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The Importance of Using Collocations, and Its Difficulties Experienced by Kurdish EFL Learners

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Abstract

The current study attempts to investigate the importance of using collocation and its performance among EFL learners, besides revealing the difficulties encountered by Kurdish EFL learners. The English department at Soran University and 10 teachers who teach in the English department participated in this study in the academic year 2019-2020. The research method used in this research is the analytical descriptive method. The researchers used two tools, a test, and two questionnaires for teachers and students. The finding of this study elucidates the importance of using collocation and revealed that Kurdish EFL learners face difficulties in using collocation, besides the fact that teachers of the English language do not pay much attention to teaching collocation as it is needed. In the light of these findings, the researchers suggest some recommendations.

Keywords: Collocation, the importance of collocation,
Difficulties, EFL learners.

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1. Introduction

In any language, words are arranged in a kind of 'natural order' which relates to one another in sentences. This is known in English as a collocation. Collocations are regarded as an important aspect of English that has received plenty of consideration in the learning and teaching of the English language. Father of collocation Firth, J.R (1957, p. 196), has improved and developed the most traditional approach and lexical collocations; he claimed that by the co-occurring words, the meaning of a word is identified, and accordingly, lexis can be separable and independent from grammar). In general, collocations refer to a familiar grouping of words that occur together in the sentence, these words carry meaning as a result of their combinations. According to Deuter et al (2002, p. vii), Collocation is "the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing". For instance; 'pretty' and 'handsome', which means attracting for having good looking each one collocates with different words; *pretty* collocates with 'girl' as in *pretty girl*, and *handsome* collocates with 'boy', as in *handsome boy*, if they substituted, then it would not sound natural. Therefore, it is necessary to use collocation by having good collocational knowledge of the language. The basic factor in the production of perfect and natural-sounding language appears when the learners' awareness emphasizes the best way of words combinations Grimm (2009, p. 164). The problem of collocation arises when students face difficulties to use words that occur together in the English language since they are familiarized to learn individual words. "Lexis and collocations provide a major difficulty in mastering foreign languages", Crystal (1992, P. 105).

According to Benson et al, (cited in Hussein 1990, pp. 123-136), collocations are more subject to the unpredictability that appears from common usage than from rules. Most researchers attribute the low level of collocational knowledge to some reasons for instance; unfamiliarity with English collocation structures, also the negative transfer from the first language.

1.1 The objectives of this study are:

1. To demonstrate the importance of using collocation in common usage among students.
2. To investigate the performance of four-year students of the English department at Soran University.
3. To reveal the obstacles which impede Soran University learners from learning and using collocation.

1.2 The current paper hypothesizes;

1. That Kurdish EFL learners have little knowledge of collocations and face difficulties in their performance while using them.
2. Most of the teachers do not pay much attention to teaching collocation as it is required.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Collocations

Different scholars have defined the term collocation, so according to Firth (1957, p.11) Collocation is “the company a word keeps”. So it refers to a combination of words linked with each

other. However Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005, p. 293) defines 'collocation' as "a combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance: '*resounding success*' and '*crying shame*' are English collocations.", similarly, Robins (2000, p.64) claims that collocation is "the habitual association of a word in a language with other particular words in sentences".

2.2 Classification of Collocations

Different kinds of collocations and certain criteria have been suggested by several linguists. (Benson, Benson and Ilson, 1990) support the view of the non-separability of lexis and grammar. They divide collocations into grammatical (G) and lexical (L) collocations.

A. Grammatical collocations: Commonly are made up of the main words (a noun, an adjective or a verb) plus a preposition or grammatical structure such as 'to-infinitive' or 'that-clause', and are labelled by eight basic types of collocations:

G1: Noun + Preposition: e.g. *blockade against, apathy towards.*

G2: Noun + to-infinitive: e.g. *he was a fool to do it. They felt a need to do it.*

G3: Noun + that-clause: e.g. *we reached an agreement that she would represent us in court. He took an oath that he would do his duty.*

G4: Preposition + Noun: e.g. *by accident, in agony.*

G5: Adjective + Preposition: e.g. *tired of, hungry for news.*

G6: Adjective + to-infinitive: e.g. *it was necessary to work. It is nice to be here.*

G7: Adjective + that-clause: e.g. *she was afraid that she would fail the examination. I needed to be here.*

G8: Consists of nineteen verb patterns in English: e.g. (Verb + to-infinitive) *they began to speak.* e.g. (Verb + bare infinitive) *we must work.*

B. Lexical collocations: unlike grammatical collocations do not contain prepositions, infinitives, or clauses, but consist of nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. There are seven types of lexical collocations:

L1: Verb (which means creation/activation) + Noun/ pronoun or prepositional phrase: e.g. *agree, make an impression, conduct research.*

L2: Verb (which means eradication/nullification) + Noun: e.g. *withdraw an offer, reject an appeal.*

L3: Adjective + Noun or (Noun used attributively + Noun): e.g. *domestic policy, heavy meal.*

L4: Noun + Verb (the verb names an action characteristic of the person or thing designated by the noun): e.g. *bomb explode, bees sting, clock ticks.*

L5: Quantifier + Noun: e.g. *a piece of advice, an article of clothing.*

L6: Adverb + Adjective: e.g. *strictly accurate, mentally disabled*.

L7: Verb + Adverb: e.g. *apologize humbly, argue heatedly*.

This study adopts grammatical and lexical collocations to investigate students' performance and difficulties in both types.

2.3 Importance of Collocation

Lately, a lot of scholars debated that the usual methods of teaching words in isolation and memorizing bilingual vocabulary lists are not as much teaching words in chunks and phrases (Nation, 2001, p. 47-54; Howarth, 1998, pp. 24-44). Therefore, Hill (2000, pp. 47-67) proposed some reasons in EFL classrooms that emphasize collocations. The first element is the predictability of choosing vocabulary and this is by listeners' expecting a range of possible word combinations when a word is uttered by a speaker. For example, the verb *drink* is supposed to be followed by a drinkable kind of liquid, e.g. *water, milk, lemonade*, etc. rather than inedible liquid, e.g. *engine oil*, or even solid. The second element is that 70% of what is written and spoken in English is collocations which consider a huge size. For that reason, teaching collocation to EFL learners deems to have an advantage widely. Besides, its role in facilitating the human thinking process that leads to fluent communication successfully. It is worth mentioning, that EFL learners are not like native English speakers to recognize multi-word units easily because, of their restricted exposure to the English language. Also, many researchers advocated that prefabricated units, including collocations, to a great extent, are significant in language fluency and language learning. Lewis (1997, p.15) supports this statement by claiming that fluency is the

result of the acquisition of an enormous store of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items including collocation, which is in turn it is the basis for the foundation of any linguistic originality and creativity. That is why it is necessary for fluency in both speaking and writing. Furthermore, it benefits advanced EFL students because merely those prefabricated units will enable learners to express complex ideas more naturally and accurately. Hill (2000, p. 55) states that "The more exposure students have to good quality input and the more awareness they develop of the lexical nature of language, the more they will recognize and eventually produce chunks themselves."

