

# Students' Knowledge and Production of English Lexical Collocations

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## Abstract

Vocabulary teaching and learning is one of the important aspects of language that should be given proper emphasis since without vocabulary, communication would be very difficult, as we cannot express our ideas properly. Collocation, or the habitual co-occurrence of words, is one of the components of vocabulary. Research has shown that EFL learners often face difficulties when producing native-like collocations. This research is an attempt to explore the knowledge and production of English lexical collocations of EFL students, more specifically, students of the English Language and Culture Department at Bunda Mulia University. To collect the data, the writer distributed a lexical collocation test. The test is divided into four parts. The first two parts measure the students' lexical collocation knowledge and the last two parts examine their production of lexical collocation. The test was distributed to Bunda Mulia University students in the English Language and Culture Department (BBI). The students are from the fourth and sixth semesters. The nature of this study is qualitative descriptive. The findings of this research reveal that the overall competence of the students in identifying and producing English lexical collocations is still quite low. The students still have difficulty identifying and producing collocations which are native-speaker-like. It is also found that their L1 influence the students in their identification and production of lexical collocations.

**Keywords:** *Knowledge, production, collocation*

## 1. Introduction

English language learning encompasses many aspects, such as the learning of grammar, vocabulary, and nowadays, even pragmatics. These aspects can be somewhat of a burden for foreign language learners of English. Nevertheless, all of these aspects are interrelated with one another, and to be considered a proficient speaker of English, one must have a good level of competence for all of them.

In Indonesia, the teaching of English generally focuses on grammar, at least in high school level. In English courses, English is normally taught using language functions as one of the basis to build communicative competence,

whereas in the university level, pragmatics has been integrated into English language teaching to further enrich students' overall competence. Although these are all important, vocabulary teaching is also an important component of English language teaching. This is supported by David Wilkins, who mentions that, "Without grammar, little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (as cited in Lewis, 2000). In other words, vocabulary is very important because without an adequate amount of vocabulary, we cannot communicate well as we will not be able to convey our ideas properly. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should also be given proper emphasis in English language teaching and learning.

One element of vocabulary teaching and learning is *collocation*. Basically, collocation can be defined as "combinations of words which occur naturally with greater than random frequency" (Lewis, 1997, as cited in Veronica, 2009). Collocation is essential because someone with good collocational abilities will be able to combine words proficiently. Nonetheless, EFL students, more specifically Indonesian students, often experience difficulty when combining words properly in their production of English language. As a result, they often produce language that is considered 'strange,' especially by native speaker standards. This may partly be due to the influence of the mother tongue or L1. For instance, one mistake that Indonesian students sometimes make is using the verb *drink* with the noun *medicine* because in Indonesian, people normally say "*minum obat*." Meanwhile, in English it is more common to say *take medicine* rather than *drink medicine*. By saying things like *drink medicine*, although clear in meaning, it is also evident that the choices of words a learner of English uses are different from those used by a native speaker of English, hence the non-native-like collocation. This is just one simple example of how the L1 can influence the production of L2 (English).

## **2. Statement of the Problem and Research Questions**

From the background above, it can be seen that EFL students may encounter problems when trying to make proper collocations, especially when their L1 may influence their production of collocations.

Based on the description above, the writer has become interested in the topic of collocation by EFL students, more specifically students of the English Language and Culture Department at Bunda Mulia University. The writer would like to explore the students' level of vocabulary competency in terms of their knowledge and production of English lexical collocations. Moreover, the writer would also like to see whether in their identification and production of English collocations, the students are influenced in some way by their L1 (Indonesian). Therefore, the writer formulates the following research questions:

1. What is the students' knowledge of English lexical collocations?
2. How do the students produce English lexical collocations?
3. Does the students' L1 influence their identification and production of English lexical collocations in some way?

### **3. Research Objective**

The objective of the current study is to explore the students' vocabulary competence in general, especially in making proper English lexical collocations. This research is limited to the knowledge and production of collocations consisting of verb + noun. In other words, the writer would like to investigate how well the students are able to identify proper collocations, and how well they produce them. In addition, the writer would also like to find out whether the students' L1 influence their identification and production of English lexical collocations in any way. Being able to produce good collocations is an important skill to have because if we cannot combine words properly, we would not be able to express our thoughts and ideas well. Moreover, if we combine words in ways that is not commonly done by native speakers, then we would end up producing collocations which can be considered 'inaccurate' by native speaker standards.

