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Investigating Lexical Collocational Errors in Students'Writing Compositions: The Case of First Year Students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to :

My dear parents Fatma and Youcef.

My sisters Kamelia and Lynda.

My brothers Massinissa and Kamal.

My best friend Samia.

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating if first year students of English at MMUTO make lexical collocational errors while writing. Then,it tries to identify the different types of lexical collocational errors that the students commit while writing in order to figure out the extent to which they can put words together properly. To reach the aims of the present work ,eighty (80) exam copies of the writing module of the academic year 2015-2016 were selected randomly from the population of first year students to be analyzed. Thus, Error Analysis analytical framework is used to identify the different errors in the students' writing compositions, relying on the theory of Michael Lewis (2000) dealing with the classification of lexical collocations. The outcomes of the investigation show that the students can not put lexical collocational items together in a correct way which result in their making of errors. The most common lexical collocational errors among students are noun+verb and verb+noun pattern . These results confirm the suggested hypotheses of the study and maintains that students' lack of collocational knowledge prevent them from producing correct lexical collocations.Thus, One could notice easily their erroneous and unnatural language while reading their writing productions. Even if they use some strategies to cover this lack like; language transfer, synonymy strategy and repetition and overgeneralization.

Key Terms: *Error Analysis Approach , collocational knowledge , lexical collocational errors*

List of Abbreviations

EFL :   English as a Foreign Language

ESL :   English as a Second Language

Hp   :   Hypothesis

L1   :   First Language

L2   :   Second Language

MMUTO :   Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou

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General Introduction

- **Statement of the Problem**

Vocabulary and grammar constitute the basic elements of foreign language teaching. However, it is noticed that for many years ,a great focus was put on the teaching of grammar since it was maintained by many scholars that the mastery of the grammatical rules permits the learners to speak and write the language properly. On the contrary, vocabulary teaching was neglected and sometimes limited to memorizing lists of words in isolation (Ketabi and Shahraki,2011).

Recently , the study of vocabulary gained popularity among many researchers who believe that "*lexis is the core or the heart of language*" (Lewis,1993) and acquiring enough vocabulary items helps learners improve their learning of a foreign language. However, putting all this lexical knowledge into practice is not an easy task, especially for foreign and second language learners .Indeed, it results most of the time in the making of errors and one of the most frequent is the misuse of collocations.

Collocation is the natural combination of two or more lexical items. It is "*a pair or group of words that are often used together*" (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2005:06). Collocational knowledge plays a central role in learning a foreign language since the main purpose behind learning new words is to put them into "practical use" .The latter sounds just correct and natural for native speakers, but for foreign and second language learners they have to make efforts to reach this stage.

Several studies have been conducted on collocation all over the world and from different perspectives. It is worth to mention the study conducted by Attar and Allami from Iran (2013) who investigated the impact of teaching collocations on developing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking ability. The data were gathered from a collocation test, interviews and learners' speaking proficiency. The outcomes of the study showed that teaching lexical collocations is a good way for raising the learners' collocational knowledge which affects

positively the improvement of their speaking ability. In the local context, Fanit Rabah from the University of Constantine (2009-2010) conducted a research on the different problems students encounter while translating English collocations into Arabic and vise versa. The result of the investigation revealed that the two main causes of students' errors in translating collocations is their over use of the literal translation and their lack of interest in the collocations of other languages and cultures.

The two mentioned works are examples of many works which investigated collocations from the perspective of developing oral proficiency or in relation to the translation field, but it is observed that few works, like the one conducted by Hammidi Fatma Zohra on collocations as erroneous patterns in EFL learning, have studied collocations from an Error Analysis point of view in the writing skill. Due to the lack of research from this perspective, the present work aims at investigating the different lexical collocational errors made by first year students of the Department of English at MMUTO in their writing compositions for the academic year 2015-2016 .This requires mainly the use of Error Analysis Approach which is "*the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language*" (James, 2001 cited in Bao,2015:138).

- **Aims and Significance of the Study**

This study aims at identifying the different types and sources of lexical collocational errors made by first year students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.This could be achieved through the analysis of the exam papers of the writing module .In addition to this, the main focus consists in investigating the students' knowledge about collocations and the extent to which they can put words together into practical use. Finally, this study can be beneficial for both students and teachers since it makes the students aware of their errors to guide them for a better production of English and also it helps the teachers to find more effective ways to teach vocabulary in general and collocations in particular.

- **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

This study attempts to explore and examine the collocational use among first year students, thus two major points seem to be worth investigating through the following questions:

Q 01. Do first year students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University make lexical collocational errors while writing?

Q 02. If yes,what are the main types of lexical collocational errors do students make?

Q 03.What are the main sources behind the students' making of those errors?

In an attempt to answer the above research questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

Hp 01: First year students of English at MMUTO make lexical collocational errors when writing.

Hp 02: The main types of lexical collocational errors students make are : **Verb+Noun** patterns and **Noun+Verb** patterns.

Hp 03:The main sources behind the students' making of those errors are; language transfer,synonymy strategy and repetition and overgeneralization.

- **Research Techniques and Methodology**

To conduct this investigation, the Mixed Method Research is used. It combines between the quantitative approach which is adopted to quantify the errors made by first year students in their writing compositions and this by relying on the spss software .The qualitative approach is used in the interpretation of the erroneous patterns adopting error analysis approach and the theory of Michael lewis (2000) dealing with the classification of lexical collocations.
The participants of this study are first year students of English at MMUTO and the corpus consists of eighty exam papers selected from the writing module of those students during the academic year 2015-2016. To examine the gathered data, Error Analysis Approach is used in the

analysis of the students compositions' errors relying on Michael Lewis theory (2000) dealing with the lexical collocational classification.

- **Structure of the Dissertation**

The structure of this dissertation is an example of the Traditional-Complex model, which consists of a General Introduction followed by four chapters and ends with a General Conclusion. The first chapter is "Review of the Literature" which accounts for a critical analysis of the concepts and the theoretical framework used in the study of collocational errors which is the main concern of the present work. The second chapter under the name of "Research Design and Methodology" presents the methodological procedure followed for both data collection and data analysis. The third chapter called "Presentation of the Findings" sets out the results of the analysis of students exam papers by identifying the lexical collocational errors in the form of tables and charts .The fourth chapter "Discussion of the Findings" is devoted to the interpretation of the results by answering the research questions and confirming or refuting the hypotheses suggested in the general introduction. Finally, the work ends with a general conclusion that aims at giving a brief summary of the key findings of the whole study.

Chapter One : Review of the Literature

Introduction

The present chapter deals with the review of the literature which is relevant to the theme of collocation. It aims at providing the reader with a theoretical framework on collocational studies related to the field of foreign and second language teaching. This chapter is divided into two sections .The first one includes some definitions of collocation ,its patterns, types and the main theoretical approaches that define it from different perspectives. The second section is concerned with lexical collocational errors in relation to the writing skill ; it starts by defining the writing skill then explaining the theory of error analysis and its process and finally,it summarizes the main sources of lexical collocational errors committed by learners.

1 .Collocations

1.1. The Notion of Collocation

In the English language, collocation refers to the natural combination of two or more words that frequently appear together "*than they would happen by chance*" (Duan and Qin,2012:1891).I t means that words that make up collocations are not put together haphazardly but rather it is the common co-occurrence of words that makes the language sounds natural. Commonly, words in pairs mean more than what words signify in isolation ;therefore, the right use of collocation permits a better fitness of the context and a more concise meaning. Lewis (1997 cited in Martynska,2004:04)argues that "*collocation is not determined by logic or frequency but it is arbitrary ,decided only by linguistic convention*".This means that English native speakers do not follow any special rule to produce collocations in such an easy way, but rather they just know what sounds right and natural which is not an obvious thing for non-native speakers.

1.2. Collocations in the Lexical Approach

The lexical approach is a theory to second language teaching developed by Michael Lewis(1993) in his book 'The lexical Approach' which is considered a reaction to the

grammar based approach. Lewis (ibid) in his theory maintains that *"language consists of grammaticalized lexis not lexicalized grammar"*(Lewis,1993: vi cited in Karoly,2005:59).This means that much of the language is not made up of individual words or grammatical structures but rather it consists of meaningful chunks when combined properly theyproduce a continuous coherent text.   .

