العنوان:	Collocation Competence Differences among Egyptian EFL Learners: A Pedagogical Perspective
المصدر:	المجلة العلمية لكلية التربية
الناشر:	جامعة الوادي الجديد - كلية التربية
المؤلف الرئيسي:	مرغني، مرغني محمود
المجلد/العدد:	ع11
محكمة:	نعم
التاريخ الميلادي:	2013
الشـهر:	أغسطس
الصفحات:	1 - 33
رقم MD:	1160232
نوع المحتوى:	بحوث ومقالات
اللغة:	English
قواعد المعلومات:	EduSearch
مواضيع:	التراكيب اللغوية، اللغة الإنجليزية، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية
رابط:	http://search.mandumah.com/Record/1160232

فروق كفاءة تراكيب المفردات اللغوية بين الطلاب المصريين الدراسين للغة

الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية: منظور تربوى

د/ مرغنى محمود مرغنى

المعهد العالى للدراسات النوعية- هرم- جيزة

ملخص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد المستويات المختلفة لكفاءة تراكيب المفردات
اللغوية بين عشرة من الطلاب المصريين الدراسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حيث
أنهم ينقسمون إلى خمسة طلاب متخصصين فى دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية بينما الخمسة
الأخرين متخصصين فى مجالات دراسية أخرى لكنهم يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض
محددة، كما تهدف الدراسة إلى تحليل تأثير المستويات المتعددة لكفاءة الطلاب فى
التراكيب اللغوية على أدائهم فى اللغة الإنجليزية، و طبقا لذلك فإن سؤال البحث الذى
تحاول الدراسة الإجابة عليه هو "إلى أى مدى تستطيع الكفاءة فى تراكيب المفردات
اللغوية التأثير على أداء الطلاب فى اللغة الإنجليزية؟" و لذلك الغرض تم إستخدام
إختبار لتحليل تركيب المفردات اللغوية، و توصلت الدراسة إلى وجود أداء متنوع بين
الطلاب الذين تم إختبارهم طبقا إلى مستوياتهم المختلفة فى كفاءة تراكيب المفردات
اللغوية .

IV-<u>Identify</u> and <u>Correct</u> errors in the underlined part of the sentence

1. You never change <u>your brain</u>. You're so stubborn.

2. Leszek Miller, the Polish Prime Minister, <u>is a born leader</u>.

3. For my birthday I got <u>a cook book</u> as a present.

4. My hair has <u>increased too long.</u> It needs cutting.

5. I'm pretty exhausted after working <u>in</u> the garden.

6. You <u>don't need to</u> dress smartly for this party.

7. I'll <u>have a joint of beef</u> for lunch.

II-Complete the missing collocates and <u>Give</u> the Arabic equivalent

1. TO MAKE [.............................]
2. TOTALLY [.............................]
3. FOOD   [.............................]
4. TO WORK [.............................]
5. A PAIR OF [.............................]
6. A CAR   [.............................]

III-Circle the correct option

1. Yesterday after work I went to M1 to (buy - make –do) the shopping.

2. I wear (casual-ordinary- common) clothes at work.

3. I have a terrible tooth (ache- pain- discomfort)

4. I overslept because my alarm clock didn't (turn off- set off- go off)

5. I bought (tin- can- mug) of white paint.

6. You work too (difficult- seriously- hard). You should go on holiday.

6 -job   [.........….......]   _____your   nails
[.....…..........]

7 -ozone   [.........…........]   _____an   appointment
        [...…...........]

8 -heart   [.........….......]_____   hurt
        [.........….....]

9 -car   [...…..….......]   _____your   own   business
[..…..…..........]

10 – a bucket [.........…......]_____ · job
[.........…......]

11 -seriously [.........…......] _____layer
[.....…..........]

12 -take it   [.........…......]   _____breaks   down
[.........…......]

Appendix A: Collocation Competence Analysis

I-<u>Match</u> words from column A with their collocates from column B and <u>Give</u> their Arabic equivalents

http://inveling.amu.edu.pl/pdf/malgorzata_martynska_inve11.pdf

A   B

1 -to make   [.......................]   _____of   water
              [.......................]

2 -to bite   [.......................]   _____seriously
              [.......................]

3 -to mind   [.......................]   _____is   beating
              [.......................]

4   -high-heeled   [.......................]_____interview
              [.......................]

5 -part-time [.......................]   _____shoes
              [.......................]

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EFL learners and their collocation competence. Such studies would enrich the EFL learning and teaching processes.