### **4. Literature Review**

There have been several studies concerning collocation, including some that used Indonesian students as the subject of study. One such study is the one done by Fridolini (2004), in which the collocational errors of Indonesian students are analyzed from a psycholinguistic point of view. In this study, she investigated

not the errors themselves, but the reason why these errors were made. She concluded that, among others, some of the errors were due to the transfer from L1 to L2, based on the similarities of the semantic features in the same semantic field, based on ignorance, etc. In brief, it was found that the underlying reasons for the errors could be psycholinguistically explained.

Trianggadini (2006) conducted another study, which employed Indonesian students as the respondents. She distributed tests in the form of recognition and production tests to test their ability in using collocation. She also gave out questionnaires to find out the problems the students faced. The result of her study revealed that students encountered problems when dealing with collocation, e.g. they had trouble finding the correct pair of words to create collocations and ended up producing mis-collocations. One of the reasons for this is because the lecturers did not really give explicit explanations nor practice regarding collocations.

One last research which is used as the main reference for the current one, is the study done by Veronica (2009). In her paper, she explored the knowledge and production of English lexical collocation by Indonesian teachers of English. It is discovered that even though the respondents scored well in their perception test, or in the test measuring their knowledge of collocation, they scored rather poorly in the production of collocation. This is despite the fact that 95% of them said that they were familiar with collocation. The findings showed that they had problems producing native-like collocations, especially in verbs and nouns type. Moreover, she asserts that the difficulty in producing collocations was not due to lack of collocational competence (knowledge), but it was because of the influence of their mother tongue.

Besides the previous studies mentioned above, the following are some theories related to collocation. Firstly, collocation can be defined as a group of words which have tendencies to co-occur, but whose meaning of the words can usually be derived from the meanings of their constituents (Brinton & Akimoto, 2000). Besides that, Woolard (2000) is of the opinion that collocations are “words which are statistically much more likely to appear together than random chance suggest.” Additionally, Lewis (1997, as cited in Veronica, 2009) defines collocation as “combinations of words which occur naturally with greater than

random frequency.” From these definitions, it can be concluded that collocation is the combination of words or lexical items which co-occur frequently.

In regards to collocation, Lewis (1997) asserts that:

“The real definition of a word is a combination of its referential meaning and its collocation field. It is the use of similar words in familiar expressions which helps distinguish one from the other(s).”

In other words, the complete definition of a word cannot be not solely defined from its referential meaning, but also from the way it is combined with other words. These combinations of words are often considered to be ‘fixed expressions,’ and it is from these fixed expressions that some words, especially those with similar meaning, can be differentiated from one another. For instance, the words *tell* and *say*. These two words may have a similar meaning, but they cannot be substituted with one another in all occasions. For example, you can say *could you tell me where the toilet is?* but you cannot say *could you say me where the toilet is?* This is because the expression *could you tell me* is already fixed and cannot be changed by any other words no matter how similar their meaning may be. Therefore, although the two words may have a similar meaning, the collocation field in which they can normally be found in distinguishes when each of the words can be used.

In addition to the definitions and description of collocation mentioned above, Benson, Benson, and Ilson (1997) describes two kinds of collocations, namely grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocation is defined as “...a phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause.” An example of a grammatical collocation would be *interested in Jazz* which basically means that someone is into Jazz or that they like Jazz. The expression *interested in Jazz* contains the grammatical collocation *interested in*. This is considered a grammatical collocation because it is a combination of an adjective (*interested*) and a preposition (*in*). The collocation *interested in* cannot be separated because it is considered as a single item with a specific meaning. Moreover, it cannot be changed or substituted by another preposition either, e.g. *interested on* because it is already one fixed construction. On the other hand, lexical collocations “... normally do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or

clauses. Typical lexical collocations consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs.” In other words, a lexical collocation is the combination of dominant words without additions of prepositions, infinitives, or clauses. An example of a lexical collocation is *sincere apologies*, which is made up of an adjective + noun. Here the combination of words is only made up of dominant words and does not include a preposition, infinitive, or clause. The combination *sincere apologies* is considered a fixed collocation as well because it would be inaccurate to substitute the word *sincere* with other words to make expressions such as *nice apologies* or *kind apologies*. For the current study, the focus is only on lexical collocations as it is more focused on the vocabulary aspect.