2.4 EFL Learners' Difficulties with Collocations

EFL learners' performance in producing collocations is influenced by different crucial factors, the most obvious reasons are, the following elements:

a. The Semantic Fields: one of the problems attributed to the expansion of the semantic field of a particular lexical item shows an increase of errors of the first language interference. For example, '*argued strongly*' instead of '*argued heatedly*' and '*sound of the cock*' instead of '*cry of the cock*' usually most of the EFL Provide inaccurate collocation to the target collocation, in the same way in producing a restricted collocation the more synonyms an item have, the more problems learners face. It is worth mentioning that serious problems for EFL are caused by high-frequency verbs like; go, take, and put, due to their rich polysemy and syntactic complexity. Besides their ability to form phrases with prepositions, thus these verbs produce collocational restrictions and specific attention to their collocational environments is needed.

Consequently, for sure different degrees of difficulty are made for the learners by the lexical properties Huang (2001, p. 115).

b. The Influence of Learners' Native Language: Pieces of evidence from many types of research have shown that Native language/Mother Tongue transfer is a reason for collocation errors among EFL and ESL learners Wang Y. and Shaw P. (2008, p.32). It cannot be denied that some human situations and states are alike; therefore, different languages have equivalent stable expressions that are syntactically and semantically parallel. Though each culture has its unique particularity, certain features fixed in these expressions vary from one language to another. For instance; *drink soup* instead of *eating soup*, and *heavy tea* instead of *strong tea*. As a result, specific expressions might cause a negative transfer by the learners of the first language. Therefore different tests and techniques confirmed that EFL learners' first language collocation knowledge interferes with the learning of English collocations, consequently, this leads them to make errors due to the differences in the systems of first and foreign languages Bahns (1993, p.56).

c. The Learners' Collocational Competence:

Another problem that EFL learners face is generally the lack of the correct knowledge of English collocation in comparison with native speakers, accordingly, first language learners produce a lower percentage of conservative collocations but a higher percentage of irregular combinations. Remarkably, there is a huge gap between their receptive and productive knowledge of collocations. Another aspect that is incorporated into the production of lexical competence is the EFL learners' unfamiliarity with English culture. This is obvious in the case of idioms due to their metaphorical meanings that are extremely associated with

cultural connotations and discourse stereotypes. Learners may search for common rules for collocations that do not work for all collocations. For instance, they might think that '*put off your coat*' is the opposite of '*put on your coat*'. Huang (2001, p. 116).

d. Learning Strategy Type: Using some definite learning strategy types like repetition, synonym, and overgeneralization by EFL learners have a negative outcome on their acquisition of English collocations. Farghal and Obiedat (1995, p. 315). Many studies are reported that EFL learners replace a word in the target language with a synonym in the first language thus it leads to committee errors Howarth (1998, p. 45). It is worth noting that there is no perfect synonym in the English language even though, synonym words are similar in their meaning, that is why learners with inadequate proficiency in the English language tend to use this strategy due to their lack of competence. Moreover, several studies show the identification of using overgeneralization which is another cause of collocation errors, for instance, *business is expanding* instead of *business is booming*, or *shout of the cock* instead of *the cry of the cock*, this is attributed to the restricted knowledge which is, in turn, lead the EFL learner's tendency towards using familiar collocations frequently instead of using new one Shih R (2000, p. 281).

2.5 Strategies and Techniques Suggested

Collocations should be considered in the teaching of vocabulary or language acquisition. Teachers of English must pay more attention to the importance of teaching collocation, especially when teaching vocabulary. The teaching of a new word must be taught in a given context (but not in isolation). Some pieces of evidence are provided by Lewis about the best learning vocabulary

through contexts by stating that a large number of words that have a close connection with each other are revealed through a complete text. For instance, he retains that words like *architect* and *accountant* will co-occur with collocates *employ(ed)*, *work(ed)*, *good* and *trained*. Accordingly, Lewis emphasizes that by using the text as context, more natural-sounding collocation will be learned easier, because meaning carries out more obviously Lewis (2000, pp. 228-242). Therefore, teachers should focus on the contexts that include new words, encouraging them to remember the words that co-occur together in the context; generally, words are associated with their meaning, besides that, it should be noticed that 'what a word occurs with, i. e. collocation, is just as important as any other kind of statement about its meaning' Carter and McCarthy (1988, p.33). This comment highlights the effective methods and techniques of teaching vocabulary focusing on collocation patterns Hill and Lewis (1997, p. 13) claim that, "one of the best ways to build vocabulary is to remember collocations rather than single words". To make this argument clearer Lewis (2000, p. 15) illustrates that any particular collocation may consist of only two or three words, but that it can transfer a large extent of difficult information containing elements of time, participants, place, and situations, and so on. For instance, in some common English collocations like *a car accident* and *road accident*, these ideas do not have other possible ways to be expressed Hill and Lewis (1997, p. 12). Therefore, it is very essential by using collocational linking, vocabularies are associated and organized. Four different reasons for learning vocabulary through their collocations are listed by Taylor:

Firstly, vocabulary will be learnt naturally and more easily in texts than that which is not so associated; secondly, vocabulary will be learned best while in context; thirdly, without deliberate

association, context is sometimes -inadequate; and finally, alongside with its grammatical structure, the vocabulary of any language needs to be developed Taylor (1983, p. 39). Another point is improving communicative competence is considered an important reason for learning collocations Channell (1981, pp. 115-122) assured that one of the very active ways of reinforcing learners' communicative competence is increasing learners' perception and knowledge of collocations. The vital element of communicative competence is learning collocational patterns. So, EFL learners' lack of collocational competence can cause problems for the learners, therefore this leads them to “create longer utterances because they do not know the collocations which express precisely what they want to say” Hill (2000, p. 49). Moreover, Fillmore (1979) claims that the knowledge of fixed expressions of which collocations are part is one of the crucial aspects of fluency. Furthermore, Fan (2009, p. 11) asserts that using collocations will promote greater fluency by the EFL learners, also paths the way to enable the learner's speech to be more understandable.

2.6 Previous Studies on Collocations

Many studies acknowledged the need and the importance of collocations, and they have noted learners' insufficient knowledge of collocations, besides learners' difficulties in both receptive and productive levels. Earlier empirical studies have noted that many collocation errors have been committed by EFL learners while producing language. Therefore, the researchers tended to investigate the reasons for making collocations errors by EFL learners.

Channell (1981) conducted a study on general knowledge of collocation on a group of eight EFL learners with a high level of proficiency by testing them to fill in a collocation grid. The grid included fifteen nouns on its horizontal axis and four adjectives on its vertical. The results showed that only 111 out of 272 collocations were marked as acceptable which forms 40%. Even though EFL learners are at an advanced level and understood the words' meaning, but still have a problem producing suitable collocations due to their lack of the correct knowledge of English collocation.

Malik and Abdolkarim (2017) investigated Iraqi EFL learners' knowledge of collocation as a linguistic source in the learning of the English language. The sample of the study consisted of four-year students of the English department at Sulaimaniyas' Cihan University. A test is made to interpret body collocation. The findings show a lack of semantic knowledge by Iraqi EFL learners when they come up with interpreting body-based collocations.

Another study by Almaktary, H (2017) examined English collocations in the Tunisian EFL context. It investigated four elements the first; is the English expressions familiarity with collocations, phrasal verbs, and idioms. The second; is the phraseology awareness, the third; is the usage deviation and, finally; the correlation between collocation competence and the learners' performance in spoken and written skills. Three instruments of collocation test, focus-group discussion and document analysis were used to collect data from a group of 84 EFL learners in the English department at the Higher Institute of Applied Languages and Computer Sciences in Béja. The findings indicated a positive correlation between collocational competence

and oral and written skills of the learners and also revealed that learners' insufficient ability in using collocations generally.