4. Further studies could examine the influence of particular teaching methods, such as the deductive approach, on the various types of collocations.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to investigate the awareness of English collocation on the part of EFL learners and the impact of that awareness on their ability to identify collocation, supply the missing part of the collocation and find and correct the collocation errors. Generally, the findings confirm the assumption that the higher the level of collocation competence, the fewer the errors made by both groups of EFL learners. Undoubtedly, the English-majoring respondents have outperformed their counterparts who are studying English as an ESP course. This indicates that the English-majoring respondents have higher levels of collocation competence than their EFL counterparts. The results of this study are consistent with those of Bahns (1993), Kuo (2009), Nessehaul (2003) and Farrokh (2012). The study has come to the conclusion that EFL learners should be aware at an early stage of learning of the proper use of English collocations. This helps develop their collocational competence.

2. EFL learners should be aware of learning English collocations, a matter that lessens their anxiety while learning English.

3. EFL teachers can help to reduce mother-tongue negative transfer by using both mother tongue and target languages when giving collocation instructions.

Suggestions for further research

Below are some suggestions for further research:

1. This study investigated one of the structural errors of collocation. That is, the noun phrase structure that consists of indefinite article, adjective and noun. Further studies could investigate other structural errors of collocation such as the verb + preposition (e.g. 'call for'), the verb + adverb (e.g. 'go ahead') and the adjective + preposition (e.g. 'proud of').

2. The present study addressed EFL learners' lexical collocation competence. Further studies could be conducted on their grammatical collocation competence. Hence, there would be a more complete description of EFL learners' collocation knowledge.

3. Further studies may also handle the relationship between the motivation, attitudes, learning styles and learning strategies of

However, because of the fact that language changes over time, this spoken language list should be continuously updated. Furthermore, the usage of dictionaries by EFL learners in the classroom will help them develop an independent learning strategy that will support their knowledge of collocations. For example, if EFL learners were to experience difficulty in understanding 'she is trying to pull his leg', they could be instructed to check their dictionaries by looking at the entry for 'leg'. That entry will provide them with full information, details and examples. Equally important and effective is material in the form of the original and authentic text. For example, EFL teachers could make use of English newspapers and magazines for reinforcing their learners' collocation competence, taking excerpts from these original texts and drawing their learners' attention to the combination of words or the structure of sentences included in those texts. Since the findings of this study have attributed collocation errors to three main reasons: mother tongue negative transfer; approximation and synonym abuse, the EFL teachers should consider the following suggestions:

1. EFL teachers should introduce English vocabulary in the form of collocation to overcome collocation errors related to approximation.

particularly to those EFL learners with poor knowledge of English vocabulary and sentence structure. Therefore, there is a dire need for different approaches and materials to be made available for the purpose of teaching collocations to EFL learners. These materials will help to reduce the EFL learners' various collocation errors. These materials include dictionaries, corpus, grids, concordances and original texts.

For example, grids are more suitable for presenting the combinations of adjectives and nouns on the one hand, verbs, and nouns on the other hand. The purpose of using grids is to demonstrate the acceptable combinations of adjectives and nouns such as 'great leader', 'qualified teachers', 'well-known players' and so on. On the other hand, Nesselhaul explained that grids' effectiveness is limited as they only handle the *form* of collocations (i.e., how collocations are structured), not their usage (i.e., how collocations can be used by EFL learners). Therefore, it is necessary for EFL teachers to introduce grids through various other learning activities in the classroom. In addition, corpus and concordances can aid EFL learners' usage of the spoken language. According to the British National Corpus (2010), there is 100-million word collection of examples of written and spoken language from various sources to symbolize a broad side view of British English in the 20th century.

Implications for the EFL teaching process

It is necessary to introduce English collocations to EFL
learners at an early stage of their learning in order to guarantee their
awareness. This awareness will facilitate their learning process and
will have an impact on their language achievement and successful
performance. In addition, EFL learners should be encouraged and
motivated to use collocations in different functional situations
within the EFL classroom. This could be done in the EFL classroom
through various activities that must be created by the EFL teachers.
Thus, the role of EFL teachers is not restricted to introducing
collocations to EFL learners and encouraging them to use such
collocations, but also includes inventing and creating functional
activities that support their learners' outcomes. This can be
attributed to the fact that collocation knowledge has a prominent
role to play in enhancing the efficiency of L2 acquisition and
achieving proper and proficient language output on the part of EFL
learners. Therefore, the researcher recommends that all English
curricula taught in Egypt should pay attention to teaching English
collocation. The preparation of EFL learners to master the use of
collocations on the basis of effectiveness and appropriateness will
enhance their ability to communicate effectively and properly. The
significance of collocations teaching can be more tangible,

