Techniques aid	✓		
Teacher gives		✓	Teacher provides
Students increase	✓		
Student understands	✓		
Repetition plays	✓		
Students revise	✓		
Methods use		✓	Methods are used
Students decide	✓		
Skill lead	✓		
Plan reduces	✓		
Plan provides	✓		
Technique differs	✓		
Teacher says	✓		
Teacher takes	✓		
Students answer	✓		
Learners manage	✓		
Students start	✓		
Taking notes help	✓		
Techniques make		✓	Techniques help or create
Students prefer	✓		
Videos provide	✓		

Strategies help	✓		
Students seek	✓		
Students gain	✓		
(Noun + Noun)			
Critical thinking	✓		
Educational videos	✓		
Comprehension abilities	✓		
Learning skills	✓		
Consuming time		✓	Investing time
Academic success	✓		
Professional career	✓		
Writing points		✓	Writing prompts
Learning strategies	✓		
Study tips		✓	Study skills
Writing skill	✓		
Key terms	✓		
Collaboration learning		✓	Collaborative learning
Key words	✓		
Visual techniques	✓		
Visual content	✓		
Analyzing techniques		✓	Analytical techniques
Taking notes	✓		
Study skills	✓		

Academic objectives	✓		
Educational career	✓		
Educational path	✓		
Academic years	✓		
comprehension skills	✓		
Academic improvement	✓		
Academic purposes	✓		
Setting plans		✓	Setting up plans/ planning
Academic journey	✓		
Academic performance	✓		
Learning process	✓		
Written activity	✓		
Comprehension skill	✓		
Time ordering		✓	Time management
Self esteem	✓		
Academic life	✓		
Cognitive abilities	✓		
Academic services	✓		
Artificial intelligence	✓		
Academic setting	✓		
Academic success	✓		
Digital platform		✓	Online platform (Adjective+ Noun)
Educational level	✓		

Key concepts	✓		
Critical thinking skills	✓		
(Adverb + Adjective)			
Very beneficial		✓	Extremely beneficial
Very useful		✓	Highly useful
Very effective		✓	Highly effective
Really effective		✓	Highly effective
Clearly difficult		✓	Obviously difficult
Very organized		✓	Well organized
(Verb + Adverb OR Adverb + Verb)			
Search correctly	✓		
Improve academically	✓		
Understand easily	✓		
Solve quickly	✓		
Easily understand	✓		
Ultimately achieve	✓		
Affect positively	✓		
Definitely prefer	✓		
Learn effectively	✓		
Easily remember	✓		
Fastly improve	✓	✓	Rabidly improve

Are likely	✓		
Is normally	✓		
Were carefully	✓		
Save immediately	✓		
Is particularly	✓		
(Noun of Noun 2)			
Point of familiarity		✓	Point of similarity
Point of view	✓		
One of the four skills	✓		
Period of time	✓		
Domain of study	✓		
One of significant skills	✓		
Way of thinking	✓		
Period of exam	✓		
Case of choosing	✓		
Purpose of study	✓		
Amount of time	✓		
A Lot of techniques	✓		
Part of field	✓		
Set of study skills	✓		
Part of course	✓		
Summary of lecture	✓		
Lot of modules	✓		

Processes of learning	✓		
Part of lecture	✓		
Process of studying	✓		
Lot of time	✓		

Appendix D: Examples of Lexical Collocation Errors in Students Essays

students. However, to excel in academics, it's essential for students to improve their study skills.

Many students don't like them but to do well on test students need to learn how to study effectively that means finding ways to learn new thing quickly and understand them well.

Various study techniques can give students a power to efficiently comprehend the academics materials. So, there are a lot's of different ways to do this, and students can try various techniques to see what works for them, in each classe. Such as: Active Reading: some students like to read over their notes, make flashcards; by creating ther can help them in their comprehension.

The information later on, which will lead to having good marks.

Searching for information about the lesson is also an important teaching-give or study skill. Students need to learn how to search correctly about the information needed, while the teacher gives the students the rest important idea in the lesson, students need to have the curiosity to understand and know more about the topic giving to them, means going beyond the general knowledge they had although, a lot of students take the information from the teacher as it is with no hard work putted on it.

in all the branches

It is very important to have your own tales [?] in your study to achieve your goals and objectives that can create a high level of your capacity and knowledge and this pa... is important to be self-controlled and intelligent in the case of choosing what is useful or not and not wasting time looking for useless strategies.

