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A STUDY OF COLLOCATIONAL ERRORS IN INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS' ABSTRACT WRITING

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the use of English collocations in abstracts of research articles written by Indonesian advanced learners. Thirty abstracts of research articles published in National Journals were taken as the data sources. Every collocation suspected as verb-noun lexical collocation was identified. The errors were analyzed using four different English dictionaries and BNC. The result showed that 46 out of 130 were unacceptable collocations. The types of unacceptable collocations found in this study were the wrong choice of verb, wrong choice of noun, Usage 1, Usage 2, preposition-related errors, article missing, the use of a singular noun instead of the plural one, and syntactic structure wrong. Findings also showed that errors produced by learners were attributed by their learning strategy, namely ignorance of rule restrictions, false concept hypothesized, use of synonyms, and approximation. In addition, the result also showed that learners' use of collocation was influenced by their L1. The ignorance of rule restrictions seems to be the most frequently occurred. It can be concluded that main causes of unacceptable collocations were errors in verb choice and the influence of the student's first language.

Keywords: *Lexical collocations, sources of errors, EFL learners*

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Introduction

The central characteristic of knowing a word is that knowing how to use it (Lewis, 2000). However, language learners often seem to have problems with the appropriate use of words due to learners may not use the words freely. For example, it is quite possible to say *stab wounds* and *internal injuries*, but it is unacceptable to say *stab injury* and *internal wounds*. These examples have illustrated



that words are not put together in a random way to form a meaning. Learning collocation could be a solution for language learners' problems, which pertain to improper use of words (Wang & Shaw, 2008). In his study, Boonyasaquan (2006) confirmed that “when learning a new word, it is important to learn it with its frequent co-occurrence/s or word partner/s, or what is called as collocation” (p. 79). In other words, learners' knowledge of collocation influences their ability to use words accurately.

The use of collocation (word combinations such as *strong tea*, *stab wound*, *internal injuries*) is essential for language learners. It is believed that proper use of collocation allows learners' language production to sound natural and fluent (Hill, 2000; Shin & Nation, 2008; Wray, 2002); hence, this notion has attracted considerable attention from researchers. For example, Bazaz and Samad (2011) found that the use of collocation indicated English learners' proficiency. In addition, Hsu (2007) conducted a study on collocation and found that there was a significant relation between collocations and language proficiency, which was proven by a positive correlation between the learners' use of collocations and their written language proficiency. Also, Saudin (2014) investigated the realization of collocation in EFL students' written texts. He found that advanced learners used more collocations in their writings. The use of collocation, more importantly, is viewed as a way to differentiate non-native's language from the native language. For instance, to offer help to someone, the native speaker tends to say, *can I give you a hand?* Rather than saying, *can I help you?* (Farrokh, 2012).

Generally, knowledge of collocation has been recognized as an essential component of general language proficiency; however, learners often feel difficult to use collocation appropriately both in spoken and written language. Some studies were conducted by utilizing different types of collocations and learner groups with a varying background of language to see learners' problems with producing collocations. For example, by using a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Bazzaz et al. (2015) conducted a study on Iranian EFL learners' use of verb-noun collocations in spoken discourse. Their findings showed that there was a correlation between learners' knowledge of collocation and their speaking proficiency. In their study, Bazzaz et al. (2015) confirmed that among the four academic year learners, the first academic year learners tend to pose more problems with verb-noun collocations. In Taiwan, Kuo (2009) investigated the use of lexical collocations, particularly verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations in writing productions written by 49 intermediate students. The result showed that students committed errors in using collocation, and verb-noun combinations were more problematic for EFL students than adjective-noun

combinations. Also, Yumanee and Phoocharoensil (2013) conducted a study on lexical and grammatical collocations used by 60 Thai EFL students in two different levels of proficiency, namely high-proficiency and low-proficiency. In their research, they found that Thai EFL learners committed errors in using collocation in both levels of proficiency. These findings clearly show that learners pose a problem in using appropriate collocations.

Given the learners' difficulty with collocation use, several researchers have conducted some studies on the possible sources of learner collocation problems. Their studies found that the influence of learners' mother tongue to be a major source of collocation errors. For example, Said (2011) studied essays written by 40 Indonesian university students and discovered that 72% of the collocation errors were due to the negative transfer of Indonesian lexical collocations into English. Similarly, Yumanee and Phoocharoensil (2013) conducted a study on collocation errors. They found that the influence of the mother tongue played an essential role in Thai EFL students' production of collocational errors.