Third Speaker	62.5
Fourth Speaker	40.62
Fifth Speaker	59.37

The results show that only the first and second respondents are highly competent in collocation, whereas the third, fourth and fifth respondents were much less competent. Therefore, the first and second Arabic-speaking respondents performed better than their three Arabic-speaking counterparts. Consequently, the results confirm high correlation between collocation competence and foreign language performance based on the percentage score of table no. 2. In other words, EFL learners who have high levels of collocation competence (i.e. high percentage of correct collocation cases) performed better than those who have average or low levels of collocation competence (i.e. less percentage of correct collocation cases). The results are similar to those of Bahns (1993), Nessehaul (2003), Kuo (2009), and Farrokh (2012).

meanings of the English collocates. In answering the second question, the fifth respondent did not give the English collocates; instead, he used the words to form sentences in English. Hence, he gave different Arabic equivalents from the ones that were required. His incorrect way of answering this question is attributed to his poor English vocabulary. In answering the third question, he mistakenly used '[common] clothes' instead of '[casual] clothes', and did not choose any of the suggested answers for item 4; he proposed 'turn on' instead of any of the choices he was given. He did not give the Arabic equivalents for the third and fourth questions. In the fourth question, he suggested 'idea' instead of 'brain', and '[grow] too long' instead of '[grown] too long'. His errors are related to synonym abuse in this case.

Table no. 2: Percentage of the correct cases of collocation for the Second group respondents

Speakers	% of Collocation correct cases
First Speaker	96.87
Second Speaker	81.25

and fourth questions and he gave the incorrect Arabic equivalents for most of the items included in the first question.

The fourth respondent shared the same errors of the third respondent in answering the first question. However, instead of answering the second question, he only gave the Arabic equivalents of the required English collocates. This demonstrates his poor knowledge of English vocabulary. In addition, he was confused about whether to use 'make' or 'do' the shopping, and whether tooth 'pain' or tooth 'ache' was correct. Surprisingly enough, he gave the correct answer for 'because my alarm clock didn't [set] off'. In the fourth question, he corrected 'brain' to 'mind' (his way of spelling the word), and shared the negative mother tongue transfer used by the third respondent by using the word 'become' to correct the sentence 'my hair has [increased] too long'. He gave no Arabic equivalent for any of the English collocates contained in the third and fourth questions. His errors are similarly related to synonym abuse, approximation and negative first language transfer into second language output.

Although the fifth respondent correctly answered all the items in the first question, he did not give their exact Arabic equivalents. Instead, he relied on transliteration rather than on the actual

question, he could only answer items 3, 4, and 5 correctly. Examples of his errors are 'change your [brain]' instead of change your [mind]' and 'you don't [need] to dress' instead of 'you don't [have] to dress'. He also failed to give the Arabic equivalents for any of the English collocates. His errors are classified as a kind of approximation.

In answering the first question, the third respondent made a number of errors, namely 'to bite [hurt]' instead of 'bite [your nails]', 'to mind [your nails]' instead of 'to mind [your business]', 'part-time [your business]' instead of 'part-time [job]', 'seriously [interview]' instead of 'seriously [hurt]'. In answering the second question, he failed to give an English collocate for 'food'. For the third question his errors are '[ordinary] clothes' instead of '[causal] clothes', '[can] of white paint' instead of '[tin] of white paint' and did not give an English collocate for 'my alarm didn't'. His incorrect answer for item 4 in the fourth question 'my hair has [become] too long' instead of 'has [grown] too long' is attributed to his mother tongue transfer, as in Arabic the verb 'become' is used in this context. Therefore, his errors can be classified according to synonym abuse, approximation and mother tongue negative transfer. Hence, he failed to give the Arabic equivalents for the second, third

Their errors can be categorized as such under the criterion of approximation in the case of ill-formed structures like 'a born leader' and under the criterion of synonym abuse in the case of using improper prepositions as proposed by Kuo (2009).

Analysis of the second group respondents

The first respondent successfully answered the first, second, third and fourth questions, with the exception of item 4 of the third question. That is, She used 'I overslept because my alarm clock didn't [set off]' instead of '[go off]'. In this case, the first respondent had incorrectly used an L2 combination of words to convey the meaning, which is known as approximation. In addition, the first respondent could not give the exact Arabic equivalent of 'a joint of beef': he overlooked the fact that the word 'joint' refers to a specific part of the animal's body since he did not know the meaning of this word when it is used as a noun.