Uzun, K. (2020). attempted to investigate the negative collocation transfer from Turkish to English, for this purpose, a corpus of 160 literary analysis essays was written by 2nd-year students of an English language teaching department in Turkey. For the analysis of the collocation, the models of Detection, Explanation, and Evaluation were used. The results pointed out that around a quarter of the collocations used by the students in their texts were negatively transferred from Turkish.

One may understand from the above studies that EFL learners, at different levels have problems with English collocations. Hence, Soran University learners of English are by no means an exception. Therefore, insufficient studies always lead to the need of doing more continuous studies in this field, however plenty of researchers have been concerned with the investigation of collocational knowledge in the world, but very few studies have been done in Kurdistan, and these studies are restricted to a limited pattern of collocation or a specific category of sample, instrument, and university. Soran university's need of doing such a kind of research will pave the path to finding the obstacles that hinder students' collocations performance efficiently.

3. Methodology

This research is conducted as an analytical descriptive study. The research sample included the whole four year students of the English department/Faculty of Arts /Soran University which formed 51 students, 39 female and 12 male, and the student age rate was between 20 to 24 years old. The main consideration when

selecting the participants was their level of English proficiency as the last stage of their studying, and they are expected to study the English language for more than 12 years. Also, the sample included 10 teachers in the English department; all of them had (MA. Degree) in linguistics and applied linguistics, four females and 8 males, in the academic year 2019-2020. The instruments used in this study consisted of a multiple-choice item test of collocation, which involved 10 items and a questionnaire for students and, a questionnaire for teachers. Hence, one of the important measures to consider in constructing any educational research instrument is validity. Accordingly, it refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what is supposed to measure or can be used for the purposes for which it is intended (Heaton, 1988; Weir, 1993). To approve the validity of this study the researcher presented the sample of questionnaires to a group of teachers and experienced instructors for amendment and improvements. The questionnaires were made based on teachers' feedback. The teachers' questionnaire consists of 15 closed-ended questions and one open-ended question. See Appendix 1. The questionnaire is distributed among teachers randomly; the students' questionnaire consists of 10 closed-ended questions and is distributed to the whole sample of students purposively, see Appendix 2. Their responses are analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Study SPSS 5-point Likert Scale. The questionnaires are designed to investigate the second hypothesis which states; (*Most of the teachers do not pay much attention to teaching collocation as it is required.*)

Regarding test instruments, the researcher consulted several experts in the field of teaching English and after surveying many research test papers and grammar books, a test has been designed by the students' level to avoid confusion. Moreover, the test is an objective test consisting of ten items requiring filling in the blanks

with the best collocate of word or the phrase in each of 10 items. The test involved both grammatical and lexical collocations. See Appendix 3. The purpose behind testing the students was to evaluate their performance of collocation to investigate the 1st hypothesis which states; *That Kurdish EFL learners have little knowledge of collocations, and face difficulties in their performance while using them.* Hence Educational Methodology states that the final written test material must go through a pilot test before administering the final test to the whole sample. A pilot test has been done for 10 students; it lasts 50 minutes, then after a week the test has been repeated to the whole sample purposively during the academic year (2019-2020).

The statistical Package for Social Study (SPSS) method is used to analyze the data gathered by the test for English language learners and questionnaires of students and teachers.

3.1 Results and Discussion

3.1.1 The Questionnaire/Part One

Regarding the part one **first question** which is about the teachers' background information as is shown below in table 1 the whole sample which they form ten teachers who hold a Master's degree.

(Table 1) Part one: Background information about the lecturer

		Count	%
Degree Qualification	MA	10	100.0%
Year teaching	2	1	10.0%
	3	3	30.0%
	5	4	40.0%
	7	2	20.0%
Subject Teaching	most of the subjects	10	100.0%

The second question of part one is about teachers' years of teaching as English teachers. According to their responses, 70% of teachers have experience in teaching between 3-and 5 years. About the third question of the part one which is regarding the subjects teachers have been teaching throughout their career, their responses show that they are taught and covered most of the subjects taught in the university (grammar, morphology, communication skills, translation, pragmatics, syntax, English language teaching, and general English language).

Part one: The analysis of teachers' questionnaire

To analyze the findings obtained from the questionnaire a t-test was conducted to compare the statistical differences between the population mean and the hypothesized mean. As can be noticed from (Table 2) below the findings are elaborated as the following:

1. The result obtain from item 1 is non-significant that $M=3.60$, $SD=1.075$; $t(1.77)$, $P=0.111$, which is greater than >0.05 . it shows that 50% of the population sample sometimes regards the main problem as belonging to their shortage in using collocations

rule restrictions, however, 30% of the state that always lacks knowledge is regarded as the main problem in producing collocation, and 10% of the state often, and rarely. Accordingly, the results of item 1 support the 1st hypothesis which says that Kurdish EFL learners have little knowledge of collocations, and face difficulties in their performance while using them because only 10% of the teachers believe that rarely lack of knowledge in collocations' is the main problem that students face while 90 % of teachers did not believe the same. Consequently, it reveals the first obstacle which hinders students' performance to use collocations.

(Table 2)

Teachers' perspectives on English collocations, the results of (15) close-ended questions are demonstrated in the table below

	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Mean	SD	t-test	p-value
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%				
item 1	0	0.0%	1	10.0%	5	50.0%	1	10.0%	3	30.0%	3.60	1.075	1.77	0.111
item 2	0	0.0%	4	40.0%	4	40.0%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%	2.80	0.789	-0.80	0.443
item 3	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%	1	10.0%	2.50	1.354	-1.17	0.273
item 4	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	0	0.0%	2.60	1.174	-1.08	0.309
item 5	1	10.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%	3	30.0%	2	20.0%	3.20	1.398	0.45	0.662
item 6	0	0.0%	3	30.0%	6	60.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%	2.80	0.632	-1.00	0.343
item 7	0	0.0%	4	40.0%	2	20.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%	3.00	0.943	0.00	1.000
item 8	3	30.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%	3	30.0%	0	0.0%	2.40	1.265	-1.50	0.168
item 9	0	0.0%	5	50.0%	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	0	0.0%	2.80	0.919	-0.69	0.509
item 10	0	0.0%	1	10.0%	3	30.0%	6	60.0%	0	0.0%	3.50	0.707	2.24	0.052
item 11	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	30.0%	1	10.0%	6	60.0%	4.30	0.949	4.33	0.002
item 12	1	10.0%	2	20.0%	3	30.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%	3.00	1.054	0.00	1.000
item 13	1	10.0%	2	20.0%	6	60.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%	2.70	0.823	-1.15	0.279
item 14	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	70.0%	2	20.0%	1	10.0%	3.40	0.699	1.81	0.104
item 15	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	60.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%	3.40	0.516	2.45	0.037

2. Regarding teacher's perspective about devoting enough time to collocation teaching 40% of them sometimes believe that teachers devote much time to teaching students collocations, and in the same range 40% of the teachers rarely have faith in devoting much time to teaching students collocation, while 20% of them claim that they often give student enough time in teaching collocation. Which is indeed they form a low percentage in comparison with the rest of the population sample, see appendix 1. Therefore it shows some shortages in devoting enough time to teaching collocation that students can use in their daily life usage efficiently. Thus it supports the second hypothesis of this research which says (Most teachers do not pay much attention to teaching collocation as it is required).

