Colloction in Iraq EFL Grauate Lfarners

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1.Introduction:

This paper describes how teachers can help students learn vocabulary more efficiently and effectively by focusing on word association or combination patterns, collocation. Collocational competence has been paid little attention in spite of its importance and great influence on vocabulary learning in EFL learners (English as a foreign language)(Channell,J.1981:119;Benson, 1989, 1990).

As a learner and teacher of English, I have found that due to time constraints, vocabulary sections are often rushed through and often in an end of year exams there is little emphasis on the vocabulary learned during the year. The few multi-word or phrasal verbs and idioms that the learners have already encountered have been a challenge for them and I want to see how I can help them cope with those verbs and idioms as types of collocation when they are dealing with texts inside and outside the classroom.

There are many problems that Iraqi EFL learners may encounter when trying to understand collocation relationships. The most difficult problem for them is knowing how to collocate word relationships or combinations.

This study will first ,draw an outline of the concept of collocation, its importance in English language learning and teaching, its types and its categorization; second ,understand the extent to which collocation is a problem for Iraqi EFL learners because of its nature. This will involve identifying and analyzing the collocation difficulties experienced by Iraqi EFL graduate learners of the department of English language/College of Education , before suggesting ways to deal with those difficulties and overcome.

2.Collocations:

2.1.Importance of Collocations in Learning and Teaching English Language:

There is much interest in collocations partly because this is an area that

has been neglected in structural linguistic traditions that follow Saussure

and Chomsky. There is, however, a tradition in British linguistics, associated with the

names of Firth, Halliday, and Sinclair, which pays close attention to phenomena like collocations. Structural linguistics concentrates on general abstractions about the properties of phrases and sentences. In contrast, Firth's *Contextual Theory of Meaning* emphasizes the importance of context: the context of the social setting (as opposed to the idealized speaker), the context of spoken and textual discourse (as opposed to the isolated sentence), and, important for collocations, the context of surrounding words (hence Firth's famous dictum that a word is characterized by the company it keeps) (1968:179). These contextual features easily get lost in the abstract treatment that is typical of structural linguistics.

A good example of the type of problem that is seen as important in this contextual view of language is Halliday's example of *strong* vs. *powerful* tea (Halliday 1966: 150). It is a convention in English to talk about *strong tea*, not *powerful tea*, although any speaker of English would also understand the latter unconventional expression. Arguably, there are no interesting structural properties of English that can be gleaned from this contrast. However, the contrast may tell us something interesting about attitudes towards different types of substances in British culture (why do they use *powerful* for drugs like *heroin*, but not for *cigarettes*, *tea* and *coffee*?) and it is obviously important to teach this contrast to students who want to learn idiomatically correct English. Social implications of language use and language teaching are just the type of problem that British linguists following a Firthian approach are interested in. This reflects a change of attitude towards the role of lexis . Nunan(1991:117)claims it was neglected by audio-linguists(during the middle of the last century),citing Hocket(1958)"Vocabulary was the easiest aspect of a language to learn and that it hardly required formal attention in the classroom".

Treatment of English collocations has only recently began to find its way for learners (EFL) as one way to make passive vocabulary active.
"Knowledge of a wide range of idiomatic expressions, and the ability to use them appropriately in speech and writing, are among the distinguishing features of a native-like command of English"(Cowie and Makin,1993:422).To increase the learners'

vocabulary is an important way of improving the learners' language as a whole. It is accepted that choosing our words carefully in certain situations is more important than choosing grammatical structures (Harmer 1991). We cannot use structures correctly if we do not have enough vocabulary knowledge.

"Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed"(Wilkins in Thornbury 2002).

Collocations are important to language learners. When learners use collocations, they will be better understood. Native speakers unconsciously predict what is going to be said based on the use of phrases. If a non-native speaker uses frequently-used patterns (collocations), it will be easier for native speakers to guess what the non-native speaker is saying and may help compensate for other language

issues, such as pronunciation. When learners write and speak, if they use collocations central to their topic, their readers are more likely to understand their message. However, the communicative and natural approach emphasized the importance of vocabulary development, which resulted in more interest in vocabulary teaching.(Deveci,2004:17).