Lewis(1997 cited in Karoly,2005:62) divides lexical items into the following taxonomy:

- **Words**   (eg: table-paper…)

- **Play words** (eg: by the time, in fact…)

- **;Collocation** (eg: feel free ,sounds exciting…)

- **Institutionalized utterances** (eg : we'll see ,I'll get it)

- **Sentence frames and heads** (eg :"Based on…I think…")

- **Text frames** (eg: In this paper we explore…: Firstly…: Secondly…: Finally…)

In the Lexical Approach, the study of collocation is the center of interest because it shows how words are combined with each other to form fluent and natural English as it is used by native speakers .Lewis (ibid) argues that:

> "Instead of words, we consciously try to think of collocations and to present these in expressions .Rather than trying to break things into smaller pieces, there is a conscious effort to see things in larger, more holistic way". (Lewis,1997:204 cited in Karoly,2005:62)

 Lewis (1997) states that words do not occur in isolation and achieving language proficiency depends on the right combinations of words .In the lexical approach, the choice of vocabulary items plays a central role in creating meaning. It is not always possible to put any word in any place even if we get grammatically correct sentences, the meaning could not be achieved (ibid).

Lewis(2000) in his theory about collocations, he classified lexical collocations into seven types:

- Adjective+Noun

- Noun+Noun

- Verb+Adjective+Noun

- Verb+Adverb

- Adverb+Adjective

- Verb+Noun

- Noun+Verb

From the classification above it is clear that Michael Lewis (2000) in his classification focused mainly on lexical items with different possible combinations.

1.3. Approaches to Define Collocations

The term "collocation" has been widely defined by many scholars within different fields and perspectives . That is why it is a challenging task to form a "*precise definition of collocation*" (Nesselauf,2004 cited in Hama,2010:07).

In this work ,the main definitions of collocation are provided according to two principal approaches : the Frequency-Based Approach (Firthian Approach) and the Phraseological Approach.

1.3.1. The Frequency-Based Approach

Firth (1957) is considered as the father of collocation and the leading figure of the frequency-based approach. His interest in collocation was mainly by focusing on the importance of context in the understanding of words. According to him, any term can only be understood by the surrounding words and he states that "*you shall know a word by the company it keeps*" (Firth,1957 cited in Dickinson,2015:02)

Halliday is one of Firth's followers ; he considers collocation as an important element in lexical learning. Halliday and Hasan (1976 cited in Hadid and Aghdam,2015) maintain

that the meaning of the word is related to another preceding word which is some how synonymous with it.

Sinclair is another British scholar who is interested in the study of collocation. He defines it a*s* "*the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text*" (Sinclair,1991:170 cited in Holtsberg and Willners,2001:136)

1.3.2. The Phraseological Approach

Phraseology is defined as:

> "the co-occurrence of a form or a lemma of a lexical item and one or more additional linguistic elements of various kinds which function as one semantic unit in a clause or sentence and whose frequency or co-occurrence is larger than expected on the basis of chance" (Gries,2008:06).

In other words phraseology focuses on phrases which are defined as "*multi words expressions*"; these phraseological units are restrictedly seen as a fixed and stable combination of at least two words(Corpas,2003:134 cited in Castro et al,2014:57).This approach believes that collocation is a system of units which consists of a base and collocate. The former is autonomously meaningful while the selection of the latter depends on the meaning of the base (Benson et al .1986 cited in Castro et al,2014:58)

1.4 Types of Collocations

Many researchers have provided different types of collocation . Lewis (2000) and many other scholars divide collocations into grammatical and lexical collocations.

1.4.1 Grammatical Collocations

Grammatical collocations consist of a dominant word such as :verbs, adjectives or nouns combined with a grammatical word which is the preposition or the grammatical structure: to+infinitive /that-clause,(Bahns,1993:57 cited in Moehkardi,2002).Here are some examples of grammatical collocations: noun + preposition (kind of, changes in) ,verb +that-clause (…that I answered right) ,noun+ to+infinitive (an attempt to do it). In those examples, the

majority of principal words are combined with prepositions . We can not talk about grammatical collocations without including "preposition" because "*it is the preposition that makes a collocation grammatical*" (Abdaoui,2010:20).

1.4.2. Lexical Collocations

Lexical collocations are items where two lexical words regularly and naturally occur together. They do not include grammatical words or structures but consist only of four lexical words (verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs) with different possible combinations (Bahns,1993 cited in Moehkardi,2002).Here are some examples of lexical collocations : verb +noun (compose music), adverb +adjective (deeply observed), verb+adverb (walk heavily), adjective +noun(strong tea).

1.5 .Strong vs Weak Collocations

According to many scholars(Hasan ,2004;Hill ,2000; Lewis,1997), collocations have different strengths: some are strong others are weak. This investigation uses Lewis theory of collocation who classifies collocations according to the degree of occurrence into two main categories: strong and weak (Lewis,1997 cited in Shammas,2013).

1.5.1. Strong Collocations

Strong collocations refer to the collocations that frequently occur together and which are fixed and function like a single word (Lewis ,1997 cited in Farrokh,2012).For instance:

-Long-range planning (not long-time planning)

-High earnings (not big earnings)

-Good morning (not nice morning)

1.5.2. Weak Collocations

Weak collocations are chunks that randomly co-occur together .In other words , this type of collocation involves words that can be combined with many others (ibid). Example: blue jeans. The color Blue can be applied to many other words such as: Blue eyes, blue car…

It is worth to mention that Hill (2000) provided another division of collocation according to the strength where he added two other categories in comparison to Lewis(1997) which are :Unique and Medium collocations (Hill,2000 cited in Bhumadhana,2010) in addition to weak and strong collocations.

1.5.3. Medium Collocations

These are words that go many times together in comparison to weak collocations .For example: Hold a meeting ,carry out a study,etc.

1.5.4. Unique Collocation

Hill (2000) gave two examples: "foot the bill" and "shrug your shoulders" .These collocations are considered as unique because both the verbs 'foot' and 'shrug' are only combined with the fixed nouns 'bill' and 'shoulders' respectively and cannot be used with other nouns. "*Foot the bill*" has the meaning of "*pay for something you do not want to*"(Adrian-Vallance et al,2009:151 cited in Bhumadhana,2010:18).The collocation "*Shurg your shoulders*" means "*raise [your shoulders] to show that you do not know something or care about something*"(Adrian-Vallance et al,2009:1619 cited in Bhumadhana,2010:18)

1.6. Compound vs Collocations vs Idioms

Some people often confuse the use of terms like "compound" , "collocation" and "idioms" where sometimes they use them interchangeably. Though each of the three categories represents a particular word group, there are no obvious features that distinguish them and it is difficult to draw a clear line between them especially the category of compound and collocation(McCarthy and O'Dell,2005).

1.6.1. Compounds

' A compound is usually understood to be the result of the combination of two free forms' (Adams,1973:30 cited in Conti,2006:02).This means that it contains two distinct words that

may function separately but have been placed together to form a compound word. 'Sometimes the words are written separately' (car park) or a hyphen is included between them (fifty-fifty) and in some cases they are written as a single word (football) (McCarthy and O'Dell,2005) . Compound words are very common and new combinations are invented by understanding the significance of each single word (ibid).

1.6.2. Collocation

Collocation is "*the way in which words co-occur in natural text in statistically significant way*s" (Lewis,2000:132 cited in Agah and Soori,2015:528). In other words,there is not a precise or logical rule for English collocations but rather their use is based on convention .Native speakers use collocations "instinctively" and second language users can not create new collocations (Martynska,2004:04). Some words just sound right and natural together for Native Speakers while others do not. For example, an English native speaker knows that it is more appropriate to say "catch a cold" than "take or have cold" and it is going to be a challenging task for English language learners to reach the phase of producing natural English that is easily understood (Wilson,2007).

1.6.3 Idioms

According to McCarthy and O'Dell (2005:06) ,"*Idioms are groups of words in a fixed order that have a meaning that cannot be guessed by knowing the meaning of the individual words*". Contrary to the obvious mentioned categories, idioms could be distinguished from them in the sense that the meaning of an '*idiomatic expressions'* is not literal but rather '*figurative or metaphoric'* (Abdaoui,2010:33). In other words , the individual elements that make up an idiom don't mean exactly what they say, however, they have a hidden meaning. Idioms generally are related to specific cultures through which people transfer ideas and values of specific societies .It will be a difficult task for students of English to guess the meaning of "Idiomatic Expressions" since they don't share the same culture.