3. Concerning the methods used by EFL teachers, the result is greater than >0.05 . The result is non-significant, which shows that 30% of the population sample sometimes indicates that they use different methods and techniques for teaching lexical collocation. However, 30% of them declare that they never use different methods and techniques in collocation teaching. Whereas 20% of them rarely use, and 10% of the state often and always use different methods and techniques in teaching collocation. It seems that teachers reply according to the implementation of the activities which are placed into practice in the classes, thus they sometimes use different methods and techniques in teaching collocation which is in turn not sufficient to teach students efficiently.

4. Teachers' notices about their students' recording for the new collections were not significant. The results were: $M= 2.60$, $SD= 1.174$; $t (-1.08)$, $P= 0.309$, which is greater than >0.05 . 30% of the population sample asserts that students often record new collocations in their notebooks; on the other hand the same range

affirms that students rarely record new collocations through lectures, though 20% of the population sample declares that never they do that, and the same range states that students sometimes do that.

5. The result obtained from item 5 indicates that 30% of the population sample declare that teachers often use collocations when they speak, or during delivering the lectures, while the same average confirms that they rarely use collocation when they speak, and 20% of the population sample claims that teachers always when they speak, they use collocation. Moreover, 10% of the state never which is impossible because, most of the words in our speech are joined together and we use them in our daily usage unconsciously, and the same range declares that sometimes they do that. The result of item 5 demonstrates that there is no statistical difference among teachers' perspectives mean, that teachers sometimes use collocation throughout delivering lectures or when speaking. This is regarded to be natural because the English language is containing lots of collocation which is taking up almost 70% of what is spoken and written in authentic English (Hill, j 2000, p 47-69).

6. The result of item 6 ($M= 2.80$, $SD= 0.632$; $t (-1.00)$, $P= 0.343$), which is greater than >0.05 . The result is non-significant, which indicates that 60% of the population sample believes that teachers sometimes teach students new words in word combinations, though 30% of them state that teachers rarely give new words in groupings, while 10% of the population sample claim that they often teach learners new words in mixtures. Accordingly, item 6 shows that there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspective mean. The reason behind that is attributed to that teachers sometimes use the technique of teaching students new

words in words combination which is regarded as the main approach to be tackled with collocation.

7. Item 7 indicates that 40% of the population sample of teachers often conducts classroom activities that focus on collocation, and the same range pointed out that teachers rarely do activities that are related to collocation. While 20% of them state that teachers sometimes conduct these activities associated with collocation. For that reason, item 7 shows that there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspectives mean. The reason behind that is attributed to that, the teacher sometimes conducts such activities related to collocation infrequently which in turn proves that collocation teaching does not receive such good attention as it is required.

8. The result of item 8 is non-significant, which shows that 30% of the population sample believe that students are aware of the importance of using and knowing collocates of certain common words. See appendix 1. The same average declares rarely they are attentive to the significance of knowing and how to combine certain words. Moreover, the same range of teachers confirms that students are never aware of it due to their inadequate knowledge about it. Furthermore, 10% of the population sample affirms that sometimes students are completely aware of the importance of using and knowing how certain common words are collocated. Consequently, the result demonstrates that there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspectives mean. Due to that, teachers consider that students sometimes totally pay attention to the importance of having information about collocation and how to join words altogether.

9. The result of item 9 is non-significant, which shows that 50% of the population sample believes that teachers rarely encourage students to learn collocations autonomously. While at the same time 30% claim that teachers often motivate learners to learn collocation independently. Though 20% state that, teachers sometimes stimulate students to acquire collocation separately. Accordingly, the result of item nine indicates that there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspectives mean. This means that teachers sometimes inspire students to pick up collocation autonomously, because they live in the fact more than others and have answered truthfully, if they encourage them or not, therefore they claimed that they sometimes encourage the student.

10. About 60% of the population sample declares that teachers are inadequate professionally in teaching collocation and 30% state that sometimes teachers are insufficient skillfully in teaching collocation, while 10% believe that teachers rarely poor proficiently in collocation teaching. As a result item, 10 is non-significant because there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspective mean. This means that teachers sometimes are inadequate in teaching collocation professionally, the reason behind that is attributed to that teachers are not trained enough by the Ministry of Higher Education in how to teach different subjects related to the English language curriculum, particularly those materials associated with collocation, with lack of having preparation of professional teachers training courses.

11. Item 11 received ($M= 4.30$, $SD= 0.949$; $t (4.33)$, $P=0.002$), which is smaller than >0.05 . The result is significant, which shows that 60% of the population sample believes that always good collocation knowledge is an important indicator of language proficiency either in writing or speaking because it shows

a high level of one's language ability, also 30% claim that sometimes is regarded as an important sign in writing or speaking language proficiency. While 10 % of the respondents assert that often proper acquaintance with collocation is an important indication of adapting skills like writing and speaking. Accordingly, the result of item 11 is significant, it shows that it agrees that a good language indicator of language proficiency depends on having respectable knowledge of collocation, therefore nearly 70% of the population sample which forms the majority of the participants have a positive attitude about that, because when someone has sufficient collocation information then he/she can understand how to use words or combining them by the best word collocate with it. Thus it denotes good language users either in writing or speaking.

12. The result of item 12 is non-significant, which shows that 40% of the population sample agrees that fluent native English speakers often use lexical collocations adequately, rather than fluent non-native speakers, thus is belonged that it is the native speakers' language and it is supposed that they are almost good users than others, and 30% of the respondent comes to their understanding that fluent native speakers produce lexical collocation effectively rather than non-native speakers. 20% of the respondent believes that rarely do native speakers adequately use lexical collocation, and 10% the state that never fluent first-language speakers come across using lexical collocation properly rather than non-native speakers, which is not reasonable, because native speakers whether they are fluent or non-fluent, they already use collocation in their language, also have a large number of pre-constructed expressions in their mental lexicon without intelligent because it is something natural-born within language. In this regards the result of item 12 is non-significant because there is no

statistical difference between teachers' perspective mean. It follows from this that teachers sometimes believe that fluent native speakers adequately use lexical collocation relatively to non-native speakers.

13. Item 13 shows that 60% of the majority population sample believes that sometimes students' perception of collocation meanings, depends on their mother tongue language interference generally. 20% of the participant claims that rarely do students depend on their first language intervention, while 10% of the respondent states that students never rely on their mother tongue language to understand the meaning of the collocation, maybe students know that first language collocation knowledge affects with English collocation, subsequently, this leads them to make mistakes due to the variances of the systems of first and foreign languages, on the other hand, the same average of the population sample shows their agreement that students often be influenced by their mother tongue in their comprehending to the meaning of the collocation, this is attributed to that often students are dependent on their first language as the only source relied on, especially in the translation task. In this respect, the result of item 13 is non-significant because the result indicates that, there is no statistical difference between teachers' perspectives mean. Accordingly, teachers believe that students sometimes apprehending the collocation meaning is subjected to the interference of their first language, which in turn leads to negative transfer and errors committed by the learners of the first language.