The findings from the previous studies on the use of collocations (e.g. Bazzaz et al., 2015; Kuo, 2009; Yumanee & Phoocharoensil, 2013) have confirmed that learners use grammatical and lexical collocations inappropriately in both speaking and writing productions. Furthermore, L1 holds a vital role in learners' collocational error productions (e.g. Said, 2011; Yumanee & Phoocharoensil, 2013). Obviously, learning collocation is necessary for language learners. Having the collocational knowledge becomes even more fundamental for learners at a higher level of education since they constantly have to deal with academic writings such as produce their own research-based academic writings. In research-based writings, e.g., *research articles* and *theses*, abstract plays an essential role as it outlines all the important points of the content study like *the research design and the objectives of the study* in a short, clear, and understandable form for readers (Kanjantira & Barraclough, 2008). Writing an abstract, however, is not only dealing with presenting contents of the study but also with the use of natural language (Thongvivit & Thumawongsa, 2017). In other words, learners need to consider the language that sounds natural for native speakers, such as *by using lexical collocations accurately*.

To see the use of language in terms of collocation produced by advanced learners in their abstract writings, Thongvivit and Thumawongsa (2017) conducted a study on the misuse of collocations in abstracts written by Thai EFL learners. Using abstracts of research articles in the field of liberal arts and humanities as data, they found that noun-preposition and verb-noun collocations were the most frequently misused grammatical and lexical collocations by Thai EFL learners. These findings have confirmed that

advanced learners still have problems in producing native-like language in their abstract writings of research articles due to the lack of knowledge in using collocations.

The ability to write a well-written abstract using natural-sounding language such as *the use of appropriate collocations* is also necessary for Indonesian EFL advanced learners since they engage with academic contexts. However, the studies on collocations in our country mainly focused on collocations found in essay writings (e.g., Hamzah, 2013; Lubis, 2013; Saudin, 2014) and final test writing (Arliza, 2013), yet few studies have been conducted on other types of academic writings. Hence, a study focusing on collocations used in different kinds of academic writings such as abstracts of research articles is necessary. The recent study aims to explore the use of collocations in abstracts of research articles written by Indonesian EFL advanced learners in terms of types of collocational errors made by the learners and the possible factors that cause learners to make mistakes in producing collocation.

Nesselhauf (2005) argues that collocation is a problem in learning a language because learners consistently produce various types of errors in using collocation, and such errors deal with various reasons. Also, Hsu (2007) asserts that the use of collocation can be an indicator of learners' quality of writing produced in terms of native-like language. Thus, it is necessary to explore the use of collocations in terms of types of collocational errors as well as some possible sources of such errors in learners' written language. For these reasons, this study investigates the use of collocations that are found in the abstract writings of research articles written by Indonesian EFL learners and suggests some possible implications relating to English collocation errors. This study addresses to answer the following questions:

1. What is the frequency of each type of collocational error in terms of verb-noun collocation?
2. What are some possible sources of collocational errors found in the abstract writings?

Research Methods

Design

The data of this study showed a general feature which aligned this study into qualitative research, namely non-numerical data which was then analyzed by a non-statistical method such as explanation (Dornyei, 2007). This study aims to find out whether the English lexical collocation has been used properly in Indonesian English writing, in this case, the abstracts of research articles in the field of English Language Teaching. For this aim, this

study attempted to identify the suspected lexical collocations according to criteria in choosing verb-noun collocation set up by Benson et al. (1997) and Nesselhauf (2003). According to Benson et al. (1997), verb-noun collocation is about a combination of words that consists of a verb and a noun/pronoun/prepositional phrase. In terms of restrictedness of the verb-noun combination, Nesselhauf (2003, p. 225) suggested that words, in this case, verb-noun, can be combined with only if the verb (noun) has a “restricted sense”. Based on these criteria, this study defined a verb-noun collocation as a combination of a verb and a noun/pronoun/prepositional phrase that one of the constituents of the combination has a restricted sense, which means a word does not go with other words freely. Then, all collocations were categorized according to the typology of lexical collocation by adopting a framework from Benson et al. (1997). The present study followed Nesselhauf’s (2003) types of verb-noun collocational errors in classifying the types of lexical errors in verb-noun combinations. There were eight groups of verb-noun errors as follows:

Table 1. Framework for Classifying Types of Errors in Collocations

No.	Types of Errors	
1.	Verb	Wrong choice of verb (or non-existent verb)
2.	Noun	Wrong choice of noun (or non-existent noun)
3.	Usage 1	Combination exists but is not used correctly
4.	Usage 2	Combination does not exist and cannot be corrected by
5.		Exchanging single element
6.	Preposition	Preposition of prepositional verb missing, present though unacceptable, or wrong
7.	Determiner	Article missing, present though unacceptable
8.	Structure	Syntactic structure wrong

The classification of sources of errors in this study is proposed by Liu (1999a), who classified sources of collocational errors into six types. The classification of sources of collocational errors is shown in the following table.

Table 2. Classification of Sources of Collocational Errors

No.	Categorizations of Sources of Errors
1.	Negative interlingual transfer
2.	Ignorance of rule restrictions
3.	False concept hypothesized
4.	Overgeneralization
5.	Use of synonyms
6.	Approximate translation

Participants

Thirty abstracts of Indonesian research articles written from 2023 to 2024 were selected as data source. Only works written in this recent period were selected in order to discover the usage of verb-noun collocation. To

build a corpus of English abstracts, this study focused solely on the abstracts of research articles in the Journals of English Language Teaching, namely *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra (BAHTERA)*, *Journal of English Language Teaching (ELIF)*, and *English Language in Focus (SCOPE)*. It is logically necessary for choosing a particular area of language use since the word combinations (e. g collocation) are different from other areas of language (Benson et al., 1997).

Instrument

In terms of confirmation e.g. misused words combination, some instruments were used such as British National Corpus and four English dictionaries namely, Oxford collocations dictionary for students of English (8th ed) (2010), The BBI Dictionary of English word combinations (2nd ed) (1997), Oxford advanced learners' dictionary (8th ed) (2010), and Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (11th ed) (2003). These four English dictionaries were selected due to the reliability of their publisher. These dictionaries are considered to be used worldwide because they provide a complete understanding about the collocates of a word and put a greater focus on co-text (Woolard, 2000).

Data Collection

The data collection was done through these steps. First, 30 research articles were selected from National Journals of English Language Teaching that provide an electronic collection of research articles. After that, the writer copied and saved all the abstracts of the articles in Ms. Words. Then, all the suspected lexical collocations were identified by selecting manually and highlighting every verb-noun. Afterward, the writer put the suspected lexical collocations on a table. If the suspected collocations appeared five times in five different texts and were found in one of the dictionaries, they were grouped into acceptable collocations and vice versa. Afterward, the collocational errors found were listed in a table according to the typology of syntactic structures (e.g. verb-noun pattern) proposed by Benson et al. (1997).

Data analysis

To answer the primary research question of this study, the collocational errors were classified based on the typology of types of collocational errors proposed by Nesselhauf (2003). Meanwhile, to answer the second research question, each type of error was analyzed in order to find some possible sources of errors according to Liu's theory (1999a). This analysis was conducted by giving a description of each of sources of collocational errors by providing some examples obtained from the extracted

data. Then, some implications related to data finding in the perspective of some scholars e.g. (Hill, 2000, p.65) and (Nesselhauf, 2003, p.237-238), were suggested. The data analysis procedures of this study were as the following steps:

First, all verb-noun collocations were generated. Then, all acceptable and unacceptable verb-noun collocations were identified. The unacceptable collocations were classified based on their types of errors. Each type of errors were quantified. After classifying the types of errors, some possible sources of errors were analyzed. The possible sources of errors found in the study, then, were classified according to their types of sources of errors. Finally, sources of errors were discussed by providing some examples of extracts.