Various experts proposed different classifications of collocations. In this research, the classification of collocation is based on the adaptation of Benson, Benson, and Ilson’s (1986, as cited in Veronica, 2009) classification. The types and examples of the lexical collocations can be summarized from Table 1 below:

No.	Types of Lexical Collocation	Examples
1.	verb (creation-activation) + noun (pronoun, prepositional phrase)	reach a verdict; fly a kite
2.	verb (eradication-nullification) + noun	break a code; demolish a house
3.	adjective + noun	reckless abandon; sweeping generalization
4.	noun + verb (action characteristic of a person or a thing)	Bees buzz; Bombs explode
5.	noun + of + noun (groups / units of things)	a bouquet of flowers; an act of violence
6.	adverb + adjective	strictly accurate; deeply absorbed
7.	verb + adverb	appreciate sincerely; argue heatedly

Table 1. Types of Lexical Collocations

From the table above we can see that there are seven (7) types of lexical collocations according to Benson, Benson, and Ilson. However, for the current research, only two of them are used, i.e. type 1 and type 2. The reasoning for this is to limit the kind of collocation to be analyzed in the study, since including all

seven types would mean dealing with a very large number of corpus to analyze. Considering the various limitations from the writer's part, it is considered best to limit the scope of the research to only these two types to make the study more focused. Furthermore, based on the writer's experience teaching writing and vocabulary classes, it is found that the students often have difficulty making collocations when it is a combination of verbs and nouns. Therefore, the current study is limited to analyzing the identification and production of collocation consisting of verb + noun.

## **5. Methodology**

The objects of the study are students of the English Language and Culture Department (BBI) at Bunda Mulia University. The participants include active students from semesters 4, 6, and 8 as they have already completed all reading subjects and should have a wide array of vocabulary at their disposal by this level. Moreover, they have already studied the topic of collocation in the Semantics and Pragmatics subject, so they should be familiar with the nature of this research.

The data for this research is collected by means of a lexical collocation test. The test itself is described in detail below. The test was distributed to the students of the English Language and Culture Department at Bunda Mulia University. The respondents include active students from semesters 4, 6, and 8. In the end, a total of 62 students are used as the respondents for this study.

Prior to distributing the test, the writer explained briefly about the topic of the collocation test and gave instructions on how to complete it. The respondents were given around twenty (20) minutes to complete the test. During that time, the writer accompanied the students as they completed the test to make sure that they have done it correctly. Any questions regarding the test were clarified then.

The lexical collocation test is an adaptation of some lexical collocation practices proposed by Lewis (1997) and Hill et al. (2000), as well as Veronica's (2009) test. It consists of four parts. The first two parts examine the students' lexical collocation knowledge, whereas the last two sections observe the students' production of English lexical collocation. Three parts of the test deal with verb +

noun collocations, while one part deals with the collocation of verbs in various contexts in sentences.

The first section of the test has eight (8) nouns. For each of the nouns, there are four verbs provided. Out of the four verbs, the respondents must identify one verb which does not collocate with the corresponding noun. For the second part of the test, the respondents must fill in the blanks in the seven (7) sentences provided with either one of these four words, i.e. *speak*, *talk*, *say*, or *tell*. The context of the sentence will determine which of these four (4) words are most suitable to be used to complete the sentences. As for the third section, five nouns are provided, and the students must come up with two verbs that collocate strongly with each of the nouns. Lastly, in the final part of the test, the respondents must fill in the blanks in the ten (10) sentences given. The blanks are to be filled with a verb that strongly collocates with the underlined noun in the sentences.

The data analysis procedure for the current study consists of three main stages. The first stage involves collecting and organizing the data from the respondents after completing the lexical collocation test. The data is organized into two main groups, i.e. the knowledge group and the production group. The data for the knowledge group is taken from the first two parts of the test since they measure the students' ability to identify proper collocations with the verbs already provided for them. As for the data of the production group, it is taken from the last two parts of the test. Here, the students' ability to produce collocations are examined since the students are given the freedom to come up with any verb that they consider to collocate strongly with the nouns provided.

The second phase deals with analyzing the data or the respondents' answers by comparing them to the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English. By comparing the students' answers with these two corpuses, it can be seen whether the students have made the proper collocations or not. In this phase, the students' answers are also analyzed in regards to the influence of the L1. In other words, their answers are analyzed to see if their L1, in this case the Indonesian language, has influenced the students in identifying or producing English lexical collocations in any way.



The final stage of the data analysis involves summarizing the result of the data analysis. In this section, the three research questions are answered and elaborated in detail.