14. about 70% of the majority population sample affirms that sometimes students' ability to use collocation effectively seems to be a huge challenge, because of their inadequate knowledge about collocation generally, 20% of the participant agrees that students

often lack the capability of using collocation efficiently which is considered as a great obstacle that faced by students due to their shortage in knowing collocations' rule restriction. Also, 10% of the respondent states that students always encountered challenges due to their ability to use collocation effectively. Accordingly, item 14 is non-significant, thus 70% of the majority of teachers verify that sometimes the difficulty of using collocation efficiently is regarded as a huge challenge for the students. This confirms the second part of the first hypothesis which says that (*Kurdish EFL learners have little knowledge of collocations, and face difficulties in their performance while using them*). Perhaps it attributes to the students' need of learning the rule restriction about collocations.

15. Item 15 received ($M= 3.40$, $SD=0.516$; $t(2.45)$, $P=0.0037$), which is smaller than >0.05 . The result is significant, which shows that 60% of the population sample agrees that sometimes unbalanced significance of grammar and inattention to vocabulary and collocations in English foreign learners' teaching lead students to be inadequate to use sentences in communication, and 40% of the participant approves that often inadequate significance on vocabulary, grammar and collocations in the process of teaching EFL learners by teachers, make students unskilled to use sentences in communication. As a result item 15 is significant which proves the statement about having a shortage in teaching such materials that are related to collocations, grammar and vocabulary, this is because of the teachers' deficiency in their methods and techniques of teaching, in addition to carelessness about these subjects which is very important and considered as a basic foundation in learning a foreign language.

3.1.2 Part II. Regarding this part, a question directed to the sample of teachers about their best method and technique in

teaching collocation according to their experiences. The responses show that they agree with the importance of using collocation while teaching English. Also, they focus on group working by having more practice in communication skills which involve words combination. Moreover, avoiding using words in isolation, besides emphasizing that students should read different sources and record them in their notebooks to be familiar with collocations. Furthermore, another participant asserts on reading various written texts, with different drills to learn collocations.

3.2 The results of the Students' questionnaire

3.2.1 Part one: Demographic information of students

Table (3)_The Participant of the Male and Female students

Count			%
Gender	Female	39	76.5%
	Male	12	23.5%
G.Age	<= 20	2	3.9%
	21 – 22	36	70.6%
	23 – 24	13	25.5%
	25+	0	0.0%

Table three elucidates that the major population are female and they form 76.5% (39 of the participants) and 23% (12) of the participants are male. Also, it shows that most of the participants who they form 70.6% (36 of the participant) ranged in age (from 21-22) respectively.

3.2.2 Part two:

As we notice from table 4 below one-sample t-test was conducted to compare the statistical differences between the students' population mean and the hypothesized mean (3). Results of statement number one, (see appendix 2) received ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.913$; $t (5.83)$, $P=0.000$), which is lower than >0.05 . The result is significant, which shows that 41.2% of the respondents believe that students' major problems in using collocation are often related to their inadequate knowledge of joining words. However, 27.5% of the participants asserted that sometimes learners' main difficulties are associated with their poor information about collocations, while 21.6% of the population sample emphasizes that students' main problems are always linked with their insufficient knowledge about how to blend words, on the other hand, 9.8% which they form a small portion of the participants declares that rarely students' main problem related to their lack of knowledge concerning collocation. Accordingly, the result of the first item is significant which proves that students face difficulty in using collocation due to their lack of knowledge and unfamiliarity with combining words.

(Table 4)

Students' perspectives about English collocations, the results of (10) close-ended questions are demonstrated in the table below

	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Mean	SD	t-test	p-value
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%				
question1	0	0.0%	5	9.8%	14	27.5%	21	41.2%	11	21.6%	3.75	0.913	5.83	0.000
question2	1	2.0%	13	25.5%	20	39.2%	14	27.5%	3	5.9%	3.10	0.922	0.76	0.451
question3	7	13.7%	9	17.6%	11	21.6%	14	27.5%	10	19.6%	3.22	1.331	1.16	0.253
question4	5	9.8%	8	15.7%	13	25.5%	16	31.4%	9	17.6%	3.31	1.225	1.83	0.073
question5	3	5.9%	7	13.7%	19	37.3%	10	19.6%	12	23.5%	3.41	1.169	2.52	0.015
question6	4	7.8%	12	23.5%	8	15.7%	11	21.6%	16	31.4%	3.45	1.361	2.37	0.022
question7	6	11.8%	7	13.7%	12	23.5%	18	35.3%	8	15.7%	3.29	1.238	1.70	0.096
question8	6	11.8%	12	23.5%	11	21.6%	10	19.6%	12	23.5%	3.20	1.357	1.03	0.307
question9	3	5.9%	9	17.6%	16	31.4%	15	29.4%	8	15.7%	3.31	1.122	2.00	0.051
question10	7	13.7%	12	23.5%	18	35.3%	9	17.6%	5	9.8%	2.86	1.167	-0.84	0.405

As for item 2, received ($M=3.10$, $SD=0.922$; t (0.76), $P=0.451$), which is greater than >0.05 . The result is non-significant, which demonstrates that 39.2% of the population sample asserts that sometimes much time is allotted by teachers to teach students how to use collocation in their everyday communication efficiently. Also, 27.5% affirm that teachers often devote much time to teaching collocation to make students familiar with how to use it proficiently. However, 25.5% state that rarely teachers dedicate much time to teaching collocation, while 5.9% claim that always teachers give much time, whereas 2.0% declare that never teachers devote much time to teaching collocation. Subsequently, there is no statistical difference between students' perspective mean. It follows from this that students believe that sometimes teachers dedicate much time to teaching students how to use collocation in their daily usage proficiently, this is attributed to the unbalanced attention of

teachers to such important matters which are considered the main step to be professional.

Regarding item 3 see appendix 2 the result is non-significant, which shows that 27.5% of the population sample believes that often lexical collocations are taught by teachers through using different methods and techniques. 21.6% of the participants state that sometimes different methods and techniques are used by teachers when teaching lexical collocations, whereas 19.6% of the students' sample confirm that always teachers use different approaches and techniques in lexical collocations teaching. While 17.6% of students approve that rarely teachers use dissimilar methods and procedures in teaching lexical and grammatical collocations. Also, 13.7% of the learners claim that teachers never use diverse ways and techniques in teaching lexical collocation. Consequently, the result is non-significant, because there is no statistical difference among students' perspectives mean giving the impression that teachers sometimes use different methods and techniques, not all the time while teaching lexical collocation, perhaps due to that in general teachers do not teach lexical collocation seriously and it is not the focus of their attention. This is Identical to the teachers' respondents.

Concerning item 4 about 31.4% of the population sample believes that often students' strategy for learning, is memorizing new words in isolation. Whereas 25.5% state that students sometimes use the strategy of memorizing new words to learn vocabulary, though, 17.6% of the participants confirm that always students' policy for getting new words is learning vocabulary in separation, but 15.7% affirm that rarely do students plan in receiving new words is learning by heart. However, 9.8% of the respondents indicate that students never use the strategy of learning

vocabularies in isolation, which is may reflect the habit and strategy of few learners in receipt of new words. Considerably, the result of item four is non-significant, because there is no statistical difference among students' perspective mean because the p. value is greater than >0.05 , consequently, the result shows that sometimes students use the strategy of memorizing new words in isolation, this is possibly attributed to the ignorance of the techniques of learning collocations in combination, and receiving no advice by teachers in how to use types of dictionaries especially that related to English-English dictionary about collocations.