Taylor (1983)lists four reasons for studying words in collocations (a) words that are naturally associated in a text are learned more easily than those not so associated;(b) vocabulary is best learned in context;(c) context alone is insufficient without deliberate association;(d)vocabulary is a distinct feature of language that needs to be developed alongside a developing grammatical competence. The context in which a collocation is used is important. Certain collocations or expressions are appropriate for certain contexts. Vocabulary ability includes both knowledge of language and the ability to put language to appropriate use in a given context.This leads to injunctions against teaching EFL words only in lists;   instead ,vocabulary should be taught in context while keeping the flexibility of list learning(Nation1990).

2.2.Collocations : A Theoretical Background

The term 'collocation' is derived from the Latin collocare (com=together =to place)which means putting or placing together, the term 'collocation' is introduced by J.R. Firth(1951) as one of the levels of meaning. He distinguishes 'meaning by collocation 'from both 'conceptual and contextual meaning'(ibid:195,196) .

Collocation, which is meaning by extension ,is considered by some linguists as one of three approaches to semantic analysis, the other two are semantic field and componential analysis which is meaning by intention(See Cooper,1973and Lehrer, 1970).The central different and independent concepts of meaning Firth introduced in his research are originally colligation and collocation . Unfortunately ,colligation fails to take off.

Colligation is a syntactic term that is very important in grammar (Langenda,1968:66-67).It is the co-occurrence of grammatical classes(Rogghe,1978:10).Hartmann(1972:41);Robins(1964:234)and Dineen (1967:305)agree that colligation is "a group of words in sequence considered not as individual lexical items ,but as members of particular word classes ".i.e., with the grammatical categories of which lexical items are the exponents. For instance "*moving sand*" is composed of the structure(gerund +noun)which are members of the grammatical categories of language. It is dealt with on the syntactic levels of meaning , i.e., syntagmatic relation between grammatical categories.

Collocation is recognized and accepted as central part of word's meaning. This means that Firth who is considered to be 'father of collocation' believes in separation of lexis and semantics. Firth brings collocation into prominence during the 60's and 70's(Carter and McCarthy1990:158).

Later, McIntosh (1961), Halliday (1966), Sinclair(1966) Mitchell (1971 and 1975), Halliday and Hasan(1976)and others take this idea further adding or introducing the notion that patterns of collocation can form the basis for a lexical analysis of language that is independent of the grammatical analysis. The two levels of analysis are regarded to be complementary.

Halliday (1966:151 , 157)argued that the collocation patterns of lexical items can lead to generalizations at the lexical level. If certain items belong to the same set , then they can be regarded as a single lexical item: "*A strong argument; he argued strongly, the strength of his argument and his argument was strengthened*(can all be regarded)as instances of the one and the same syntagmatic relation. What is abstracted is the item *strong , having the scatter strong, strongly, strength, strengthened* which collocate with (the item)*argue(argument)*. "Sinclair (1966:412and 1974:16)proposed

that a lexical item can be defined from its collocation patterns.

Sinclair(1991:109,112)proposes two principles" in order to explain the way in which meaning arises from language text." The grammatical level is represented by the "open-choice principle" , which considers language text as the result of a very large number of complex choices…….the only restraint being grammaticalness". The" idiom principle" represents the lexical level and account for "restraints that are not captured by the open-choice model". "Collocation…………illustrates the idiom principle" (ibid:115).This means that Sinclair(1991) has modified his initial position and acknowledge the interrelation of the grammatical and lexical levels.