## 6. Findings and Discussion

The tables below summarize the findings of the study based on each part of the lexical collocation test.

Table 2. Result of Noun: An Advice

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
accept	6	9.68%
follow	3	4.84%
take	7	11.29%
make	46	74.19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3. Result of Noun: A Car

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
drive	0	0%
stop	9	14.52%
park	9	14.52%
turn on	44	70.96%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4. Result of Noun: The Answer

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
search	35	56.45%
find	1	1.61%
get	11	17.75%
know	15	24.19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5. Result of Noun: A Joke

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
make	5	8.06%
tell	4	6.45%
listen to	16	25.81%
play	37	59.68%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6. Result of Noun: A Report

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
do	21	33.87%
write	1	1.61%
construct	6	9.68%
issue	34	54.84%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7. Result of Noun: Success

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
get	7	11.29%
achieve	1	1.61%
guarantee	33	53.23%
determine	21	33.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 8. Result of Noun: A Dog

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
walk	27	43.55%
raise	22	35.48%
feed	2	3.23%
pet	11	17.74%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 9. Result of Noun: The Bread

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
bake	0	0%
burn	38	61.29%
cut	17	27.42%
serve	7	11.29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 10. Result of: If I may \_\_\_ so

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
speak	15	24.19%
talk	2	3.23%
say	43	69.35%
tell	2	3.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 11. Result of: Nobody to \_\_\_ to

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	7	11.29%
talk	52	83.87%
say	1	1.61%
tell	2	3.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 12. Result of: I can't \_\_\_ for anyone else

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	19	30.64%
talk	2	3.23%
say	8	12.90%
tell	33	53.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 13. Result of: You can \_\_\_ to me about it

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	10	16.13%
talk	41	66.13%
say	3	4.84%
tell	8	12.90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 14. Result of: Didn't \_\_\_ anything to anybody

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	1	1.61%
Talk	2	3.23%
Say	26	41.93%
Tell	33	53.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 15. Result of: Could you \_\_\_ me the time

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	0	0%
Talk	1	1.61%
Say	0	0%
Tell	61	98.39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 16. Result of: (Subject) \_\_\_ about (noun) all the time

Verb	Frequency	Percentage
Speak	11	17.74%
Talk	48	77.42%
Say	2	3.23%
Tell	1	1.61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 17. Result of noun: A Mistake

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
make	54	accept	2	show	1
do	27	regret	2	create	1
correct	11	Fail	2	advice	1
find	6	avoid	2	look for	1
have	4	unfollow	1	cause	1
revise	2	repeat	1	fix	1
forgive	2	apologize	1	tell	1

Table 18. Result of noun: A Message

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
send	45	give	3	report	1
write	28	leave	2	keep	1
receive	7	make	2	answer	1
type	5	Tell	2	open	1
deliver	5	text	2	compose	1
read	5	delete	1	handphone	1
get	5	Do	1	voice	1
reply	3	take	1		

Table 19. Result of noun: A Presentation

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
make	25	explain	3	perform	1
do	22	deliver	3	start	1
present	19	see	2	handle	1
speak	8	introduce	1	watch	1
give	6	finish	1	answer	1
show	5	play	1	slide	1
tell	5	construct	1	composer	1
listen to	4	hear	1	know	1
prepare	4	follow	1		
have	3	take	1		

Table 20. Result of noun: Money

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
save	19	Work	3	collect	1
get	12	transfer	2	achieve	1
make	12	Keep	2	asking	1
earn	11	Steal	2	transaction	1
give	10	borrow	2	change	1
lend	7	Loan	2	guarantee	1
spend	7	Lost	2	afford	1
have	5	Pay	2	raise	1
waste	5	search	1	Dollar	1
count	3	effort	1	Rupiah	1
buy	3	Use	1		

Table 21. Result of noun: A Discount

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
get	50	make	3	hunt	1
give	20	Cut	3	miss	1
has	8	look for	3	use	1
buy	8	count	2	look	1
shopping	4	provide	2	accept	1
take	4	ask for	1	dress	1
find	3	leak for	1	store	1
sell	3	promote	1	search	1

Table 22. Result of noun: Medicine

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
take	44	have	2
get	5	drink	2
consume	5	made	1
buy	3		

Table 23. Result of noun: Observation

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
does	14	makes	3
do	6	made	1
did	5	has	3
is doing	2	finds	2
conducts	8	found	1
is conducting	2	search	2
conduct	2	use	1
conducted	1	develop	1
make	8		