As for item 5, it is clear that ($M=3.41$, $SD=1.169$; $t(2.52)$, $P=0.015$), which is smaller than >0.05 . The result is significant, which shows that 37.3% of the student sample approves that sometimes students prefer getting new words in short phrases. Although, 23.5% state that students always like learning new vocabulary in the word combination method, also 19.6% of the respondents support the statement that students often prefer acquiring new words by using the techniques of word combination and short phrases. While, 13.7% of the participants indicate that students rarely favourite gaining new vocabulary in short phrases, and 5.9% show that students never prefer attaining new words in short phrases. Accordingly, the result of item five is significant; it shows positive agreement for the majority of the population sample about students' preference to learn new words in the combination method because they realize the importance of acquiring new words is better to be in the word combination method rather than in isolation.

Regarding item 6 the result is significant, it shows that 31.4% % of the population sample indicates that the best kinds of dictionaries used among EFL for collocation learning are English-

English dictionaries, because they believe that the best way of learning new words is in combination method. While 23.5% of the participant claims that rarely among EFL learners English-English dictionaries is used as the best type of dictionaries. Perhaps they depend on translating new words into their mother tongue language to grasp the meaning. Although, 21.6% of the respondent demonstrates that often English-English dictionaries is used among EFL for collocation learning as the best type. However, 15.7% of the students indicate that sometimes such a kind of dictionary is used amongst EFL for collocation learning and 7.8% which form a small portion of the whole sample have faith that an English-English dictionary is never used as the best type of dictionary to learn collocation. The result of this item can be counted as a positive response because the majority of the students' population sample shows their agreement that, the English-English dictionary is the best type of dictionary that is used among EFL for collocation learning. This, in turn, reflects students' awareness of the best types of dictionaries particularly for collocation learning.

Item 7 received ($M= 3.29$, $SD= 1.238$; $t (1.70)$, $P= 0.096$), which is greater than >0.05 . The result is non-significant, which shows that 35.3% of the population sample shows that good collocation knowledge is a remarkable element in language skills. Though, 23.5% of the students claim that sometimes it is important to have good information about collocation because it is regarded as the main component of language proficiency. However, 15.7% of the respondents confirm that always respectable information about collocation fundamental sign of language adeptness. While, 13.7% of the participants indicate that rarely worthy information about collocations is a basic pointer of language ability, on the other hand, 11.8% state that good collocation knowledge is never considered a significant indicator of language proficiency.

Consequently, the result shows that sometimes students believe that good collocation is considered a basic element of language proficiency, this is attributed to the that students' good collocation information makes speakers more confident and fluent in their communication, subsequently leading to be good qualified speakers.

Concerning item 8 it shows that 23.5 % of the population sample believes that students always depend on the literal meaning of their first language to understand the meaning of English collocation, the same range of participants believe that rarely students rely on their mother tongue language to realize the meaning of the target language. Also, 21.6% of the respondents claim that students sometimes depend on the literal meaning of their first language to comprehend the meaning of the English language. Moreover, 11.8% state that students never depend on the literal meaning of their mother tongue language to indicate the meaning of English collocation. The result of this item is non-significant because there is no statistical difference among students' perspectives mean, so the evidence is very strong The result shows that sometimes students depend on the literal meaning of their mother tongue because possibly according to them, there are no alternative existed sources to be used to understand the meaning of the target language words, which reveals their lack of collocations knowledge since they are influenced by mother tongue interference.

Item 9 shows that 31.4% of the majority of respondents indicate that students sometimes avoid using collocation because of their unfamiliarity with collocations' meaning and have not the capability to identify them easily. Although, 29.4% of the participant shows that students always avoid using collocation due

to their inexperience with the collocation' meaning besides of inability of spotting them easily. While 17.6% of the students' sample believe that students rarely avoid using collocation which is attributed to their lack of knowledge about the meaning of collocation and could not easily distinguish them. Whereas a small portion of the sample 5.9% indicates that students never avoid collocation due to their unfamiliarity with the collocation meaning. Consequently, the result is non-significant, because there is no statistical difference between students' perspective mean. The result shows that sometimes students' ignorance of the collocation meaning with the difficulty of recognizing them easily, makes students avoid them. Thus it affects language proficiency because it is essential to use collocation for demonstrating the language ability of the students.

Finally item 10 received ($M= 2.86$, $SD= 1.167$; $t (-0.84)$, $P= 0.405$), which is greater than >0.05 . The result is non-significant, which shows that 35.3% of the majority population sample believes that teachers sometimes encourage students to learn collocation autonomously, while 23.5% of the participant claims that rarely teachers stimulate students independently to learn collocation. However, 17.6% of the respondent indicates that teachers often inspire learners autonomously to acquire collocation. Moreover, 13.7% of the student confirms that teachers never motivate students by themselves to absorb collocation. Furthermore, 9.8% of the students state that always teachers inspire the learners to learn collocation spontaneously. Accordingly, the result gives the impression that teachers sometimes encourage students, but not every time, this is attributed to the teachers' disregard for the collocation teaching, besides of that the result of this item agrees with teachers' perspective of item nine which affirms that they sometimes encourage students autonomously. Consequently, it can

be seen that teachers are responsible for the students' lack of collocations knowledge, because of dedicating less time and effort to teaching collocation, spite using outdated methods and conducting fewer techniques and activities required for teaching collocations. Moreover, students should be blamed as a result of their negligence in recording new words and investigating collocations rules, words combination, and understanding of the meaning of the collocations, therefore these facts observed have a negative result on the students' performance.

3.3 The results of the Test

According to the results shown below the test shows students' ability to collocate in English correctly, they are asked to choose the word that best collocates with the word or phrase in each of the ten given sentences, see appendix 3. In the light of these statistics shown below in table 5, it is clear that students have problems with collocations in general, they have difficulties with both lexical collocations and grammatical collocations.

Table (5) the result of the test

	A			b			C		
	Word	Count	%	word	Count	%	Word	Count	%
Blank1	Hard	9	17.6%	heav y	34	66.7%	Strong	8	15.7%
Blank2	Heate dly	6	11.8%	hotly	10	19.6%	strongly	35	68.6%
Blank3	Of	22	43.1%	For	14	27.5%	By	15	29.4%
Blank4	Swallo w	9	17.6%	eat	33	64.7%	Drink	9	17.6%
Blank5	domes tic	17	33.3%	local	16	31.4%	Inner	18	35.3%
Blank6	Verily	10	19.6%	exac tly	24	47.1%	strictly	17	33.3%
Blank7	In	13	25.5%	At	14	27.5%	For	24	47.1%

Blank8	Shout	17	33.3%	Cry	14	27.5%	Sound	20	39.2%
Blank9	In	9	17.6%	out	18	35.3%	At	24	47.1%
Blank10	Stopp ed	18	35.3%	slept	26	51.0%	Stood	7	13.7%

1. Lexical collocation (Adjective/Noun),(heavy meal), as indicated above 34 students, 66.7% of the total have chosen the correct answer "**heavy**" which is written in bold. While the rest of the students have chosen incorrect responses 17.6% of them selected (hard) due to the semantic features, they substitute heavy to hard and 15.7% of them selected (strong) as a result of their literal transfer. The result of the first question shows a good impression of their knowledge and competence in collocation, which may be due to the that the subjects did relatively well in collocating words which are frequently used in daily life. While the rest of the blanks answer of the students prove the contrary, unfortunately.