The following table shows some examples of compounds, collocations and idioms .It explains some of the wrong uses of collocations in brackets as well as the signification of the selected idioms.

Compounds	Collocations	Idioms
-Post office	-Make efforts(not 'Do')	-"I was knocked on my heels" (I was surprised).
-Narrow-minded	-Powerful engine (not 'strong')	-Hold your horses (wait /calm down).
-Teapot	-Watch tv (not look at TV)	-"Break a leg" (wishing someone good luck)

- **Table 01: Some Examples of Compounds, Collocations and Idioms (McCarty and O'Dell,2005:07)**

1.7. Collocational Patterns

Many scholars tried to provide different possible combinations of the words that constitute collocation. Lewis (2000) classification of collocational patterns is adopted since he focuses on lexical collocation which is the main concern of the current work. In addition to this, McCarthy and O'Dell (2005) classification of grammatical collocation is included so as to figure out the differences.

1.7.1 Michael Lewis Classification of Collocational Patterns

The following table shows seven collocational patterns as classified by Michael Lewis (2000) in his theory about lexical collocations   and each pattern is illustrated with an example:

Verb+adverb	Examine thoroughly
Verb+noun	Submit a report
Verb + adjective +noun	Revise the original plan
Noun +noun	Radio station
Noun +verb	The fog closed in
Adverb + adjective	Extremely inconvenient
Adjective +noun	A difficult decision

- **Table 02:Lewis (2000) Division of Collocational Patterns** (Lewis,2000:133 cited in Abdaoui,2010:17)

In the table, Lewis (2000) divides collocations into seven types .According to him, "*collocation is a subcategory of multiword items which habitually co-occur together*" (Lewis cited in Martynska,2004:04).Lewis (ibid) focuses in his classification on four lexical items: verbs ,adjectives ,nouns and adverbs within different combinations which are the elements that form the lexical collocations (Bahus,1993 cited in Moehkardi,2002:59).

1.7.2. McCarthy and O'Dell Classification of Collocation Patterns

The following table shows the six collocational patterns as classified by McCarthy and O'Dell (2005:12) ,each pattern is given an example :

Adjective + noun	Major problems
Noun + verb	The company has grown
Noun+Noun	A surge of anger
Verb+preposition	Burst into tears
Verb+ adverb	Pulled steadily
Adverb +adjective	Fully aware

- **Table 03:McCarthy and O'Dell Division of Collocational Patterns**

McCarthy and O'Dell (2005) provide an example of collocational classification with six patterns . It includes the pattern of (verb+ preposition) which is not included in the previous table of Lewis (2000) because it is the grammatical collocations that contain words such as verb, adjectives ,or nouns combined with a "preposition". (Bahns,1993:57 cited in Moehkardi,2002:54)). So, a conclusion can be drawn that Lewis in his classification focused on lexical items whereas McCarthy and O'Dell focused on grammatical items.

2 .Collocational Errors in the Writing Skill

Learning a new language provides a unique opportunity for students to express their thoughts and ideas in another language .However; learners face a lot of problems when they express themselves especially in writing. The majority of students make a lot of errors among them the mis-use of collocations.

2.1.The Writing Skill

Writing is one of the basic skills of English language .It consists of a set of characteristics that a learner must be capable of carrying out in order to produce a proficient language. "*A focus on writing for exchanging and engaging ideas puts students with varying language strengths on a more nearly equal footing…"*(Geemia,1992:35 cited in Hamstand and Thorson,1994:14) .This means that writing plays an important role as a communicative skill but writing academically at university is a hard task for EFL learners .When reading first year students' compositions , one could notice easily their lack of writing proficiency .One of the most significant challenges the learners face is the mis-use of different lexical items which occur probably due to their lack of collocational knowledge.

2.2. Error Analysis

Error Analysis is a theory established by Stephen Pit Corder" in 1967 which aims at analyzing learners' errors as a part of investigating their language learning process .In other words, examining students errors gives information about how effective are the language

programs used. According to Gass and Selinker (1992 cited in Aras,2017:69) *"errors are red flags that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language"*.This means that the different errors students make determine how successful is the teaching learning process.

2.2.1. The Process of Error Analysis

According to Grass and Selinker (2008:103), the process of analyzing the learners'errors passes through different stages which are:

- Collecting Data

- Identifying Errors (What is the error eg: wrong verb form, concordance of tenses …)

- Classifying errors (eg: errors in agreement or regular verbs…etc)

- Quantifying Errors (eg: how many errors occur in irregular verb form?)

- Analyzing sources of Errors

- Remediating for Errors: pedagogical intervention is carried out in order to improve learners skills

2.2.2. Errors vs Mistakes

"Errors are deviations which reveals the learners lack of knowledge about the language" (Ghadessy,1980:96 cited in Preethi,2013:02) . According to Corder (1967), an error is systematic . It means that the learners make it many times without even recognizing that it is an error. Errors cannot be self corrected. Mistakes on the other hand are ''*caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, slips of the tongue and so on"*(ibid). It is a failure in their performance of a language, students can '*recognize it as a mistake and correct it if necessary'* (Corder,1967 cited in Grass and Selinker,2008:102)

3.Importance of Collocations in EFL Learning

In traditional methods of language teaching, learners' main focus was on the mastery

of isolated words meanings, their forms and pronunciation, whereas the teachers used to correct continuously their grammatical errors for a perfect use of language structures. However, those teachers ignored that the majority of mistakes occurs due to the wrong combination of lexical items which is the result of the lack of collocational knowledge (Hill,2000 cited in Kuo ,2009:141)

Many scholars opted for the importance of collocations in teaching English as second or foreign language. According to Lewis(1997 cited in Karoly ,2005:60), knowing collocations permits the learners to increase both their mental lexicon and their fluency. Collocational knowledge enables the learners develop their oral proficiency and this by making them think faster while speaking , to create an easy and effective communication using a limited number of concise words to express more than what they mean to say (Hill,2000 cited in Wang and Good,2007:03).

Furthermore , learning collocations allows the learners to improve their reading abilities and listening comprehension .In other words, it makes them realize the different ready-made chunks used by native speakers either in speech or writing and thus, select some of those items and reuse them by forming other natural and meaningful sentences according to different social situations.

Lewis (2000 cited in Farrokh,2012:56) "*encourages teachers to raise collocational awareness in learners*" who should know that the ability to understand and combine words correctly constitutes the basic elements of language learning. The teacher should keep on investigating and developing the appropriate and effective ways to motivate learners and facilitate their acquisition of collocations .This will develop the students' proficiency in English as Foreign Language in general and their writing skill in particular (Mounya,2010 cited in Bahardoust and Moeini,2012:68).

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature about collocational studies. It provides a description of the theoretical framework adopted in this investigation, and points out to the main definitions related to collocations. This chapter also tries to shed light on the notion of collocational errors in the writing skill. Thus, in the next chapter the methodological framework will be presented by explaining the procedures of data collection and data analysis.

Chapter Two : Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology to be used in this study ,which aims at identifying and analyzing the different kinds of lexical collocational errors made by first year license students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. This will be achieved by examining their exam copies of the writing module . This chapter is divided into four parts . The first presents the research method used in the study . The second deals with the sample of the work. The third describes the tools used in the data collection. The fourth one is devoted to data analysis procedures which describes the different steps followed to examine the gathered data.