A Collocation is an expression consisting of two or more words that correspond to some conventional way of saying things. Or in the words of Firth (1957: 181): "Collocations of a given word are statements of the habitual or customary places of that word." Or "the habitual co-occurrence of lexical items"(1957:196). Collocations include noun

phrases like *strong tea* and *weapons of mass destruction*, phrasal verbs like *to make up*, and other stock phrases like *the rich and powerful*. Particularly interesting are the subtle and not-easily-explainable patterns of word usage that native speakers all know: why we say *a stiff breeze* but not *??a stiff wind* (while either *a strong breeze* or *a strong wind* is okay), or why we speak of *broad daylight* (but not *?bright daylight* or *??narrow darkness*).

Collocation operates in an open set of lexicography (Langenda,1968:66-67).For McCarthy ,it is "the likelihood of co-occurrence between words , or the way in which words associate with one another"(1990:158).For example ,a word such as "*blonde*" collocate strongly with "*hair*" .The word "*beige*" collocate strongly with the word "*car*" .But they cannot be collocated inversely to become "*beige hair*" or "*blonde car*".

2.3.Types of collocations:

In English ,as in other languages ,there are many fixed ,identifiable , non idiomatic phrases and constructions .Such groups of words are called recurrent combinations ,fixed combinations ,or collocations .Collocations fall into major groups: grammatical and lexical collocations.(Benson et al.,1986b:ix) Grammatical

collocations consist either of a dominant word(usually a verb ,a noun , or an adjective)and a dependent word such as preposition ;or of a particular structural pattern ,such as the dative- movement transformation ,that clause ,and to +infinitival + gerund. Lexical collocations ,in contrast, consist of two "equal" components ,such as verb +noun or adjective +noun. Examples of both types are given below:

2.3.1.Grammatical collocations :

1. verb + preposition + noun *speak through an interpreter*

2. verb + preposition *(to)get at,(to) go for*

3.adjective +preposition *different from ,cautious about ,full of*

4.adjective +preposition + preposition *fed up with*

5. preposition+ noun *for sale ,on time*

6.dative movement transformation *She sent the book to him / She sent him the book* .

7.that clause It is necessary that we know how to use a computer.

.It is necessary for us to know how to use a computer.

8. to +infinitival + gerund

2.3.2.Lexical collocations:

1. verb + noun *(to) reach a verdict, (to)launch a missile, (to)lift a (pronoun, prepositional phrase) blockade, (to) revoke a license*

2.verb + adjective + noun *learn a foreign language*

3. verb + adverb *live dangerously*, *(to) apologize humbly, (to) affect deeply*

4. noun + noun *a pocket calculator*

5. noun +of+ noun *a bunch of flowers, apiece of advice.*

6. adjective + noun *a huge profit ,reckless abandon ,sweeping generalization*

7. adverb + verb *half understand*

8. adverb + adjective *completely soaked ,deeply religious ,fiercely independent*

There are three important criteria which help distinguish collocation items from other kinds of strings .They are institutionalization ,fixedness, and non-compositionality (Bradwell,2005:7):

a. Institutionalization is the degree to which collocation item is conventionalized in the language :does it recur? Is it regularly considered by a language community as being a unit ?

b. Fixedness is the degree to which a group of lexical items is frozen as a sequence of words .Does it inflect ?Do its component words inflect in predictable or regular ways ?For example, *they rocked the boat* and not *they rock the boated* or *they rocked the boats*. Similarly, does the item vary in any way ,perhaps in its component lexis or word order? For example, *another kettle of fish* and *a different kettle of fish* are alternative forms, but *on the other hand* is not varied to *on another hand* or *on a different hand.*

c. Non-compositionality is the degree to which a collocation item cannot be interpreted on a word-by-word basis, but has a specialized unitary meaning. This is typically associated with semantic non-compositionality: for example when someone *kicks the bucket*(i.e. 'dies')they are not actually doing anything to a receptacle with their foot, and *cat's eyes*(luminous glass beads set into the road surface to guide drivers)in British English, are not in any degree biological.