2. Lexical collocation (Verb/Adverb), (argued heatedly) the second blanks answers denote that the percentage of the right answers to this question is lower than the incorrect ones. Only 6 students 11.8% out of 51 students have chosen the correct answer "**heatedly**" which is written in bold. 19.6% of the students selected (hotly) which is attributed to the generalization and 68.6% of them answered with (strongly) due to the substituting the word as a result of semantic features. The result of item two shows that students use different strategies according to their understanding.

3. Grammatical Collocation (adj. + prep.), (tired of) as it is shown in (table 5) 22 students answered properly with (**of**) which makes 43.1% of the whole participants, while the rest of the students half they have chosen (for) and the other parts have chosen

(by), the result shows that students are somehow having a problem with grammatical collocation, and they use the literal transfer of their first language due to their lack of knowledge concerning collocation.

4. Lexical collocation (V. + N.), (eat soup) table (5) demonstrates that 33 students (64.7%) answered correctly they chose to **eat** to collocate with soup due to their positive transfer, 9 students (17.6%) choice was (drink) as a result of substitution strategy and the same rate answer was (swallow) which their answers are wrong. The finding points out that translation strategy from the first language to the target language sometimes leads to collocations that are equivalent.

5. Lexical collocation (Adj. + N.), (domestic policy) only 17 students 33.3% responded correctly with (**domestic**), and almost near range 35.3% have chosen (inner) due to the literal transfer from mother tongue language, and 31.4% of students answered with (local) due to the substitution. It seems that the participants use improper words to collocate with a policy that shares sufficient semantic features with the intended word, this is due to overcoming their poor knowledge of the fitting collocate (Ellis, 1997, p.60).

6. Lexical collocation (Adverb + Adj.), (strictly accurate) as it is shown above 17 students 33.3% answered properly with (**strictly**), while 24 students 47.1% responded with (exactly), and 19.6% of them answered with (verily). The result of item number six demonstrates students' deviant answers are related to the strategy of the synonym that students resort to, due to the sharing semantic property to the wrong choices. Perhaps they tend to choose the most common lexical categories items when they are not acquainted with specific collocates.

7. Grammatical Collocation (Prep. + N.), (in agony) only 13 students 25.5% answered correctly "**in**", and 14 students 27.5% have responded with (at), while 24 students 47.1% of the participants responded with (for), the result is unsatisfied this is due to the student's unfamiliarity with a preposition in collocation with agony, therefore they answered according to their understanding.

8. Grammatical Collocation (N. + prep. clause), (Cry of the cock) as it is presented in table (5) only 14 of the participants 27.5% have chosen the right answer **cry**, and 17 33.3% of them have chosen (shout) due to the literal transfer, while 20 of the 39.2% answered with (sound) as result of substitution due to semantic features.

9. Grammatical Collocation (V. + prep.), (works at) it is clear that the majority of the participants 47.1% have answered with **at** which is the right option, 35.3% of the students have answered without, and 17.6% of them have responded with (in). The finding of this item shows somewhat blameless performance in this item due to the identical collocation of **work** in the Kurdish language **kar dakat la**. Thus the mother tongue transfer is not always negative, sometimes you find typical collocations in both English and Kurdish. The result is attributed to the Kurdish mother tongues' positive transfer. Luckily, where there is preciseness matching between collocations in two languages, the outcome will lead to positive and acceptable production.

10. Lexical Collocation (N. +V.), (His watch stopped) only 18 students have chosen the correct verb **stopped** which forms 35.3% of the whole participants this is due to their translation from mother-tongue Kurdish language that results in the positive transfer which is the same in the target language. While most of the

students 26 out of 51 participants 51.0% have selected an incorrect choice (slept), and the rest of the students 13.7% have selected the wrong option (stood) due to the use of substitution strategy.

The whole outcomes are unsatisfactory; the students who are majoring in English give disappointing responses. This assured that students have difficulties with collocations as a result of their low language competence. So, it validates the first hypothesis which says (*That Kurdish EFL learners have little knowledge of collocations, and face difficulties in their performance while using them*).

Different factors can be illustrated as a result of the students' collocational competence low performance like lack of Kurdish-English or English- Kurdish dictionaries of collocation that display the equivalent of source and target language collocations. Also, various cultural factors contribute to having different unexpected patterning of collocation which is regarded as the main reason that students ever face. Therefore, once the EFL learners come across communication problems, they attempt to overcome these difficulties by using different strategies. The learners almost in this study tried to rely on some strategies like a transfer (literalism), generalization, substitution, and other strategies:

Regarding *Literal transfer* it is noted that students relied on their mother tongue language (Kurdish) information, transferring an equivalent from Kurdish to English. Thus, sometimes there is a mismatch between Kurdish and English language, and the errors arise apparently. For example, (inner policy instead of domestic policy, a strong meal instead of a heavy meal, shout of the cock instead of the cry of the cock, tired by instead of tired of). Therefore, it can be indicated that the mother tongue interference

(Kurdish) plays a major role in collocation difficulties. Students give the right for themselves to collocate according to their first language, forgetting the fact that "what collocates in one language does not necessarily collocate in another" (Zughoul,1991, p.52).

Concerning *Substitution* strategy students always try to overcome the poor knowledge of the appropriate collocate, by using an improper vocabulary item or structure which contributes enough semantic features common with the required item Ellis (1997, p. 60). Thus, students' answers demonstrate their tendency to substitute one word for another one that has alike semantic characteristics with disregarding the restriction on the co-occurrence of these words. This is obvious in the students' responses for instance; argued strongly instead of argued heatedly, exactly accurate instead of strictly accurate, the sound of the cock instead of the cry of the cock, local policy instead of domestic policy, a hard meal instead of a heavy meal, his watch stood instead of his watch stopped, drink soup instead of eating soup. So, the main reason behind students' erroneous patterns is due to their dealing with collocation elements not as one unit, but individually. As a result, they trespass the natives' restrictions by replacing the elements of a specific collocation freely. Consequently, they produce wrong patterns which seem unnatural to the natives.

Regarding *the Generalization* strategy, it refers to the students' tendency to extend the meaning that does not appeal to that word. So, it is the use of words in a context to which they do not belong (Husada, 2007: 102). For instance; students use argued hotly instead of argued heatedly, and, shout the cock instead of the cry of the cock. Students' use of this strategy may attribute to their lack of knowledge about lexical collocation. Based on the students' test results shown in table (5) it can be seen that students have problems

with both grammatical and lexical collocation which attributes to their unfamiliarity with collocation in general. It is worth mentioning that positive transfer from the mother tongue has a vital role in selecting the right option as in (his watch stopped, eat soup) thus students benefit from this strategy when the positive transfer is equivalent to the target language. Thus according to these results, it cannot be ignored the reality of the students' weakness in this field, which is regarded as a serious problem impeding their language performance, therefore they almost widely depend on substitution strategy literal transferring from their mother tongue, and generalization, beside of other strategies. Hence, the overall EFL learners' performance in English collocations is disappointing; this validates the first and second hypotheses of this study.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that collocation deems as an important feature that has an effect. it reflects students' language proficiency and language competence. Since collocation is greatly restricted by the native speakers' propensity and by their culture. Therefore, teachers should consider the importance of using collocations by taking into account the cultural, grammatical, and lexical, while teaching a foreign language like English. The findings of this study indicate that Soran University EFL learners, even at an advanced level, have difficulty with both grammatical and lexical English collocations Also, Soran University teachers do not pay much attention to teaching collocation as it is required. In the light of these findings, the researchers recommend the Ministry of Higher Education, and Scientific Committees of teachers in English departments who are involved in a syllabus design program to pay attention to the collocation subject to be included in the English department curriculum for its significant role in language

proficiency. Moreover, opening training courses will support English language teachers to develop their teaching skills to be more effective and efficient. On the other hand students and teachers, themselves should be aware of collocations knowledge by devoting much time and effort to practice, do exercise, listening to the native speakers and using Collocation Dictionaries.