1.The Research Method

To reach the highlighted objective and to be able to identify and analyze the different lexical collocational errors , the Mixed Method Research is adopted for both data collection and data analysis. This method is used in social sciences to describe "*the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods,approaches,concepts or language into a single study*"(Johnson and Onwuegbuzie ,2004:17 cited in Symonds and Gorard,2008:01).Quantitative Methods are based on the objective measurement and mathematical, statistical or numerical analysis of the collected data and this through polls , questionnaires , and surveys , or by the manipulation of pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques (Babbie, Earl.R ,2010). In other words, quantitative research focuses on numerical data collection and then generalizes it across a group of people (first year students of English) or to explain a particular phenomenon (Babbie ,Earl.R,2010). In this case , lexical collocational errors are quantified relying on the software :Statistical Package for The Social Sciences(SPSS) which is a "*software package for the manipulation and statistical analysis*

of data"(Landau and Everitt,2004:03). According to Arkkelin (2014) ,the main components of SPSS are :

1-Data Editor Window: Where data are entered to create data files;

2-Syntax Edito Window: where data are analyzed and displayed;

3-Output Viewer Window: where the results of the analysis are viewed. Qualitative approach is also adopted in this research for the explanation and description of the main collocational errors made by first year students of English in their exam papers. Qualitative inquiry *"involves purposeful use for describing ,explaining and interpreting collected data"*(Williams,2007:67)

2.Sample

The sample of this research is chosen randomly. In this method of sampling, each unit or element has the equal chance to be included in the sample (Ajay and Micah,2014:03) .This work consists of 80 exam papers to represent a population of first year students at the department of English at MMUTO .The exam question was about describing the potato crisp production process . It is worth mentioning that the papers were taken from three different groups which are taught by different teachers .This represents a good working sample to investigate the appropriate use of lexical collocations.

Furthermore, because of time constraints , this research opted for the second semester exam papers of the year 2015/2016. These copies are used in the process of identifying and analyzing the different lexical collocational errors made by first year students of English in the writing module . The learners' identities are kept anonymous in this investigation. All the writing exam copies are numbered from 1 to 80 instead of including students' names to preserve the participants privacy.

3.Procedures of Data Collection

In this investigation, eighty (80) exam copies of the writing module were used to gather

data. The students' productions are meant to be analyzed so as to sort out the different collocational errors they make and to give a complete description and a clear explanation of the situation .The corpus of the study consist of the exam papers of first year students ; this group of students is selected since the participants have normally an average and acceptable competence in English. Furthermore, these students take an exam of the first semester in the Written Expression Module for the academic year 2015/2016 .

4.Procedures Of Data Analysis

This study is conducted adopting error analysis approach and relying on Michael Lewis theory (2000) which classifies lexical collocations into seven patterns.

Most of foreign language learners face problems when putting their knowledge into practice which leads to errors . Thus, in order to analyze the different errors students make while writing, Error Analysis method is adopted which is according to Ellis (1994 cited in Al-Khresheh,2016:51) divided into four stages:

1)-Collection of a sample of learner language: in this stage a "well defined sample" of participants should be selected so as to get clear and concise results .In this study, the sample consist of paragraphs written by first year students of English in their writing exam .

2)-Identification of errors: An error is "*any deviation from what a native speaker would produce*"(Ellis,1994;Corder,1981 cited in Al-Khresheh, ,216:52). In this step, the identification of the erroneous collocational patterns is made.

3)-Description of Errors: After identifying the different errors ,the description of these errors is done through dividing them into categories and subcategories (Al-Khresheh,2016:52). The errors in this investigation are classified into seven types of lexical collocational errors according to Michael Lewis (2000) .

4)-Explanation of Errors: This last stage is devoted to the explanation and the analysis of the nature of the different erroneous patterns found in the students' compositions as well as identifying their sources (Al-Khresheh,2016:53).

. **Conclusion**

This chapter presents the methodology to be employed in the present work. It starts by presenting the used research method then it deals with the sample and the participants of the study .Finally, it shows both data collection and data analysis procedures. This chapter helps more in arranging the different data used in the study and in organizing the coming chapters mainly the following one dealing with the presentation of the findings.

Chapter Three : Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter attempts at presenting the findings of the present research which aims at identifying the different lexical collocational errors found in 80 exam papers in the writing module of first year students at MMUTO and the main types of lexical collocational errors that the students make. This   chapter starts by classifying the different errors   and   by including their correct version in the form of tables .Then, it presents the frequency of errors in the form of a diagram.

I. Types   of   Collocational Errors Identified in Students'Writing Compositions

As foreign language learners , the students of English make many errors when they try to transform the acquired items in the target language into a written product. This is noticed easily in their written compositions which show their mis-use of the different lexical collocational errors .The latters are categorized into seven types and illustrated in the following tables:

1- Adjective +Noun

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	a)Cooked in a**middle temperature**	- Cooked in a **medium temperature**
2	b)-Potato crisp falls into **little bags**	- Potato crisp falls into **small bags**
3	c)- They are in temperature cooker for **some minutes**	-They are in temperature cooker for **few minutes**

Table(4):Adjective+Noun Pattern

Table (4) represents the first type of collocational errors identified in first year students' exam papers in the writing module. Three erroneous lexical collocations were extracted from the total number of 22 errors of 'Adjective+Noun' pattern .It shows that students tend to commit errors in their writing compositions and get confused when combining the two lexical items that form the first type of collocation .

2-Verb+Noun

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	d)Salter **made salt** to these pieces	-Salter **add salt** to these pieces
2	e)The first step is we **give the potato** we put it in machine	-In the first step, we **take the potato** and we put it in the machine
3	f)- **To emballe the potato**	-**To pack the potato**
4	g)-Potato **use** steps	-potato **follow** steps

Table (5):Verb+Noun Pattern

Table (5) portrays four errors which are extracted from 45 errors belonging to the second type of lexical collocation ' Verb+Noun' . This table shows that students have the tendency to make errors when they try to find which verb collocates better with which noun .

3-Noun+Noun

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	h)**Machine of washing**	**-Washing machine**
2	i) –**The bags giving** for the salors	-**The bags delivery** for the sellers
3-	j)-**Rayons of Supermarkets**	**-Supermarket shelves**

Table (6):Noun+Noun Pattern

Table (6) indicates three erroneous collocations which are taken from 17 errors identified in the pattern of 'Noun + Noun' lexical collocation. Students make errors within this pattern since they are accustomed with a certain use and combination of these words.

4-Verb+Adverb

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	k) -The machine **send** it **electrically**	-The machine **send** it **directly**
2	l) -At the end , the potato **is sold successfully**	-At the end , the potato**is sold well**

Table (7):Verb+Adverb Pattern

The table above reveals three collocational errors to represent the erroneous category

Of 'Verb +Adverb' pattern. It is worth mentioning that these two errors are the only ones which are identified in this category.

5-Adverb+Adjective

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	m) -It is a **nicely good** experience	-It is a **quite good** experience
2	n) -**Very conscious** way of working	-**Very careful** way of working

Table(8) :Averb+Adjective Pattern Identified in First Year Students' Exam Papers

Table (8) points out the misuse of collocational type ' Adverb+Adjective' among first year students of English in their writing exam .This two collocations are the only ones found in this pattern.

6-Verb+Adjective+Noun

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	o)**Make the hot air** to potato	-**Provide hot air** to potato
2	p) **Put a great amount** of potato	-**put a large amount** of potato
3	q)-It **pass a difficult process**	-It **undergoes a difficult process**

Table(9) .Verb+Adjective+Noun Pattern Identified in First Year Students 'Exam Papers

Table(9) shows the sixth category of lexical collocation 'Verb+Adjective+Noun' . Three errors are chosen to represent this pattern knowing that 4 errors is the total number of the mis-combined words found in students' writing compositions .Students get lost while trying to put their knowledge together and moreover when they combine words of this category .

7-Noun+Verb

Examples	Identified Errors	Correct Form
1	r) **Potato will be maked** in begs for sale	**-Potato will be put** in beg for sale
2	s) –**The diagram intitulated** potato crisp production	**-The diagram entitled** potato crisp production
3	t)-**Potato are removed** to salter	**-Potato moved** to salter
4	u)-**Bags are derived** by workers	**-bags are carried** by workers

Table (10).Noun+Verb Pattern Identified in First Year Students' Exam Papers

The table above demonstrates the most common erroneous pattern among first year students of English in their writing compositions .The category of Noun+Verb is where students tend to make more errors since 59 is the number of the extracted errors and four collocations are chosen to represent the constraints that students face while combining theses two lexical items.