Results and Discussion

Results

The Frequency of Each Type of verb+noun Collocational Errors in the Abstract Writings of Indonesian EFL Learners

In regard to the first research question “What is the frequency of each type of error in terms of verb-noun collocation?”, this study defined collocation as frequent word co-occurrences in certain ways, i.e. based on patterns (Benson, 1997) and restricted sense of one of the constituents (Nesselhauf, 2003). The result showed that there were 130 verb+noun collocations in the corpus. A total of 84 collocations out of 130 collocations produced by the learners were acceptable, and a total of 46 collocations were unacceptable. After identifying the erroneous verb-noun collocations in the corpus, the errors were classified based on the framework proposed by Nesselhauf (2003, p. 225) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Types of Collocational Errors Found in the Learners' Abstract Writing

No.	Types of errors	Examples	Occurrences (Percentages)
1.	Wrong choice of verb	<i>comprehend</i> difficult words (<i>understand</i> difficult words)	23 (17.69%)
2.	Wrong choice of noun	limit the <i>research</i> to (limit the <i>study</i> to)	5 (3.84%)
3.	Usage 1 Combination exists but is not used correctly	mix element in to (mix element <i>into</i>)	1 (0.77%)
4.	Usage 2 Combination does not exist and cannot be corrected by exchanging single elements	improving student's simple past tense (improving student's knowledge of simple past)	2 (1.53%)
5.	Preposition		

No.	Types of errors	Examples	Occurrences (Percentages)
	a) Preposition is not used	a) describe the data ∅ (describe the data <i>in</i>)	1 (0.77%)
	b) Wrong choice of preposition	b) focus <i>in</i> code-mixing (focus <i>on</i> code-mixing)	8 (6.15%)
			10 (7.69%)
6.	Article missing	use ∅ speaking test (use <i>a</i> speaking test)	2 (1.53%)
7.	Noun is used in the singular instead of the plural	encounter large <i>class</i> (encounter large <i>classes</i>)	2 (1.53%)
8.	Syntactic structure wrong	make the students become more active (the students become more active)	1 (0.77%)
Total number of errors and percentage			46 (35.38%)

Table 3, showed that verb-related errors was the most frequently occurred, especially the wrong choice of verbs (17.69%). The second most frequently erroneous item was the preposition-related errors (7.69%). Concerning the preposition errors, the most noticeable ones were the wrong choice of the preposition (6.92%), followed by a missing preposition (0.77%). The third item was the wrong choice of the noun (3.84%). This finding showed that the use of determiner was still problematic for the learners, even the advanced learners (1.53%). The result also showed that advanced learners still committed errors in constructing a correct English sentence. There was an example of a syntactic pattern-related error (0.77%). Type of usage 1, which showed that the combinations existed but not in a correct form only occurred ones (0.77%). Usage 2 which refers to the non-existent combination, meaning the combination can not be corrected by exchanging a single element, occurred more frequently. It was two times (1.53%).

Some Possible Sources of Errors

The second research question was “What are some possible sources of collocational errors found in the abstract writings?” The results showed that 41.30% of the collocational errors were attributed to the ignorance of rule restrictions, followed by synonyms (23.9%), false concept hypothesised (21.73%), and negative interlingual transfer (10.86%). The least influential factor was a paraphrase, constituting only 2.17 % of total errors.

Table 4. Some Possible Sources Collocational Errors

No.	Source of Errors	Example	Occurrences (Percentages)
1	Negative interlingual transfer	Improve student's <i>skill to speak English</i> (<i>English speaking skill</i>)	5 (10.86%)

No.	Source of Errors	Example	Occurences (Percentages)
2.	Ignorance of rule restrictions	Focused <i>in</i> code mixing (Focused <i>on</i> code mixing)	19 (41.30%)
3.	False concept hypothesised	<i>Improve</i> their critical thinking (<i>develop</i> their critical thinking)	10 (21.73%)
4.	Synonymy	<i>Comprehend</i> the difficult words (<i>Understand</i> the difficult words)	11 (23.9%)
5.	Paraphrase	<i>reached</i> the learning outcome (<i>achieved</i> the learning outcome)	1 (2.17 %)
Total			46 (100%)

Discussion

The result of this study showed that the type of errors committed by the learners were caused by five possible sources of errors: *the influence of negative interlingual transfer, ignorance of rules restrictions, false concept hypothesized, the use of synonym, and paraphrase*. Each type of errors was discussed based on what caused it errors as follows:

Negative interlingual transfer refers to the negative influence of the learner's L1 on the acquisition of an L2 (Liu, 1999a). This type of error occurs when the learner turns to his or her own L1 for help e.g. *using direct translation or literal translation*. Many factors that lead to negative transfer have been taken into consideration, such as cultural differences, thought patterns, comprehension process of the students. The findings of this study showed that the non-nativeness of learners' language was influenced by negative inter-lingual transfer.