The second respondent shared the first respondent's correctness in answering the first and second questions. However, in the third question, in addition to sharing the first respondent's error of using 'set off' instead of 'go off', he answered 'I bought a [can] of white paint' instead of '[tin] of white paint'. In the fourth

Speakers	% of Collocation correct cases
First Speaker	93.75
Second Speaker	96.87
Third Speaker	90.62
Fourth Speaker	90.62
Fifth Speaker	87.5

The results of the first-group respondents confirm the assumption that high levels of collocation competence are closely associated with high levels of performance. The five English-majoring respondents showed a high level of collocation performance, which was slightly varied amongst them. However, those English-majoring respondents who have a higher level of collocation competence made fewer errors than their counterparts, who have a slightly lower level of collocation competence. Most of their errors are structural in nature. That is, their errors are more related to sentence structure than to the meaning of a single word.

though all words in this sentence are English words, it does not reflect awareness of the underlying system of language which Chomsky (1965) called "linguistic competence". In other words, 'a born leader' does not constitute a proper structure of an English noun phrase. As mentioned earlier, the word 'born' is not suitable for the noun phrase. In addition, she used a wrong preposition for item 5 as she used 'at' instead of 'on'. Finally, in her answer to item 7 she omitted the preposition 'of' in the noun phrase 'a joint of beef'. Instead, she should have said 'I'll have a [plate] or [slice] of beef for lunch'.

The fifth respondent answered the first and second questions correctly. She gave perfect answers to the third question, with the exception of item 4 as she used '[set] off' instead of '[go] off'. In the fourth question, she considered 'is a born leader' to be a correct answer for item 2. In addition, she considered 'a cook book' as a correct answer for item 3. As such she proposed a new form of noun phrase structure. That is, indefinite article (i.e. 'a'), noun ('cook'), and noun ('book'). She used the preposition 'at' instead of 'in' in item no. 5.

Table no. 1: Percentage of the correct cases of collocation for the first group respondents

question. His answer was 'Leszek Miller, the Polish Prime Minister, is the man for the job'. Even though his answer is grammatically correct, it did not suit the question, i.e. 'is a born leader'. The noun 'leader' needs an adjective to form the noun phrase, which consists of an indefinite article (i.e. [a]), an adjective and a noun. Its structural phrase should be as follows:

Det + adj + n

The third respondent is a brilliant student. She gave correct answers for all questions except item 4 of the third question (where she used '[set] off' instead of '[go] off'), and item 5 of the fourth question (where she used 'in' instead of 'at' in item no. 5 of the fourth question and She also corrected item 6 of the same question to 'I have beef'. In fact, this answer changes the tense of the main sentence. The correct answer for this item should be 'I will have a ([plate]/ [slice]) of beef for lunch'.

The fourth respondent successfully answered the first and second questions. However, in answering the third question, she used '[set] off' instead of '[go] off' in item 4. In answering the fourth question, she did not correct the second item which reads 'Leszek Miller, the Polish Prime Minister, is a born leader'. Even

and '[tin] of white paint'. Finally, in the fourth question, which
includes seven items, respondents were asked to find and correct the
included errors. For example, '[cooking] book' instead of '[cook]
book', 'my hair has [grown] too long' instead of 'my hair has
[increased] too long', and 'a [great] leader' instead of 'a [born]
leader'. The respondents were also asked to give the Arabic
equivalents for the English collocates.

Data analysis, results and discussion

The study relied on the descriptive statistics of percentage
score for the purpose of data analysis. The analysis of results and
discussion are based on the three criteria set out in Kuo's 2009 study
(namely   mother   tongue   transfer,   synonym   abuse   and
approximation).

Analysis of the first group respondents

The first respondent answered the first, second and fourth
questions correctly. In response to the third question, he made two
errors as he used 'pain' instead 'ache' in item 3 and '[set] off'
instead of '[go] off' in item 4. The second respondent gave correct
answers to all questions with the exception of item 2 of the fourth

Methodology

Data were collected based on a two-page test developed by Martyńska (2004) (appendix A). The respondents are 10 randomly-selected Egyptian EFL learners. They are divided into two groups. The first group includes five students at the Languages and Translation Department, whereas the second group comprises five students at the Hotels and Tourism Department at the Higher Institute for Specific Studies. Data were collected in two different sessions; one session for each group. A session lasted for one and a half hours. All instructions were translated into Arabic for the purpose of clarity.