Study skills are variety depending on the students themselves; the way of thinking and the degree of motivation that he or she has to achieve his or her objectives. For example, drifting is very important step for the student who afreaid or not sure of their answers so it is helpful and useful at the same time. Also, brainstorming is another good technique when the student collect and gether the ideas about such topic which need. In addition, repitition can help the student a lot to memorize the information "the student who has a bad memorization. In another hand, the activities that have a relationship with comprehension such as "answer the following questions or choose the correct answer. the Visual aids activities are very effective nowadays in order to inhance and rise the studing skills like; using pictures, data show or even drawings. All these techniques

Body paragraph 1:

Tests are a crucial aspects of the educational journey, and they can be daunting for many students. However to excell in academics, it's essential for student to improve their study skills. Many students don't like them but to do well on test students need to learn how to study effectively that means finding ways to learn new thing quickly and understand them well.

Various study techniques can give students a power to efficiently comprehend the academics materials. So, there are a lot's of different ways to do this, and students can try various techniques to see what work for them in each classe. Such as: Active Reading: some students like to read over their notes, Make flashcard by creating them can help them in their comprehension. Collaborative learning: by teaching their peers, friend And no matter how they do it, studying helps students do better in their school.

Résumé

Maîtriser les collocations améliore considérablement la compétence en écriture des apprenants de l'anglais langue étrangère (EFL) en rendant leur usage de la langue plus naturel et idiomatique. L'utilisation correcte des collocations peut élever la qualité des essais des apprenants de l'anglais langue étrangère. Les recherches ont démontré que les apprenants de l'anglais langue étrangère rencontrent une gamme de difficultés qui entravent leur capacité à écrire de manière compétente. La présente recherche vise à analyser l'utilisation des collocations lexicales dans les écrits académiques des étudiants de Master 1 à l'Université Mohammed Kheider de Biskra ; plus précisément, elle cherche à évaluer la fréquence et la précision de l'utilisation des collocations par les étudiants. Pour atteindre cet objectif, une analyse de contenu a été utilisée pour examiner les données de 30 copies de test sur les 168 copies de Master 1. Les résultats ont indiqué que les étudiants utilisent largement les collocations lexicales dans leurs écrits. De plus, il a été révélé que les étudiants ont tendance à utiliser plus fréquemment les collocations verbe + nom et adjectif + nom par rapport aux autres types. Concernant les erreurs de collocation, il a été trouvé que les collocations verbe + nom, adjectif + nom et adverbe + adjectif sont les plus problématiques. De plus, les résultats ont montré que l'interférence de la langue maternelle des étudiants, le manque de connaissance des collocations et la généralisation excessive sont les principales raisons du mauvais usage des collocations par les étudiants dans leurs écrits. Par conséquent, la présente étude indique la nécessité d'un enseignement clair et méthodique de cet aspect linguistique de la compétence en anglais, tant théoriquement que pratiquement.

.Les Mots de Clés : L'anglais comme langue étrangère, Collocation Lexicale, Compétence en Écriture, Analyse de Contenu, Erreurs de Collocations.

الملخص

إتقان المتلازمات اللفظية يعزز بشكل كبير من مهارة الكتابة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية قمن خلال تحسين طبيعتها واستخدام التعابير الاصطلاحية في لغتهم. إن الاستخدام الصحيح للمتلازمات اللفظية يمكن أن يرفع من جودة مقالات متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وقد أظهرت الأبحاث أن متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية يواجهون مجموعة من الصعوبات التي تعيق قدرتهم على الكتابة بشكل ماهر. يهدف البحث الحالي إلى تحليل استخدام المتلازمات اللفظية في الكتابة الأكاديمية لطلاب السنة الأولى ماستر بجامعة محمد خيضر بسكرة؛ على وجه التحديد، يهدف إلى تقييم كل من تكرار ودقة استخدام الطلاب للمتلازمات اللفظية. لتحقيق هذا الهدف، تم استخدام تحليل المحتوى لتحليل بيانات 30 من أصل 168 نسخة اختبار لطلاب السنة الأولى ماستر. أشارت النتائج إلى أن الطلاب يستخدمون المتلازمات اللفظية بشكل واسع في كتاباتهم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، تبين أن الطلاب يميلون إلى استخدام متلازمات الفعل + الاسم والصفة + الاسم بشكل أكثر تكرارًا من الأنواع الأخرى. وفيما يتعلق بالأخطاء في استخدام المتلازمات اللفظية، وجد أن متلازمات الفعل + الاسم، الصفة + الاسم، وظرف + صفة هي الأنماط الأكثر إشكالية. علاوة على ذلك، أظهرت النتائج أن تأثير اللغة الأم للطلاب، نقص المعرفة بالمتلازمات اللفظية، والتعميم الزائد هي الأسباب الرئيسية وراء سوء استخدام الطلاب للمتلازمات اللفظية في الكتابة. وبالتالي، تشير الدراسة الحالية إلى الحاجة إلى تعليم منهجي وواضح لهذا الجانب اللغوي من مهارات اللغة الإنجليزية نظريًا وعمليًا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التجميع المعجمي، إتقان الكتابة، تحليل المحتوى، أخطاء التجميع.