II. The Frequency of Lexical Collocational Errors

The diagram (1) shows the results of the frequency of the seven types of lexical collocational errors identified in first year students' exam copies of the writing module. As it can be seen from the diagram : noun+verb is the most erroneous pattern with 59 errors followed by verb +noun pattern with 45 errors. The categories of verb+adverb and adverb+adjective are the less common mis-combinations among first year students with only 2 errors for each type.
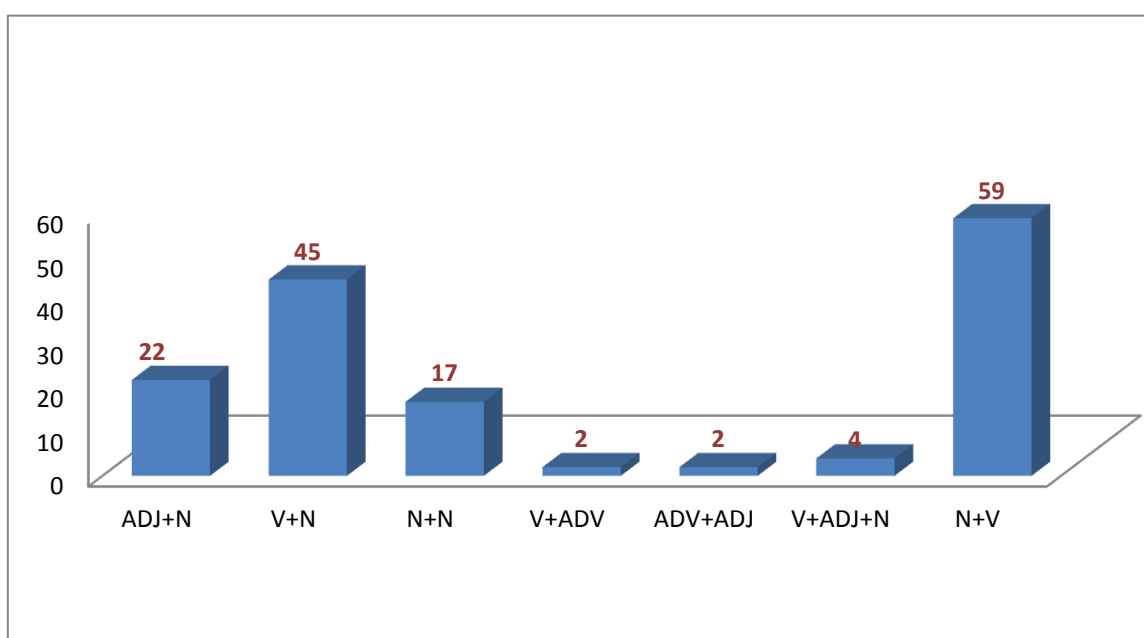
- **Diagram (1) : The Frequency of Lexical Collocational Errors**

Conclusion

This chapter tried to display the different erroneous lexical collocational patterns identified in the first year students' writing compositions. This chapter is divided into two parts ; the first part describes the different categories of errors made by the learners in a form of tables. The second part deals with portraying the errors' frequency in a form of a diagram .

From the presented data , it is noticed that Noun+Verb mis-use is the most frequent erroneous pattern among first year students' writing compositions . The next chapter attempts at discussing the different outcomes presented in this section and tries to confirm and provide answers to the suggested hypotheses in the general introduction.

Chapter Four : Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the interpretation and the discussion of the outcomes presented in the previous chapter . The different errors which are found in first year students' compositions are explained and analyzed using error analysis and relying on Michael Lewis (2000) theory of collocations in order to get answers to the research questions and confirm or refute the hypotheses advanced in the introduction. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first one deals with the analysis and the explanation of the different errors types by providing examples of the seven erroneous patterns which are identified in the corpus of eighty (80) writing exam papers. The second section focuses on the main sources behind the students' making of lexical collocational errors.

1-Interpretation and Explanation of the Erroneous Patterns Identified in First Year Students' Exam Papers

This dissertation asks two main questions at the beginning of the work. The first question is "*Do first year students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University make lexical collocational errors while writing*?". Thus, after reading and analyzing the students compositions and in an attempt to provide an answer to the presented question , it is essential to refer to the erroneous sentences found in different compositions ,which show the students'confusion in the use of lexical collocation. It is important to mention that 151 is the total number of the extracted errors .The latters are categorized into 7 patterns according to Michael Lewis (2000) classification of collocational patterns. The errors are analyzed by referring to Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009) which presents the frequent words used with each term (Duan and Qin ,2012) as well as the context in which each erroneous word is presented. Thus " *the context and the deliberate association including collocations provide connections that help learners to deeply understand a word's meaning*"(Duan and Qin

,2012:1891).It means that the context in which each erroneous word is used is important to determine which word collocates better with the other .If the context change the meaning of words changes too.

1.1.Adjective+Noun

The examination of students' writing papers reveals that the mis-use of Adjective+Noun pattern is a very common error. It was repeated twenty two (22) times in the exam writing compositions, and it is the third most frequent erroneous category in the students' exam copies .This indicates that the EFL learners encounter many problems when it comes to choosing which adjective co-occurs with which noun .

There is often a list of possible adjectives that can be used to describe the noun, but not any combination of those two lexical items can make up a collocation. There exist some nouns "*whose meaning depends on the adjectives used with them*"(Hill and Lewis ,2000 cited in Antle,2014).For example, the noun 'behaviour' is different in the collocation 'Human behaviour' and 'Social behaviour',the meaning could only be elicited from the whole collocation. The following sentences are included in table (4) of the previous chapter and show some of the wrong combinations of Adjective+noun:

a)- Cooked in a **middle** (medium) temperature

b)- Potato crisp falls into **little** (small) bags

c)They are in temperature cooker for **some** (few) minutes

In sentence (a), the mis-collocation "middle temperature" creates unnatural combination .The adjective middle is combined with the wrong noun.The adjectives (middle and medium) are used to express something in the center or a central position; however, each one is used with different nouns. The adjective "middle" is used with nouns such as: class-age-point-school-year…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The adjective 'medium' describes something which is average in size, degree ,amount and so on and it is used with

nouns as: temperature, size, height, language, transmission…(ibid).The noun "temperature" appears among the most common nouns that collocate with "medium". Thus, "**medium temperature**" is the correct and the natural collocation which fits the context of potato crisp production as well.

In sentence (b),the use of the adjective "little" is erroneous in the collocation "little bags". The word "little" is used to express emotions or the idea of smallness .The frequent nouns that collocate with this adjective are: doubt, attention, child, value, interest, impact…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The word "bag" is not an abstract word but it is something concrete that can be big or small in size. So, it is the adjective "small" that co-occurs with the noun "bag" to form the collocation "**small bags**" which is also appropriate to the context of the study.

In sentence (c), the quantifiers "some" and "few" may be confusing among learners since they express nearly the same meaning. Hence, both are used to express an unspecific number of objects or nouns. However, in the example (c) it is more appropriate to say " few" because it used to describe a small ,indefinite number contrary to "some" which describes a large ,indefinite number. In addition to this ,some is used for uncountable nouns whereas few is used for countable noun ,in this example 'minutes' is a countable noun. Furthermore, the most co-occurring nouns with the adjective 'some' are: time-way-extent-matter-point…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).For the list of the common nouns collocating with the adjective 'few' in (oxford collocation dictionary,2009) they are: minute-year-hour-mile-question-inch… The noun 'minute' appears as one of the most used nouns with 'few'. Thus, the appropriate collection is "**few minutes**".

1.2 Verb + Noun

Verb + Noun combination is the second most erroneous category identified in the corpus. It was repeated forty five (45) times in eighty(80)exam papers. There are some of the verb-

noun collocations that non-native speakers could semantically predict. For example, when the noun is "*just a typical object of the verb*", for instance collocations like: drive a car , write a letter…(Nimb,1996) .There are other verb-noun collocations which are more fixed and are unpredictable by non-native speakers. In other words ,the use of a noun with a certain verb could not be explained semantically but rather it is with convention. For example, the collocation *"pay attention"* and *"deliver a speech"* ; both the verbs *"pay and deliver cannot be replaced by synonyms"*(Nimb,1996:267).

The erroneous verb-noun collocation identified in this study belongs to the first category where the *"noun is just a typical object of the verb"*(ibid:265) .The students are not native speakers so they cannot produce fixed collocations. The following sentences which are presented in table (5) explain more the errors students make within this pattern:

d)Salter **made** (add) **salt** to these pieces

e)The first step is we **give** (take) **the potato** we put it in machine where washed.

f)To **emballe** (to pack) **the potato**

g)Potato **use steps**

In sentence (d), the verb 'to make' is used instead of 'to add', knowing that the verb "make" is used most of the time for production or creation and generally the result is something we can touch. As regards the collocating nouns of the verb 'to make' , the following list is proposed by the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009): use-decision-room-change-effort…. The collocation "make salt" means produce salt but the context of the sentence (d) is different , the salter adds salt to the potato pieces and does not produce salt. The verb "add" is used frequently with nouns as: salt, sugar, flour, egg, oil, example, power… The noun salt is among the most frequent collocating nouns with the verb "add" which are proposed by the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009). This makes the collocation "salter

add salt to these pieces" a correct and natural sounding collocation which should be used in this context.