The collocation competence analysis is divided into four questions. In the first question (comprised of 12 items), respondents were asked to match words from column 'A' with their collocates from column 'B'. For example, 'a bucket [of water]', 'car [accident]', and 'ozone [layer]'. In the second question (which contains six items), respondents were asked to complete the missing collocates, (in the second question which contains six items) such as 'totally [legal]', 'to work [hard]', and 'a pair of [shoes]'. In the third question (which comprises six items), respondents were asked to circle the correct collocates like 'tooth [ache]', 'casual [clothes]'

male counterparts. The highest difference between both male and female students existed among the sophomore students as the mean score of male students was 24.07 compared to 14.75 for their female counterparts. Surprisingly, the first-year students achieved the highest score of lexical collocation test compared to their sophomore and junior counterparts. Their means score was 28.54, then come the junior students in the second place with the mean score of 27.80. The sophomore students had the least performance mean score of 21.88. Even though the difference mean score between the first and junior students was just 0.74, it is considered as an alarming indication for the Iranian Ministry of Higher Education. Ganji (2012) attributed the poor knowledge of the Iranian EFL learners in lexical collocations to the fact that EFL teachers in Iran do not give adequate attention to the teaching of collocations in the classrooms in additional to the lack of emphasis on collocations teaching in the English textbooks taught to the Iranian EFL learners as the English curricula in Iran have never included the teaching of collocations. The results of collocations weak performance concluded by Ganji (2012) are similar to those reported by Bahns (1993), Nesselhauf (2003) and Farrokh (2012).

adjective +noun, noun +verb, adverb +adjective, and verb + adverb. Data were analyzed by using certain analytical instruments: T-Test and One Way ANOVA. Ganji's study was significant as it was the first of its kind to elicit data related to the collocation competence of Iranian EFL learners in a comprehensive way. Furthermore, it investigated three different types of proficiency levels as the learners were from different grades at the university. The study is also distinguished as it handled collocation competence based on gender perspective: twenty five male students and eighteen female students and included different types of collocations as stated earlier in contrary to other studies conducted on Iranian EFL learners. The results of the study indicated that the selected sample of Iranian EFL undergraduate learners managed to answer only fifty percent of the designed collocation test. Their mean score was 25.65 which can be considered as an indication of their weak performance in lexical collocation, even though they had studied English for six years before joining the university. The results also indicated that the male Iranian EFL learners outperformed their female counterparts even though the difference was not statistically significant. The mean score of the male students was 26 as compared to that of the female students which was 25.16 out of 50. Based on the academic levels, the first and second –year male students out performed the female students. However, the junior female students outperformed their

Arabic sentence "al-kitab al-gadid" is translated in English as "the new book"; where the adjective "al-gadid" (which means 'new') comes after the noun "al-kitab" (which means "the book").

Furthermore, Bahns (1993) and Nesselhaul (2003) pointed out that the attempts of L2 learners to avoid negative transfer from their mother tongue may in fact cause the occurrence of approximation. That is, L2 learners may rely on approximation in order to realize their communicative goals. Lewis (2000) introduced a remedy for the occurrence of approximation, by suggesting that EFL teachers teach vocabulary in the form of collocation. This method reinforces the collocation competence of L2 learners and reduces the frequency of the occurrence of approximation.

In addition, Ganji (2012) examined the collocation competence of higher education Iranian EFL learners, namely freshmen (eleven students), sophomore (seventeen students) and junior students (fifteen students). Although the Iranian EFL learners can achieve high scores in grammar tests, their writings and their spoken language are characterized by the wrong combination of words. For the purpose of data collection, Ganji (2012) designed a fill-in-the-blank test which contains fifty items. The test covers five different types of collocations. These types are verb + noun,

that there are three reasons for collocation errors, namely (1) L1
language negative transfer; (2) synonym abuse; and (3)
approximation. "L1 negative transfer" is when L2 learners
introduce features from their mother tongue into their target
language output. "Synonym abuse" is when L2 learners recognize
the synonyms but are not aware of how to use them properly. For
instance, they tend to use 'broaden with vision' instead of 'broaden
your eyesight'. "Approximation" is when L2 learners use the words
or structure of the language they are learning incorrectly to express
their intended meaning. For example, L2 learners may use 'fell'
instead of 'failed' and 'talk' instead of 'tell'.