Table 24. Result of noun: Requirements

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
fulfill	25	met	1	allow	1
fill	1	pass	2	do	1
complete	5	think	1	acquire	1
have	5	get	1	realize	1
has	2	attach	1	prepare	1
follow	2	provide	1	see	1
know	4	qualify	1	accept	1
meet	2	accomplish	1		

Table 25. Result of noun: Praise

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
gets	28	received	1
got	16	give	1
get	6	gives	1
has	3	hope	2
receives	3	hears	1

Table 26. Result of noun: Baby

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
give birth	8	Deliver	4	feed	1
give a birth to	1	Bear	2	check	1
take care	9	Help	2	operated	1
take care of	1	Bring	2	take out	1
birth	1	Keep	1	vaccinate	1
care	1	Carry	1	maintain	1
born	7	Raise	1	hold	1
take	5	let go	1		
save	7	Have	1		

Table 27. Result of noun: Operation

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
do	14	Run	3	attends	1
operate	5	make	3	execute	1
engage	5	lead	7	change	1
joint	1	play	1	begin	1
join	4	examine	1	involve	1
follow	5	declare	1	control	1
start	4	attend	1	take	1

Table 28. Result of noun: Business

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
run	16	reach	1	develop	1
ran	1	build	1	operate	1
running	1	built	3	operates	1
owned	5	undergo	1	operated	1
done	8	Got	3	try	1
do	2	Get	1	organized	1
had	1	lived	1	kept	1
make	4	mind	2		
made	3	developed	1		

Table 29. Result of noun: Regulations

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
break	38	violating	1	miss	1
against	2	do not obey	2	contravene	1
do	2	disobey	2	ignore	1
violate	7	not follow	2	forget	1
violated	1	follow	1		

Table 30. Result of noun: Breath

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
take	58	do	1
inhale	2	make	1

Table 31. Result of noun: Decision

Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency	Verb	Frequency
make	24	taken	1	reached	2
made	13	choose	2	follow	1
decide	4	found	2	determine	1
take	5	Find	1	met	1
took	1	Get	4		

After reviewing the data analysis for the four parts of the lexical collocation test, this final section presents the summary of the findings and answers the three main research questions.

First of all, in terms of the students' knowledge of English lexical collocations, it is found that the students are able to identify the proper collocations of three (3) out of the eight (8) nouns in part I, and six (6) out of the

seven (7) fixed expressions in part II. From this result, it can be said that the students' knowledge of English lexical collocations is just slightly above average. The students still make many mistakes in identifying the appropriate collocations for certain nouns, especially in the first part where the verbs and the nouns are not presented in context. However, they perform better in the identification of fixed expression in part II. This shows that they are quite familiar with the fixed expressions presented in this section and are able to complete them using the correct verbs.

Secondly, to answer the question regarding the students' production of English lexical collocations, it is found that the students are able to come up with appropriate collocations for three (3) out of the five (5) nouns in part III of the test, and for only two (2) of the ten (10) nouns in part IV. In other words, the students' competence in producing proper English lexical collocation can still be considered fairly low. It would seem that the students have difficulty producing appropriate collocations for the nouns provided, especially when it is presented in context. It appears that some of the students do not fully understand the context of the sentences; hence, they produce verbs that not only do not collocate well with the noun in question, but they also produce verbs that do not fit with the context of the sentences at all. There are actually instances where the choice of words the students have produced is already the correct ones, but the number of students who come up with these correct ones are much less than the number of students who produce the incorrect collocations.

Finally, to answer the question of whether the students' L1 influence their identification and production of English lexical collocations; the answer is yes. There are cases in which the Indonesian language influences the students in both identifying and producing proper lexical collocations. An example of the L1 influence in the identification of correct collocations is in the case of the verb *play* with the noun *joke*. Since in the Indonesian language there is no expression equivalent to *play a joke*, more than 50% of the respondents identify this as the incorrect verb to collocate with the noun. However, this collocation is actually very possible and quite common in English. As for the example of the L1 influencing the production of proper English lexical collocations, we can see the



case of the noun *observation*. Many of the students come up with the verb *do* to collocate with the noun *observation* because it is influenced by the Indonesian collocation of *melakukan observasi*. Actually, the more accurate English collocation is *make an observation* and not *do an observation*.