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Appendix 1

Instructors' questionnaire:

Name of Faculty: _____

Department: _____

Part one: Background information about the lecturer

1. What degree or qualifications do you have?

Master Degree / MA

Doctor of Philosophy Degree / PhD

2. How long have you been teaching in the English Language Department?

From one year to five years

More than five years

3. What subjects have you been teaching throughout your teaching career?

.....
.....
.....

1. never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often 5.
Always

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Students' main problem in producing collocations is their lack of knowledge in combining words.					
2.	Teachers devote much time to teaching students collocations, thus students can use them in their daily usage proficiently.					
3.	Teachers use different methods and techniques for teaching lexical and grammatical collocation.					
4.	Students record new collocations in their notebooks.					
5.	Teachers use collocations when they speak, or during delivering the lectures.					
6.	Teachers teach students new words in word combinations.					
7.	Teachers conduct classroom activities that focus on collocation					
8.	Students are fully aware of the importance of using and knowing collocates of certain common words.					
9.	Teachers encourage students to learn collocations autonomously.					
10.	Teachers are inadequate professionally in teaching collocation.					

11.	Good collocation knowledge is an important indicator of language proficiency either in writing or speaking.					
12.	Fluent native English speakers use lexical collocations adequately, rather than fluent non-native speakers.					
13.	Generally, students' perceptions of collocation meanings, depend on their mother tongue language interference.					
14.	The ability to use collocations effectively seems to be a huge challenge for most university-level students.					
15.	Unbalanced importance on grammar and neglect of vocabulary and collocation in English foreign learners' teaching lead students to be inadequate to produce sentences in communication.					

Part II. According to your experience, what is the best method and technique for teaching collocations?

.....

Appendix 2

Students' questionnaire:

Name of Faculty: _____

Part one: Background information

Gender male **Female**.....

Age.....

English Department Stage

Years of studying English

1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often 5. Always

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Students face difficulty in using collocation due to their lack of knowledge and unfamiliarity with combining words.					
2.	Much time is dedicated by the teachers to teaching the students how to use collocation in their daily usage proficiently.					
3.	Lexical and grammatical collocations are taught by teachers by using different methods and techniques.					
4.	Students' strategy for learning vocabularies is memorizing the new word in isolation.					
5.	Students prefer learning new words in the (short phrases) word combination method.					
6.	The English-English dictionary is the best type of dictionary used					

	among EFL for collocation learning.					
7.	Good collocation of information is the key indicator of language proficiency either in writing or speaking.					
8.	Students depend on the literal meaning of their mother tongue language to indicate the meaning of English collocation.					
9.	Students avoid using collocation due to their ignorance of the collocations' meaning and could not recognize them easily.					
10.	Teachers encourage students to learn collocations autonomously.					

Appendix 3

A Sample of the final Test

Age.....

Gender.....

Choose the best collocate for the (word or phrase written in bold) in each of the following items:-

1. When he is hungry, he loves to eat.....**meal**.

a. hard b. heavy

c. strong

2. They **argued**about their rights to compensation.

a. heatedly b. hotly

c. strongly

الخلاصة

اصبحت المتلازمات اللفظية احدى اهتمامات الباحثين في العقود الاخيرة نظرا لما لديه من اهمية في تدريس وتعليم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية , اذ كان من الضروري الاهتمام بالمتلازمات من اجل اكتساب الطلاب للغة بشكل عفوي وتلقائي بمرور الزمن ضمن عملية التعليم, موضحا اسباب صعوبة اداء الطلاب وكيفية القضاء عليها من خلال سنراتيجيات وتقنيات الحديثة المقترحة لدى الباحثين.

و في ضوء هذه المشكلة تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى التحقيق من ضرورة استعمال المتلازمات اللفظية وكيفية ادائها بين الطلاب, مع الكشف عن الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلاب الاكراد فى تعلم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية.تضمنت عينة البحث عن اساتذة وطلاب المرحلة الرابعة, قسم اللغة الانكليزية, كلية الاداب, جامعة سوران, وذلك من خلال اختبار الطلاب, و استبانتيين تم توزيعها على الاساتذة والطلاب, حول ضرورة المتلازمات اللفظية و الصعوبات التي يواجهها متعلمي طلاب الاكراد للغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية, جامعة سوران كنموذج.

تكشف نتائج هذه الدراسة ان الطلاب يواجهون مشاكل في تعلم واداء المتلازمات, وقد تبين انه الاساتذه لا يخصصون المزيد من الوقت الكافي لتدريس المتلازمات اللفظية, وعلى ضوء هذه النتائج حيث اقترح الباحثون ببعض من التوصيات.

بوخته

په یوهندی هاورییانه (collocation) بوته جیگه ی تی پامان و گرنگی پیدان له لایان توژیژه رانی بواړی وانه وتنه وه و فیربوونی زمانی ئینگلیزی وهک زمانی بیگانه، له بهر نه وهی په یوهندی هاورییانه (collocation) یه که له تاییه تمه ندیه سه رکیه کانی فییر بوونی زمانی بیگانه. بویه نه م تووژیینه وه تیشک ده خاته سهر گرنگی پیدانی فییربوونی نه م بابه ته بو نه وی به شیوازیکی ئاسایی وسروشتی به دی بهیتریت وهربرگیت له پرۆسه ی فییربووندا ، وهه روه ها دیار خستنی نه و ئاسته نگانیه که ده بنه ریگر له به رده م فییربوونی قوتابیاندا نه مه ش به نه هیشتنی نه م کو سپ و ته گه رانه ی ده بنه هو ی کیشه وگرفت وه به به کارهینانی تکنیکی نوی وشینوازی جوړاو جوړ له ریگه ی چهند ستراتیژی و ته کنیکیکی نوی که ده سته پشخه ری کراون له لایان توژیژه رانه وه.

نه م توژیینه وه هه ول ددهات که وا گرنگی په یوهندی هاورییانه (collection) و نه دای قوتابیان نیشان بدات، نه م لیکولینه وه یه ۱۰ ماموستاو ۵۱ قوتابی به شی ئینگلیزی کولیزی ئادابی زانکوی سوران به شدار بوونه له ریگای پاپرسی نامه یه ک بو قوتابیان وماموستایان وهه روه ها تافیکردنه وهی قوتابیان له بابه تی collocation دا. لیکولینه وه که نه وه دهرده خات که وا قوتابیان رووبه رووی کیشه وگرفت ده بنه وه جگه له وهی که وا ئاست و نه دایان وهک پیویست نیه وهک دووا قوناغ، هه روه ها له باره ی ماموستایانه وه لیکولینه وه که دهرده خات که وا نه وان له راستیدا وهک پیویست گرنگی و بایه خ به وانه وتنه وهی کولکه یشن نادهن. له ژیر رو شنایی نه م نه نجامانه توژیژه ران چهند پیشنیاریک ده خه نه روو.