To reduce and eliminate synonym abuse by L2 learners, Liu
introduced the "idiom principle" (1999). The idiom principle is that
the more idioms are accumulated, the less frequently these errors
occur. To reduce the influence of L1 negative transfer, L2 learners
should be aware of the differences between their mother tongue and
the target language. This type of L1 transfer may be clearly visible
when L2 learners write compositions in English. For instance, one
of the main structural differences between Arabic as a first language
and English as a target language is the positioning of adjectives. In
Arabic, adjectives must be placed after nouns, which is a clear
contradiction with the structure of English clauses. For example, the

English-language development as the possession of "a sufficiently large phrasal mental lexicon" enables them to produce language that is "fluent, accurate and stylistically appropriate" (Lewis, 2000, p. 177). Pawley and Syder (1983), Hunston and Francis (2000) and Wray (2002) agreed with Lewis, arguing that the importance of collocation knowledge in L2 competence is beyond dispute.

Several studies were conducted to investigate levels of collocation competence in English and its effect on English language learning (Bonk, 2000; Haung, 2001; Wei, 1999; Zughoul & Hussein, 2001; Zughoul & Hussein, 2003). Sin's (1999) study found a correlation between L2 proficiency and collocation competence. Hill (2000) pointed out that many learners with a large vocabulary have problems with fluency because their competence in collocation is limited. Park (2008) conducted a study on lexical collocation used by Korean EFL college learners. The results of the study showed that there are considerably high correlations between proficiency in English and competence in lexical collocation, as well as between knowledge of vocabulary and competence in lexical collocation (Park, 2008).

Chia-Lin Kuo (2009) investigated the English-writing errors produced by 49 Taiwanese intermediate students. Kuo concluded

often associated. Thus, collocation is "a lexical relation and not subject to rules but to tendencies" (Nofal, 2012, p. 76).

The definition of collocation can be explained through three approaches, namely (1) the lexical approach; (2) the semantic approach; and (3) the structural approach (Gitsaki, 1990; Benson, Benson and Ilson, 1997). According to the lexical approach, the meaning of a word is determined by the co-occurring words (Firth, 1957; Sinclair, 1966; Halliday 1966). The semantic approach attempts to examine collocations from the semantic point of view, analyzing vocabulary separately from grammar. The main goal of the advocates of this approach is to find out why words collocate with certain other words, e.g. why we can say *blonde hair* but not *blonde car*. According to the structural approach, collocation is determined by structure and occurs in patterns. Therefore, advocates of the structural approach believe that the study of collocation should include grammar (Gitsaki, 1996).

Literature review

A large amount of research was carried out to show the importance of collocation in learning a foreign or second language (L2). The development of ESL/EFL learners' collocation competence is considered as an important dimension to their

Introduction

Alsakran (2011) argued that knowledge of vocabulary is the most essential element in learning a foreign, or second, language. However, knowledge of vocabulary requires more than just learning a set of isolated words or knowing their basic meaning. Within the realm of lexis, the area of collocation is of great importance to second-language learning in general, and word knowledge in particular. Highlighting this, Kim (2009), cited in Alsakran (2011, p. 13), argued, "Truly knowing a word means not only knowing the meaning of the word but also knowing the words with which it frequently co-occurs". Collocation is a feature that is common to all languages. It can be defined as the way words occur together in predictable combinations. The term "collocation" was first employed by Firth (1957), who is considered "the father of collocation and the developer of a lexical and the most traditional approach to this phenomenon" (Martyńska, 2004: p. 2). Collocations are usually defined as "sequences of lexical items which habitually co-occur [i.e. occur together]" (Cruse, 1986, p. 40). According to Farrokh (2012, p. 56), collocations are "recurrent combinations of words that co-occur more often than expected by chance". Understanding the meaning of a word requires knowing not only its dictionary definition but also the kinds of words with which it is

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the different levels of collocation competence amongst 10 Egyptian EFL learners (five learners are majoring in English, whereas the other five learners are studying English as an ESP course) and analyzes the impact of the learners' competence levels on their performance in English. Accordingly, the study attempts to answer the question, "To what extent can collocation competence affect learners' performance in English?" A collocation analysis test had been used for this purpose. The study indicates varied performance amongst the tested respondents according to their levels of collocation competence.

Key words: Collocation- collocates- collocation competence- L2 language learners- English for Special Purposes (ESP)- performance- mother-tongue negative transfer- implications for the EFL teaching process in Egypt.

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Dr. Marghany Mahmoud Marghany

Higher Institute for Specific Studies, Haram, Giza

2013