There were three types of errors that were caused by the influence of negative transfer, namely error related to numbers, usage 2, and syntactic structure. Examples of the inaccuracy of the learners in using numbers e.g. *learners used singular forms instead of plural forms*, indicated the influence of negative interlingual transfer as in (1). The following examples might be related to the fact that Indonesian tend to use a singular form instead of plural form to express the words *class* and *problem*. In his study on verb-noun collocation, Hong et al. (2011) also found that Malaysian EFL learners also committed the number-related errors when they produced collocation such as "*saw two girl*" instead of "*saw two girls*". According to Hong et al. (2011), the reason why learners produced this expression was that Malaysians do not use plural form to say the plural noun for the context as the given example.

(1) [...] using reference books translation to study independently, and to shape their own strategies for solving language *problem*.

An example of learners' inaccuracy that was related to usage 2 e.g. *the combination does not exist and cannot be corrected by exchanging single elements*, included (2) which was supposed to add a noun before the phrase *simple past* e.g. *knowledge of* to make the combination acceptable. Regarding this finding, Hong et al. (2011) also found that the learner produced "*story about the tragedy*" instead of "*tell the story about the tragedy*".

(2) [...] gives the positive significant result in improving *students' simple past tense*.

The examples that showed the inappropriate use of syntactic structure were in (3) and (4). In (3), the learners tend to say "*to improve students' skill to speak English*" instead of "*to improve students' English speaking skill*" as the target expression. It can be seen that learners used a longer expression as the result of using literal translation which is understandable when it was translated back into Indonesian e.g. *meningkatkan kemampuan siswa untuk berbicara bahasa Inggris*, but it was not acceptable English collocation. The example in (4) showed that the syntactic pattern of the sentence showed L1 language feature e.g. *membuat para siswa menjadi lebih aktif*. Nesselhauf (2003) also found that the erroneous collocation which is related to the wrong syntactic structure, e.g. "*make sb. friends*" instead of "*make friends with sb.*" was as the result that learners were influenced by their native language to produce the target collocation. These type of errors indicated that learners lacked of collocational knowledge.

(3) [...] the application of the TPR method to improve *students' skill to speak English*.

(4) [...] using song makes the students become more active.

Ignorance of rules restrictions is about the lack of knowledge about some restricted rules in specific structures. Language learners account for their analogy and failure to observe the restrictions of existing structures (Liu, 1999a). Thus incorrect rules seemed to be employed frequently. There were four types of errors that were caused by ignorance of rule restrictions, namely preposition-related errors, wrong choice of verb, wrong choice of noun, and missing article. Examples of types of errors that caused by inaccurate preposition forms include (5), (6), and (7). These examples showed that learners tend to ignore the restriction of the rules. They used the preposition "*in*" instead of "*on*" for "the word "*focus*" and "*in*" rather than "*with*" for the word "*troubles*". Another example is in (8), the word "*into*" was used instead of "*to*". These errors might be due to the carelessness of certain types of linguistic rules, language learners tried to apply the acquired structures to any similar cases and failed to identify the difference between different structures (Liu, 1999a).

- (5) This research only focus *in* code mixing.
- (6) Many students have troubles *in* reading the required books [...]
- (7) This study, then, assigned the subjects *into* [...]

The sentences below were the examples of the wrong choice of the verb (8), wrong choice of the noun (9), and missing article (10) respectively.

- (8) [...] after *carrying out* a remedial teaching.
- (9) [...] the students have achieved good *category*.
- (10) [...] the data of students' speaking skill were collected by using \emptyset speaking test.

The example, in (8), the learner used the word "*carrying out*" instead of "*giving*" to express the target collocation e.g. "*give a remedial teaching*". It indicated that they did not know the precise word to get the acceptable collocation for the intended meaning. The example (9) showed the word "*category*" was used instead of "*degree*" to express "*achieved degree*" as the target collocation. Furthermore, the example (10), showed that the learner did not use the article. Nesselhau's study (2003) also found that the non-existence of non-lexical words e.g. *article and determiner* can make the collocation unacceptable. These three examples indicated that the learner did not become aware of the restriction rules with which the words should be combined and what non-lexical element should be used to produce an acceptable collocation.