Collocations are characterized by limited *compositionality*. We call a natural language expression compositional if the meaning of the expression can be predicted from the meaning of the parts. Collocations are not fully compositional in that there is usually an element of meaning added to the combination. In the case of *strong tea*, *strong* has acquired the meaning *rich in some active agent* which is closely related, but slightly different from the basic sense *having great physical strength*. Idioms are the most extreme examples of non-compositionality. Idioms like *to kick the bucket* or *to hear it through the grapevine* only have an indirect historical relationship to the meanings of the parts of the expression. We are not talking about *buckets* or *grapevines* literally when we use these idioms. Most collocations exhibit milder forms of non-compositionality, like the expression *international best practice* .It is very nearly a systematic composition of its parts, but still has an element of added meaning. It usually refers to administrative efficiency and would, for example, not be used to describe a cooking technique although that meaning would be compatible with its literal meaning.

These determining factors may apply in varying degrees because there is no clear cut-off points between them, and not all factors are taken into account by all analysts :"most collocationalists use only a semantic criterion of whether a

combination is fully compositional or not"(Nattinger and DeCarrico,1992:177);"The study of collocations ……has tended to concentrate on linear ,syntagmatic co-occurrence of items and has not included the syntactic and semantic statements that are often essential"(Carter,1987:55).

Woods(1981)in Nattinger and DeCarrico(1992); Aisenstadt (1979); Cruse(1986);Kjellmer(1994);Jones and Sinclair (1974)and Benson and Ilson(1985 and 1986);Aitcheson(1994) have dealt with the categorization of collocation differently.

Lewis (1998) proposes the following categories for collocations:

1. Strong: A large number of collocations are strong or very strong. For example, we most commonly talk of *rancid butter,* but that does not mean that other things cannot be rancid.

2. Weak: These are words which co-occur with a greater than random frequency. Many things can be long or short, cheap or expensive, good or bad. However, some things are more predictable, which could be called collocation; for example, *white wine* or *red wine.*

3. Medium strength: These are words that go together with a greater frequency than weak collocations. Some examples are: *hold a meeting; carry out a study.* To gain a clear picture of collocations ,it is helpful to distinguish grammatical and lexical collocations from idioms from one hand and from free combinations on the other.

There are different views not only as to when ,for example ,a lexical combination ceases to be an idiom and should be regarded as a collocation ,but also regarding shadings within these categories. It is therefore quite possible to distinguish different types of collocations based on the freedom with which they can collocate with one another.

What has been proposed is a continuum on which the lexical combinations can be placed. Convenient(but to a great extent arbitrary) end-point and intermediary categories have been proposed as well.

i. Impossible collocations: there are lexemes whose co-occurrence seems impossible. This type of collocation happens when the semantic features of the combined lexemes are not compatible. For example "*green cow*", "*round square*" ,"*hot ice*", "*black*

snow",.......etc. Such associations are expected to co-occur because they are incompatible i.e., they are impossible or odd because the lexeme "*green*" naturally applies to "*cabbages*"(Leech and Short,1981:195).

ii. The possible but not habitual collocations :this kind of combinations occurs when the semantic features of both lexemes are compatible and may co-occur ,yet they are not associated habitually enough to be considered as collocations..For instance ,"*new*" or "*old noises*" are hardly heard of ,so they are unusual(Wilkins ,1972:127).This unusual combinations of lexemes is the concern of poets who tend to use such type of collocations so as to create certain effects upon the reader.

iii .Frozen , restricted collocations or "transitional combinations"(Benson,1989:5) :two or more items are restricted by semantics and usage. They follow certain structural patterns ,as in :"*blonde hair*" ,"*rancid butter*" ,"*bread and butter*", and "*bride and groom*", "*to foot the bill*"(pay the bill)"*to catch one's breath*"(to return to normal after being busy or very active),"*to carry weight*" (be convincing),"*to see action*" (participate in combat),"*to take one's time*" (act slowly).