The sentence (e) sounds unnatural and has many gaps either in cohesive devices ,punctuation and wrong choice of words. The error that concerns the category of verb-noun collocation is the wrong use of the verb "give" with the noun "potatoes". The verb "give" has the meaning of providing or offering something. In this context, it is not the fact of giving something but rather 'taking' something (potato) for a particular purpose (washing it). Thus, the collocation "In the first step, we **take the potato** and put it in the machine to be washed" is the natural sounding collocation that fits the context.

In sentence (f), the word 'emballe' created a mis-collocation. The verb (emballer) belongs to the French language which is the L2 of the students in this study .The learner made an assumption that there is a correspondence between French and English words. This L2 negative transfer leads students to produce wrong English combinations(Ellis,2008; Gass and Selinker,2008 cited in Phoocharoensil,2013:03) .In the English language, the word 'pack' should be used ;it means put something into a box or a container generally for sale .According to the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009) ,the collocating nouns of the verb to pack are (thing-bag-clothe-card-suitcase…) .Thus, the sentence "**to pack the potato**" is the right collocation ; it means in this context to put the potato inside a container to be sold.

In sentence (g), the verb "use" is combined wrongly with the noun "step". "Use" means to employ something for a certain purpose.The collocating nouns of the verb 'use' are: language-computer-resource-word-knowledge…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009). According to this list,the verb 'use' should not be used with the noun 'step' because potato does not use steps but rather follows them. The verb 'follow' in this context means to come after an order of time. The frequent nouns that collocate with the verb ' follow' are :steps-order-direction-advice-produce…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The noun 'step'

appears in the list of the most frequent collocating nouns of the verb 'use'. This makes the sentence "potatos follow steps" the correct and the natural sounding collocation that corresponds to the context since potato follows different steps to become crisps.

1.3 Noun +Noun

The mis-use of this lexical combination type holds the fourth position in the students'writings with seventeen (17) errors .This is a considerable number that implies that the learners encounter problems when it comes to putting these two items together to form a meaningful collocation. The noun-noun collocation is of great importance in English because *"It is the noun which carries most content and it is the noun which is at the center of most collocations"*(Hill,2003:51 cited in Talakoob and Koosha,2017:269).The examples taken from table (6) illustrate more the errors students make within this pattern:

h)**Machine of washing** (Washing Machine)

i)**The bags giving** (delivery) to the salors

j)**The rayons of supermarkets** (supermarket shelves)

In example (h) , the two nouns (Machine) and (Washing) are wrongly combined by using the preposition "of ".This is due to the interference of the French language where the compound word (Machine à laver) is translated directly to the target language as (Machine of Washing).In English, it is not needed to include a preposition to make a compound word but rather just put them together "washing machine" to form a correct collocation.

In sentence (i),the noun bags is not used with the right noun. This creates an erroneous collocation. 'giving' in the context of the sentence is the fact of allowing someone to have something .The frequent nouns used with 'giving' are :birth-impression–opportunity-chance…(Oxford Collocation Dictionar,2009).In the domain of industry , the noun 'delivery' should be used as it collocates with nouns as: sale-quality-order-good…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).Thus, the collocation "**the bags delivery** for the sellers" is the appropriate.

In sentence (j) ,the word "rayon" belongs to the French language, it was adopted and combined with the noun supermarket with an assumption of forming an English collocation. This created a wrong word combination which is due to the negative transfer of the French language (Sabbah,2015 cited in Thyab,2016).In English, the noun "shelves" should be used. The collocating nouns with the word "shelves" are: supermarket- library-store-cabinet-bookstore-kitchen…. (Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The noun Supermarket is one of the most co-occurring nouns with "shelves". So, the word combination "**supermarket shelves**" is the correct and the natural sounding collocation in this context.

1.4 Verb +Adverb

This category contains the lowest number of errors among the others, with only two (2) wrong combinations. This reveals the students' lack of using complex adverbs which is due to the complexity of verb-adverb collocation. *"Adverbs require a great deal of effort to be mastered"*(Narita and Segiura,2006 cited in Yilmaz and Dikilatas,2017:70). So, they tend to use familiar and simple ones .Thus, due to the students' fear of using complex verb-adverb collocation, the latter is not considered as a challenging type in this investigation. The sentences below are extracted from table (7) and include the two erroneous combinations which are identified in this category:

   k)-The machine **send** it **electrically** (directly).

   l)-At the end, the potato is **sold successfully** (well).

In the sentence (k), the use of the adverb "electrically" is erroneous in its combination with the verb "send". The adverb "electrically" collocates with verbs like: connect-charge-control-stimulate-operate….(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).In the context of potato crisp production, the different machines in this process send potato directly from one step to another and not electrically. The verb "send" is frequently used with adverbs as: Immediately –directly-only-away-just-far…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The word directly is one

of the common adverbs used with the verb "send". According to the list proposed by the dictionary and according to the context of potato crisps production; the collocation "**send it directly**" is the appropriate one.

In sentence (l), the adverb "successfully" does not co-occur with the verb "sold". The adverb "well" should be used instead. The adverb "successfully" collocates with the following verbs: work-accomplish-develop-perform….(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009). The verb "sold" is used with adverbs like: well-recently-actually-separately-directly…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).In this list, "well" is among the frequently used adverbs with the verb "sold" whereas the adverb "successfully" is not. This makes the collocation "**sold well**" the correct and the natural lexical collocation which fits the context also.

1.5 Adverb +Adjective

This category does not include many errors ; as just two (2) errors are found in 80 student's exam papers . Students rarely use this kind of complex combination for fear of making errors .Adverbs are not frequently used in academic writing and even advanced EFL/ESL learners ignore the appropriate use of adverbs (Hinkel,2004 cited in Yilmaz and Dikitas,2017:70).The following examples illustrate the two erroneous combination within this pattern:

m)- It is a **nicely good** experience (very good experience)

n)-**Very conscious** (very efficient) way of working

The use of the adverb "nicely" is erroneous in sentence (m), it does not collocate with the adjective "good ". The frequent adverbs that co-occur with "good" are :very-quite-pretty-much…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).So, the word that collocates with good is an adverb of degree either (very or Quite) depending on the degree of intensity in the context. 'Very' is a strong intensifier used with graded adjectives as 'good' .For example: extremely good, very good…etc.The adverb 'very' strengthen the adjective 'good' and makes the collocation "it is a very good experience" a strong and natural sounding collocation.

In sentence (n), the use of the adjective "conscious" is wrong. Generally "conscious" is used for persons; it means to be aware of something .For example: be conscious of a problem. In this sentence, we talk about positive work ,it is appropriate to say "very efficient" way of working. In the domain of industry, it is frequent to say efficient way .According to the list proposed by the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009), the common collocating adverbs of the adjective "efficient" there are: very –highly-quite-generally-just…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).The common collocating nouns of the adjective "efficient" are: Production-method-way-system-process…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).According to the lists proposed by the dictionary the adjective "efficient" collocates both with the adverb "very" and the noun "way" that follow it .Thus, the collocation "**very efficient way** of working" is just natural and fits the context.

1.6 Verb + Adjective +Noun

This category is not very erroneous among first year students .There are only four (4) lexical collocational errors which are identified in this investigation .This pattern contains three elements which make it the longest pattern among the six others . It is noticed that the students avoid using such complex collocations and tend to use simple ones with less elements.The following examples explain some of the learners' constraints with this category:

o)**Make** (Provide) **the hot air** to the potato

p)**Put a great** (large) **amount** of potato

q)**It pass a difficult process** (it undergoes a difficult process)

The verb "make" is one of the most mis-used verbs with other elements in this investigation. In sentence (o), the verb "make" is combined wrongly with the adjective "hot" and the noun "air". In the context of potato crisps production ,the verb "make" is synonymous with the verb "produce". In the context of sentence (o), it is not a matter of

producing hot air but rather providing hot air to the potato to dry. Thus the collocation "**provide hot air** to the potato" is the correct one.