## **7. Conclusion**

The topic of collocation has become a growing concern in the field of English language learning and teaching nowadays. More and more people are realizing the importance of being able to combine words to express ideas and thoughts clearly and properly. This study is an attempt to examine the collocational competence of the students of the English Language and Culture Department at Bunda Mulia University. The motivation to do this kind of corpus research comes from the writer's personal experience in teaching vocabulary and writing classes, where it is found that students often have problems producing proper collocations.

Based on the findings in the previous chapter regarding the identification and production of English lexical collocations, it is found that the students' overall competence is still not very good. They still have difficulty identifying and producing proper collocations. This is due to the fact that they are not fully aware of the correct collocations for several of the items presented in the lexical collocation test. Certain collocations and fixed expressions have to be treated as a fixed lexical item which sometimes cannot be explained logically since it is the most 'common' combination of words. These combinations just have to be more or less 'memorized,' and this is the kind of knowledge that the students lack in general. In addition to lack of knowledge, it is found that the students' L1 also influence the way they identify and produce collocations. Most of the time, when the students do not know the proper collocation for a word, they just try to think of the correct collocation from their mother tongue and transfer it into English with the hope that there is an English equivalence for it. However, it is found that this kind of strategy is actually not very effective and the students end up identifying and producing collocations which are not 'common' by native speaker standards.

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**Appendix**  
**Lexical Collocation Test**

**Part I**

One verb in each line **does not collocate** with the noun. Cross out the one which **does not fit**.

Example: *have, get, ~~acquire~~, miss* : AN OPPORTUNITY

- |                                       |              |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. accept, follow, take, make         | : AN ADVICE  |
| 2. drive, stop, park, turn on         | : A CAR      |
| 3. search, find, get, know            | : THE ANSWER |
| 4. make, tell, listen to, play        | : A JOKE     |
| 5. do, write, construct, issue        | : A REPORT   |
| 6. get, achieve, guarantee, determine | : SUCCESS    |
| 7. walk, raise, feed, pet             | : A DOG      |
| 8. bake, burn, cut, serve             | : THE BREAD  |

(Adapted from Lewis, 2000 and Veronica, 2009)

**Part II**

Complete the following sentences with the appropriate form of *speak, talk, say, and tell*.

Example: *Did you enjoy your trip? You must \_\_\_\_\_ us all about it.*

Answer: tell

1. If I may \_\_\_\_\_ so, that doesn't sound like a very good idea to me.
2. She gets very lonely ever since her husband died. She has nobody to \_\_\_\_\_ to, you see.
3. I can't \_\_\_\_\_ for anyone else, but I think it's a good idea.
4. If you think it would help, you know you can \_\_\_\_\_ to me about it at any time.
5. It's still a secret, you know. I hope you didn't \_\_\_\_\_ anything to anybody.
6. Could you \_\_\_\_\_ me the time, please.
7. He \_\_\_\_\_ about football all the time. It gets very boring.

(Taken from Lewis, 1997)

**Part III**

For each of the nouns below, write two verbs that strongly collocate with the nouns.

Example: A PROMISE

Answer: *make, keep*

- |          |       |                  |
|----------|-------|------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ | : A MISTAKE      |
| 2. _____ | _____ | : A MESSAGE      |
| 3. _____ | _____ | : A PRESENTATION |

4. \_\_\_\_\_ : MONEY  
 5. \_\_\_\_\_ : A DISCOUNT

(Adapted from Lewis, 1997)

#### Part IV

Fill in each blank with a verb that collocates strongly with the underlined nouns in the following sentences.

Example: *He was so depressed with his life he \_\_\_\_\_ **suicide** last night.*

Answer: committed

1. She has a terrible cold, so the doctor told her to \_\_\_\_\_ some **medicine**.
2. In her research, she \_\_\_\_\_ an **observation** of the development of a child's vocabulary through the use of songs.
3. He wasn't accepted for the position because he didn't \_\_\_\_\_ the necessary **requirements**.
4. She \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of **praise** for her brilliant performance on stage.
5. She was told that due to some complications, she has to \_\_\_\_\_ the **baby** immediately or the baby will die.
6. The general was eager to \_\_\_\_\_ the military **operation**.
7. She has \_\_\_\_\_ her **business** successfully for over 10 years.
8. You will get a penalty if you \_\_\_\_\_ the **regulations** in this company more than three times.
9. A good way to calm down is to \_\_\_\_\_ a deep **breath**.
10. After a long debate, they have finally \_\_\_\_\_ a **decision** that would benefit both parties.

(Adapted from Veronica, 2009)