iv. When the lexical items have many semantic features in common but collocate differently.Benson defines this type as " an arbitrary recurrent word combinations"(1986a:235-54;1986b:xxiv;1989:3) .For example "*friendly*" and "*amicable*" are synonymous, however, only "*amicable divorce*" is collocationally acceptable ,but "*friendly divorce*" is not . Lewis(2000:13)exemplifies "*wound*" and "*injury*" ,the difference being only their collocational range , i.e. ,"*a stab wound*" but not "*a stab injury*". Other examples are "*To commit a murder*" ,"*to reach a verdict*", "*to launch a missile*", "*to withdraw an offer*" ,"*best, kind, warm, warmest etc. regards*". "*soft water*" ,*soft ground*", "*mild beer*" and "*gentle soap*" . Though that "*soft , mild* and gentle" are synonymous each word has exclusive collocations . Their collocability is mostly not rule governed . Collocation is of great help for discovering the degree, i.e., grading , of synonymity between lexical items. It may also make one's meaning clearer and more emphatic(Ulmann,1962:152).

v. Free or usual collocations it the occurrence or combination of two or more items with free commutability within the grammatical and semantic framework of language(Aisenstadt,1981:54).For example :the word "*heavy*" may collocate with

many items freely such as "*traffic , fighting , losses ,rainfall ,fog ,drinker ,smoker ,heart ,meal,….etc.*" ; to "*destroy a barn ,bridge, document, factory, harbour ,road ,village , ….etc.*" and "*to condemn,decry ,denounce ,acclaim ,forget ,investigate ,report ,study , recall ,etc. a murder*". Another example is the verb "*gave*" in the sentence "*I gave Tracy the book.*" Which can be substituted by *"passed", "handed"* or *"threw"* with no problem syntactically or syntagmatically.

vi . Kjellmer(1994),Jones and Sinclair (1974) regard idioms as a subtype or subclass of collocations. Collocation describes the relationship between words that often appear together. They include structural patterns that resemble traditional grammar and combinations of words that simply go together. Therefore, idioms like *take a break,* and word combinations like *get on a bus* are considered collocations.

Idioms differ from collocations in the sense that they are fossilized form that tend to be immutable and their parts are productive ,i.e., the relation between their lexical items is fixed. The meaning of the idiom as a "lexically complex unit constituting a single minimal semantic constituent"(Cruse,1986:37-41)cannot be deduced from the combined meanings of its constituents"(Kjellmer,1994) and (Benson et al.,1986a:252-53).Such as :*to kick the bucket(to die), to spill the beans (to tell a secret too soon or to the wrong person)*

3.Data Analysis:

The first type of collocation(See Section 2.1) is hardly needed by the students and it is impossible to find them in the real world. Thus ,it makes no difficulty for the learners. Concerning the second type ,if the learner knows the meaning of the individual parts ,it makes no problem for him/her to comprehend them. As far as the third type is concerned ,there is no logical semantic explanation for them. So they must be memorized as they are.

Fixed expressions and idioms are very difficult for learners to learn or understand. Practically, a lesson on such expressions is presented to twenty Iraqi EFL graduate learners at the University of Babylon/College of Education /Department of English .

To find the extent of collocational problems and to prove the importance and necessity of context for understanding the meaning for the learners, the subjects are given the

expressions in isolated form .They are : "1.*It rains cats and dogs(*it rains very hard*)* 2.*a piece of cake(*very easy to do*)3. let the cat out of the bag(*to reveal a secret*)4.she's on the phone(*She has got a phone*)5. phone up(*to telephone*)6.inflict losses on( )* 7.*raise (a)doubt ()8.heap praise on ()9.jog one's memory ()10.give up(*to stop doing or having something that you have done or had regularly before*)"*.

The comprehension is quite low. None of the subjects offer acceptable answers to five of the test items : **1, 4,6,9** and **10 (See table (1)below)**. It is obvious that the subjects made great efforts but failed to come up with the accurate words. It is clear from the low rate of responses that learners need help to deal with the arbitrary nature of English collocations(Benson,1989:3).