In sentence (p), the adjective "great" is joined with a wrong noun . Both adjectives (great and large) show bigness either in size or quantity and so on but their use with the right nouns is different. According to Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009), the adjective "large" collocate with nouns like: amount-quantity-portion-group-city… .Concerning the adjective "great", it co-occurs with nouns as: extent- important- difficulty –advantage - change…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).According to the first list, the word "amount" is among the frequent nouns used with "great" whereas in the second list it is not the case .So ones the three elements of the sentence are combined together the verb;the adjective and the noun they form the collocation "**put a large amount** of potato" which is just correct and natural.

The sentence (q) includes wrong combinations of words 'it pass a difficult process'. The verb 'pass' has different meanings depending on the context. In this context, the verb pass means 'to move on'. However, the word 'pass' does not collocate with the noun 'process'. According to the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009),the frequent collocating nouns of the verb 'pass' are: time-examination-resolution-information… .In this list, the noun 'process' is not included. This means that 'process' is not collocating with the verb 'pass'. In fact, the verb 'undergo' should be used in sentence (q).According to the Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2009), the nouns used with 'undergo' are: Process-change-order-development……The noun 'process' appears in the list of the most collocating nouns with the verb 'undergo'. In addition to this, the word 'difficult' is one of the collocating adjectives with the noun 'process':Difficult-simple-different-same…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).According to the lists provided above and according to the context, it is

clear that the word combinations "it **undergo a difficult process**" are co-occurring together and make up a correct and a natural collocation.

1.7 Noun +Verb

The collocation of a noun and a verb is very powerful in English since just one noun and one verb are enough to make a sentence (Stockdale.J.G,2005) .Many errors are identified within this pattern among first year students' writing with the total of 59 lexical collocational errors. This number makes this pattern as the most erroneous type in this investigation. The examples below show some of the learners' error-making of Noun-Verb collocation :

     r)-**Potato will be maked** (put) in bags for sale.

     s)-**The diagram intitulated** (entitled) potato crisp production.

     t)-Then **potatoes are removed** (moved) to salter .

     u)-**Bags are derived** by workers

In sentence (r), the verb "make" is not used with the right noun. In this context, the verb that should be used is "put". The verb "make" is used for producing something .In the context of sentence (r) it is the fact of moving something "potato" into a precise place "bag". The frequent collocating nouns with the verb "put" are: thing-money-trust-fire-foot…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary:2009). In fact, potato is a thing that could be put inside bags to be sold. Thus, the collocation "**potato will be put** in bags for sale" is the correct words combination in this context.

In sentence (s), the word "intitulated" is erroneous. The verb "intituler" belongs to the French language which is the L2 of the participants of this study.The learner who made the error assumes that the same verb is used in English. This is due to the negative influence of the French language which results in the students making of errors (Gass and Seinker ,2001 cited in Guo et al,2004:1942).In sentence (s), the verb "entitled" should be used which is the

fact of giving a title to the diagram in this context. Thus, the collocation "**the diagram entitled** potato crisp production process" is the correct one.

In sentence (t), the verb "are removed" is wrongly used with the noun "potato" which makes the meaning of the sentence ambiguous. According to sentence (t),it is clear that the student who made the error is confusing between the verb "move" and "remove". The latter means "take off" ,for example :remove potato skin. The verb "remove" collocates with nouns like: power-doubt-barrier- portion-material...(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).In fact ,in sentence (t) the verb "move" should be used,it has the meaning of going from a place to another in a specific direction. This is the case of potato which is moved to get salt in the salter. The verb "move" collocates with nouns as: thing-person-muscle-time-right…(ibid).Since potato is a "thing", it can go from one place to another in this process .This makes the collocation "**potatos are moved** to salter" the right and the meaningful word combination in this context.

The sentence (u) shows the verb 'derived'which is mis-combined with the noun 'bags'.The verb 'derive' co-occurs with the following nouns:car-motor-system….(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009) whereas the verb 'carry' collocates with nouns like:bags-blood-weight-message…(Oxford Collocation Dictionary,2009).In this list, the word 'bag' appears as oe of the most collocating nouns of the verb 'carry'Thus the collocation "bags are carried by the workers" is the correct and natural sounding collocation.

In order to answer the second research question asked in the general introduction / *"What are the main types of lexical collocational errors do students commit?"*,we referred to The results of the analysis of the different collocational errors above. It shows that the most erroneous lexical collocation pattern among first year students' writing are Noun+Verb with 59 errors and Verb+Noun with 45 errors .Thus, this answers the second research question and confirms the suggested hypothesis.

II. Sources of Collocational Errors

One research question remains to be answered it is as follows: *"What are the main sources behind the students' making of lexical collocational errors"*. To answer this last question we have refered to the students' writing errors that provides evidence about the main sources that lead them to produce wrong and unnatural collocations.

Writing is one of the challenging skills to be mastered in English. Many EFL/ESL learners encounter a lot of problems when they try to put their English language into practical use. One of these constraints that they face is the right use of collocations.While reading their productions, one could notice easily their unnatural language. Thus,it is extremely significant to explore the major sources that lead the students to produce erroneous collocations while writing.

Depending on many studies that have investigated the issue of the sources of collocational errors and according to many scholars like: Phoocharoensil (2010),Howarth (1998), Zughol and Abdul-Fattah (2001); the main sources of lexical collocational errors are: Language transfer, synonymy strategy and repetition and overgeneralization.

1. Language Transfer

Language transfer refers to *"the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired"* (Odlin,T ,1998 cited in Bian,2013:200). This means that many lexical collocation errors occur due to the negative influence of the mother tongue. Most of the time

learners rely on their first language (L1) collocational knowledge to produce second language (L2) word combinations assuming that there is *"one-to-one correspondence between L1 and L2 collocational choices"* (Phoocharoensil,2013:02).This results in their production of wrong L2 lexical collocations.It is worth mentioning that the mother tongue of the participants of this study is Kabyle and their second language is French which they learned at an early age at school. Whereas, English is a foreign language. Throughout the analysis of the different errors, it is noticed that first year students at the department of English at MMOTO tend to use French language while producing collocations in English and not Kabyle.

The French and English language share a lot of similarities ;sometimes they use the same grammatical structure and they have many words in common.It is noticed in this study that students think in French language before they produce an English collocation assuming that there is a correspondence which result in their wrong word combinations.The following example which is extracted from the erroneous Noun+noun collocations, illustrates more the negative interference of the French language on learners:

-"The rayons of supermarkets".In this example, the learner transferred negatively both the structure and the words from the French language. In French in order to combine two nouns a preposition is required .The collocation in French will be: " les rayons de supermarché", the preposition "de" is used to put the two nouns together which is not the case in English .In order to combine two words in English one could just make them together to form a correct collocation without adding any preposition. Furthermore , the learner who made the error transferred also the word "rayons" from French .In English the word "shelves" should be employed instead which means a flat length of rigid material used for storage. Thus, the combination "supermarket shelves" is the English and natural collocation that should be used without referring to the rules and the terminology of any other language .The collocation

above is an example of many wrong collocations that are found in this study and which are due to the negative transfer of French language either in word choice like: <u>emballe</u> the potato – crisps <u>vending</u> etc..or in the structure for instance: machine <u>of</u> washing. Thus a conclusion can be drawn is that negative transfer of language is a major source of lexical collocational errors in this study.

2.Synonymy Strategy

While learning L2 collocations, students refer to synonymy strategy which aims at replacing a word with another of a similar meaning which is not always an effective method and may cause collocational errors mainly lexical ones (Phoocharoensil,2014). "The effective meanings of near synonyms are closely associated with word forms, context, and genres"(Xiao and Mcenery,2006:109). Many learners assume that they can use any near synonym to replace any word in any context which result in their making of errors.

An example is taken from the students' writing compositions: "potato crisp falls into <u>little</u> bags". The adjective "little" is inappropriately used in this context with the noun "bags". "little" is used with abstract words to express emotions or the idea of smallness. In this collocation, it is the adjective "small" is used with concrete nouns to express something which is big or small in size. Even if "small" and "little" are near synonyms ,their use depend on the context .Thus, synonymy strategy is not always an effective method and it may lead to collocational errors.