The errors arised from learners' misconceptions of distinctions in the target language (Liu, 1999a). They take it for granted that one word can be substituted for another randomly. This study found two types of errors related to learner's misconception, namely the wrong choice of a verb as in (11) and wrong choice of a noun as in (12).

- (11) It could helps students *improve* their critical thinking.
- (12) [...] to improve student's reading *comprehension*.

For example (11) and (12), learners seem to be confused with the words that have different denotative meaning, but they share a near synonym-meaning. For example, learners used the word "*improve*" to express "*develop their critical thinking*" as the target collocation. The word "*improve*" and "*develop*" have different denotative meaning. The word "*improve*" means "to make better" and this word is related to words e.g. *enhance* and *enrich*. Meanwhile, the word "*develop*" is about "to be more advance cognitively" and this word related to the word *advance*. In other words, these two words have a near-synonym meaning in terms of making something to grow, but the two have a different function in terms of the context. In this case, learner used the word that does not fit the target context.

There were two types of errors caused by the use of synonym strategy, namely wrong choice of verb and wrong choice of noun. The

following sentences exemplified learners' errors because of synonym strategy.

(13) This study *employed* questionnaire to collect the data of the students.

(14) The researcher limited the *research* to grammatical errors only.

For example (13), a learner used the word "*employ*" instead of "*use*". According to the Oxford Dictionary (8th ed, 2010, p.480), the word "*employ*" is defined as "to use sth such as skill, method, etc. for a particular purpose". This word has "*use*" as its synonym word. In this context, "questionnaire" should go with the verb "*use*" to form an acceptable collocation. Similarly, the example (14) showed that learners used the word "*research*" instead of "*study*", but the verb "*limit*" in this context should go with "*study*". In learning English words, most learners tend to remember the English form and depend a lot on their L1 equivalent (Liu, 1999a). Therefore, they used the word "*employ*" and "*use*" as well as "*research*" and "*study*" interchangeably since these two words can be covered by the same Indonesian equivalent e.g. "*menggunakan*" and "*penelitian*" respectively. However, their usage is quite different since each word has its own way to collocate with other words in order to obtain a particular meaning based on the context.

Approximate translation is a strategy to paraphrase the thought from L1 to L2 (Liu, 1999a, 2000). Sometimes students relied on their intuition to create collocations of their own and choose approximate translation as another strategy other than a literal translation. The verb "*reached*" in (15) showed that the learner used a word that shares enough semantic features to satisfy the target collocation e.g. "*achieved*" in order to grasp the intended meaning. Interestingly, the error that was caused by approximate translation only occurred ones. It might be the writer were advanced English learners.

(15) Sixty percent of all students *reached* the learning outcomes [...]

Conclusion

There were eight types of verb-noun collocational errors found in the learners' abstract writings. Indonesian EFL learners' error in producing acceptable collocation were attributed by five possible factors. The first factor was ignorance of rule restrictions, e.g. *focused in code-mixing* instead of *focused on code-mixing*. Misconceptions of distinctions in the target language occurred, for instance, *improve their critical thinking* instead of *develop their critical*. The next source of error was a synonymy strategy. Another factor was an approximate translation strategy. It refers to those who used vocabulary items or structures or morphological features that shared enough semantic features. The last factor was that Indonesian EFL learners' collocation productions have been influenced by their L1. In light of the

difficulty of the production in collocations, the findings of this study showed that learners are in need of more practice producing collocations. Therefore, different kinds of activities can be used to improve learners' receptive and productive skills.

Some limitations were identified in this study as follows: 1) the subjects are limited to a small number of Indonesian EFL learners' writing which could not represent all teaching and learning situations; 2) since the subjects in this study were learners with strong learning motivation, it was worthy to include more learners from different field; 3) due to time and resource restrictions, the data collected in this study are only a part of students' performance. 4) since the size of the data was quite small due to the selection criteria, the result could not be generalized for all Indonesian EFL learners. Further research in the field of collocation could continue the study using the following ideas: 1) this study only looked for errors in verb-noun collocations. Further types beyond this kind of collocation need to be identified. 2) this study focused on students' lexical collocational competence ;further studies might wish to consider the students' ability with grammatical collocations. 3) future study could also investigate the relationship between EFL students' collocational competence and their academic success. It would be of great value to understand whether or not collocational knowledge helps students to increase their academic achievement.

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