Table (1): Percentages of the responses of the subjects in the first test

Items number	Percentages of the correct answers	Items number	Percentages of the correct answers
1	0٪	6	0٪
2	١٠٪	7	20 ٪
3	١٪	8	18٪
4	٠٪	9	٠٪
5	15٪	10	٠٪

To demonstrate that meaningful context is necessary to help learners better understand collocational relationships, the collocational items are put in the following sentences and then presented to the same subjects:

1.*It rains cats and dogs.You cannot go out without umbrella*.

2.*Can you do this?Sure !It's a piece of cake!*

3. *Let the cat out of the bag. Don't keep it secret.*

4.*She's on the phone. So ,you can keep in contact with her.*

5.*What time will you ring tomorrow ?I rang up yesterday and booked the hotel.*

6.*Our forces were able to inflict heavy losses on the enemy.*

7.*Her proposal raise serious doubts in my mind .*

8.Don't heap too much praise on her. She will get conceited .

9.The photograph may jog your memory .

10.I 've tried many times to give up smoking. But I cannot.

Table (2): Percentages of the responses of the subjects in the second test

Items number	Percentages of the correct answers	Items number	Percentages of the correct answers
1	18٪	6	٣٤٪
2	٣٣٪	7	٤٢٪
3	42٪	8	٣٥٪
4	٢٠٪	9	٢٨٪
5	٣٥٪	10	٣٤٪

Concerning the items: (1,4,6,9 and 10)whose rate is 0٪ in the first test. Their percentages increased to (18٪,20٪,34٪,28٪ and 34٪) respectively. The progress from first test to the second made by the subjects is appreciable when they are compared with each other. Only 1٪ of the subjects knows the collocation of the item No.3 in the first test ,but the average of correct answers increased to 42٪ in the second test. Similarly , only 10٪ of the subjects give acceptable answers in the first test to item No.(2) which is increased to 33٪.

As table (1)and (2)show ,responses of the first test differ from the second one. The higher scores of the second test due to having meaningful context from which they make the appropriate guess. Without this context, the collocation of a word or expression proved to be quite difficult or even impossible to recognize and understand.

After a month the subjects are asked to submit the first test again. As table (3)below shows ,the results decreased greatly .This means that the subjects have forgot them ,i.e., this confirms the fact that EFL learners must be provided by opportunities to practice , listen, and write what they learn. McCarthy(1990)comments that knowledge of collocation is based on years of experience of masses of data and the

regular co-occurrence of particular words ,and native speakers have a good intuitive knowledge of typical collocations.

Table (2): Percentages of the responses of the subjects in the third test(*after a month)*

Items number	Percentages of the correct answers	Items number	Percentages of the correct answers
1	0٪	6	10٪
2	١١٪	7	22 ٪
3	5٪	8	18٪
4	٣٪	9	١٢٪
5	15٪	10	٩٪

From my experiences as a student and language teacher, I can say that the Arabian culture encourages rote learning, where students memorize lists of words in isolation. Learners I have taught tended to write Arabic equivalents of single words; when students see the words in phrases, they could not understand them. Such surface level knowledge inhibits meaningful learning and creates collocation related problems such as the following:

1. Learners may have intralingual problems. For example, instead of *many thanks,* they might incorrectly use *several*

thanks.

2. Learners may make negative transfer from their mother tongue. For example, some Iraqi EFL learners tend to say *become lovers* instead of *fall in love.*

3. Learners may look for general rules for collocations that do not work for all collocations. For example, they might overgeneralize rules of collocation, for example, the use of prepositions in phrasal verbs. They could think that put *off your coat* is the opposite of *put on your coat.*

4. When students learn words through definitions or in isolation, their chances of using appropriate collocations or remembering the words decrease.