3. Repetition and Overgeneralization

Repetition is used by EFL learners as a strategy due to their lack of collocational knowledge and sometimes their fear of producing L2 wrong collocations .So, to avoid confusion and misuse of word combination, EFL learners tend to repeat a limited number of collocations with which they are familiar with (Hawarth,1998 cited in Phoacharoensil,2010).

For example in this study collocations like : "potato crisps" and "bags for sale" are repeated many times by students in their writing compositions. It is worth mentioning that these two collocations were already mentioned in the diagram and learners keep repeating theme. They can use other words like: slices –chips…. Instead of repeating "crisps".

Overgeneralization is another source of error which occurs when the learner learns a rule in the target language and assumes that this rule can be generalized without exceptions which may cause many collocational errors (Scovel ,2001 cited in Kaweera,2013). For example, the Spanish learners overuse the verbs make, do, take and have with the inappropriate noun as claimed by Zinkgraf (2008, cited in Hammidi,F,Z, 2015).In the present study, learners overuse the verb "pass" with wrong adjectives like: pass a <u>difficult</u> process – pass <u>many</u> steps…whereas in these collocations , verbs like: undergo or go through should be used.

According to the explanation and illustration above it is clear that first year students of English at MMUTO use some strategies to cover their lack of collocational knowledge which result most of the time in their production of erroneous lexical collocations. Thus, the answer of the third research question is :The main sources behind the students' making of lexical collocational errors are; language transfer, synonymy strategy and repetition and overgeneralization .

III- Interpretation and Remediation for the most common lexical collocational Errors identified in Students'Exam Papers

1)Interpretation of Verb+Noun collocational Errors

This collocational pattern holds the second position in the most erroneous patterns in this investigation with 45 errors in eighty(80) exam copies.

Verbs are important parts of speech. "*Verbs typically used in academic discourse should not be taught on their own, but together with their collocational patterns*"(Marco,2011:91).Many

reasons lead the learners to make errors while combining verbs and nouns ,among them the wrong choice of the delixicalized verb. There exist in English some verbs which are known as Delexical verbs which convey a little meaning alone and to communicate more meaning they depend on their combination with a noun ;they function as "support verbs" (Coffey, 2006 :940). The most common delixicalized verbs in English are (Have-Do-Make-Take and Give).For example, in the sentence: she has a shower, the verb "has" alone does not convey much meaning but when it is combined with the noun "shower" the sentence becomes clear and understood. This shows that some words depend on their combination with others to communicate meaning.

The choice of the right noun which collocates with the delixicalized verb is not an easy task for EFL/ESL learners; that's why they tend to make many errors when trying to form a natural collocation with these two elements. In this study, many delixcalized verbs were combined wrongly with some nouns which created unnatural collocations. For instance, in the sentence "salter **made** salt to these pieces", the verb make is a delixcalized verb which conveys a little meaning alone. Thus, when it was combined with the noun salt it becomes meaningful. However, the verb "make" is used for creating or producing something and according to the context (potato crisp production) it is not a matter of producing salt but rather just putting or adding some salt to something(potato). So, the delixicalized verb (make) was combined wrongly with the noun (salt) and this created an incorrect collocation .

2)Remediating for Noun+Verb collocational Errors

Many EFL learners know a lot of nouns , their definitions , synonyms ,plural forms and so on, but when it comes to find the right verb that co-occurs with the right noun most of them encounter constraints (Stockdale,J,G,2005).This is the case of the present work where the category of Noun+Verb is the most erroneous pattern among first year students' writings. It holds the first position in the number of errors with 59 in a corpus of 80 copies. This reveals

that the students are unfamiliar with the natural patterns which are composed of these two lexical elements. Thus, Stockdale (2005) proposed a method that helps in the teaching of the verbs that collocate with the right noun. In this section ,this method is applied to one of the most repeated nouns in this study "crisps" so as to elicit the different verbs that co-occur with this noun according to the teaching process of nouns collocating with verbs proposed by Stockdale (2005).

To know the different verbs that collocate with the noun "crisps", two fundamental questions should be asked for the learners:

-"What are some verbs for the noun used as subject ?"

-"What are some verbs for the noun used as an object ?"

To get the different verbs for the noun "crisps" when it is used as subject ,some simple questions are asked to the learners to make them understand the meaning of subject ; can **crisps** (subject) wake up at 6:00 ? (no, but crisps can fry for example).To get the verbs used with the noun "crisps" when the latter is used as an object , other simple questions are asked; can I study **crisps** (object)? (no, but I can eat crisps).Finally, the students are asked to check the word "crisps" in a collocation dictionary. The list of verbs that co-occur with "crisps" and which appears in the dictionary are (slice-fry-serve-cook-brown-burn-boil-remove-crumb-eat…..).The Noun-Verb collocations that could be formed at the end of the process are: Crisps fried-Crisps served… At the end of this process, the students should bear in mind that "*to know a noun is also to know a few of its collocating verbs*"(Stockdale,2005:01).

The method above permits to the learners to form correct noun-verb collocation. It is obvious that the participants of this study ignore this method proposed by Stockdale (2005) . This caused their making of errors and let the noun+verb collocations to be the most erroneous pattern in this work.

Conclusion

This chapter deals with the discussion and interpretation of the different results presented in the third chapter .It aims at explaining and analyzing the seven erroneous types of lexical collocations which are identified in eighty exam copies. Each collocational pattern is illustrated with examples that are interpreted and analyzed .Thus, the results of the analysis confirmed the suggested hypotheses presented in the general introduction and maintain that in fact ,first year students of English make collocational errors when writing and the main erroneous types are verb+noun and noun+verb patterns.

General Conclusion

This study aims at identifying the different lexical collocational errors that make the students' writing not proficient as well as eliciting the main erroneous lexical collocational patterns that are frequent among first year students of English at Mouloud Mammeri University. In addition to this, the investigation explored the major sources that make the students' language unnatural and erroneous. To reach the aims of this work, eighty exam copies were selected from the first year students' writing exam of the academic year 2015-2016 to be analyzed.

Three main hypotheses were advanced at the beginning of the investigation as an attempt to provide answers to the three main issues of the dissertation. The first one suggests that first year students of English make lexical collocation errors when writing .The second suggest that the main types of lexical collocational errors the students commit are :verb+noun and noun+verb patterns .Whereas the last hypothesis suggest that the main sources behind the students' making of errors are; language transfer,synonymy strategy and repetition and overgeneralization.

To confirm these hypotheses, the mixed method research is adopted in the analysis of errors which is a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative method .The quantitative method explains the data gathered from the software used in the study " Statistical Package of Social Sciences" which are the percentages of errors occurrence. The qualitative method interprets the different erroneous collocational patterns that are identified in the students writings compositions and this by relying on Error Analysis framework.

The total number of the identified errors is 151which are classified into seven categories according to Michael Lewis (2000) classification of lexical collocations (adjective+noun, noun+noun,verb+adjective+noun,verb+adverb,adverb+adjective,verb+noun   and   noun+

verb).Each pattern is illustrated by the mis-combination of words taken from eighty writing productions of first year students.

The results of the investigation indicate that first year students encounter many difficulties while associating different words together .They do not know what are the words that co-occur with some other words especially when it comes to find the noun that collocates with the right verb and to combine the verbs with the correct noun. Thus, the two main lexical collocational errors which are repeated in the majority of copies are noun-verb and verb-noun combinations. This confirms the suggested hypotheses about the two main erroneous types. Due to the their lack of collocational knowledge ,learners rely on some inefficient strategies which are most of the time the source of their erroneous language like: language transfer,the use of synonyms or repetition and overgeneralization.The mis-use of lexical collocational patterns makes the students'language sounds unnatural and their writing not proficient.

During the investigation of this work ,many challenges and constraints have been faced. The main problem is time limitation since the present study needs more time in analyzing the different data. In addition to the lack of documentations that treat collocation issue .

At the end, it is recommended that teaching lexical collocations will be included in the writing syllabus at university as a necessary element of language learning since the importance is not in knowing the meaning of different words but rather the way of putting these words together into a practical use. Thus, learning collocations permits to EFL learners to know more about the native-way of speaking and raises both their communicative and writing proficiency.

For further studies, First, it is suggested to investigate the role of collocational knowledge to improve the oral skill of the learners .Second, exploring the efficient ways to remediate for

collocational errors. Finally, investigating the teaching of collocations in the textbooks at middle and secondary schools in Algeria.

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Appendix