5. Students may fail to make sense of an idiom. To illustrate, the English idioms "*It is raining cats and dogs*" ,"*a piece of cake*" do not make sense to Iraqi EFL learners because these idioms do not exist in our culture. Collocation is language-specific. It denotes particular sociocultural connotations and associations. English and Arabic cultures are different so links in a chain of particular lexical items vary greatly .This causes interference with perception of the cohesion in English language for EFLs.

6. When students read texts, they may not recognize collocations as meaningful phrases, which would inhibit their understanding

of the text.

7. Collocates can also be separated by many relevant words ,making their relationship very difficult for Iraqi learners to identify.

8. Collocational behaviour such as collocation mismatches and clines of fixity is also a major problem. Learners should learn patterns of collocation in English: some words can substitute but others cannot, regardless of syntax.(See Section 2.1. iv and v)

9. Iraqi EFL learners have no opportunity to practice or use these learned expressions and idioms out of the class.

10. Factors such as a difference in status or a social distance between the speaker and the hearer can affect the choice of collocational phrases. For example, we would not greet our boss by saying "How's it going?"; however, it is all right to greet a friend that way. This example suggests that knowledge of connotation and formality is important in deciding which collocation to use.

11. When teachers do a reading passage with students ,surely they are teaching vocabulary including collocations. The importance is on giving learners time to assimilate the vocabulary. Sadly , this is not the case in Iraqi EFL classrooms.

For these reasons, the extent of collocation problems may go beyond simple translation.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations:

4.1.Conclusions:

It is obvious that learners only know Arabic definitions of given English words. As expected ,most learners have difficulty choosing the correct combination of two or more lexical items. The most common errors made by Iraqi EFL learners in writing

are: a lack of collocational competence , native-language interference and incorrect spelling. If learners are not familiar with recurrent word combinations, they can only generate awkward and forced sentences in which traces of native-language interference can be found. The extent of collocation problems for them is specifically in the areas of recognizing collocation combinations out of context, understanding fixed expressions or idioms and frequency in using expressions appropriately.

The common belief that words should be learned in context emphasizes the importance of collocations in EFL i.e., it must be included in the syllabus of EFL.

4.2.Recommendations:

From the test results we can reasonably infer that ,since collocational capacity cannot be spontaneously acquired ,the teaching of collocations is absolutely integral to the encoding of a language by non-native speakers. Thus, the following recommendations are thought to be useful:

1.Students need to know that learning collocations is crucial for learning English, and noticing collocations is an important stage in learning.

2.Hill (2000) asserts that when teaching collocation, teachers need to pay close attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress, and grammar.

3. Students need to be made aware of collocations and that some words are used in a very restricted number of collocations enabling them to use the words they know in a range of collocations which pack more meaning into what they say or write.

4.When teaching collocations, teachers cannot ignore reading and listening skills, which help learners notice collocations. Writing and speaking skills, on the other hand, give them the opportunity to practice collocations.

5. Unless students are taught in context-based classes, collocations will not make sense to learners, and meaningful learning will probably not take place. Teaching collocations in isolation is no better than teaching single words in isolation.

6.A dictionary of English collocations can be a good resource for EFL students because they are quite portable and reasonably inexpensive to purchase. So have students do dictionary work to find certaincollocations. Dictionaries of collocations on the market such as the *LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations* and *The BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations* can be of great help in drawing students'

attention to collocations. This will also encourage student autonomy.

7.Another possible solution for teachers to help learners better understand collocation is the use of grids and scales. This helps him illustrating a word's semantic features as well as its collocability. Thus the learner would be able to relate to each other and know what other words can combine with. Lexical items should be presented together in groups, and not as isolated vocabulary.

Collocational grid

	Woman	Man	Child	Dog	Bird	Flower	Weathe	Landsc	View	House	Furnitu	Bed	picture
Handso		+									+		
Pretty	+		+	+	+	+		+	+	+		+	+
Charmi			+							+			
lovely	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

If there is a + against a word printed in bold this means that the word collocates with the word or expression at the top of this grid .

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