Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Overview

Collocation means a natural combination of words; it refers to the way English words are closely associated with each other. For example, 'pay' and 'attention' go together as pay attention, 'blond' goes with hair and 'heavy' with rain.

Since 1930s, English language teachers have been persuaded to take into account the co-occurrence of particular words and they also come to know that the influence of language depends on learning to use these co-occurring words.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005 p: 293) defines collocations as "a *combination of words in a language that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance: 'responding success' and 'crying shame' are English collocations*". This co-occurrence of words together will help university EFL learners to speak and write English in a more natural and accurate way. However, many other definitions have been raised about collocations from different Linguists. For instance,McCarthy (2008) states that *"Acollocation is a combination of two or more words which frequently occur together*". It means that it's not just a combination of any words together but it needs to know which words can co-occur

together. For instance, we say making friends rather than getting friends or heavy rain, not strong rain. Collocations enhance improvement of learners' oral communication, listening comprehension, reading speed, so that teaching collocations enable learners to be aware of language chunks used by native speakers in speech and writing. The first British linguist who brought the idea of English collocation was Firth (1957 p: 165) described language in both linguistics and situational context in his work "*you shall know a word by the company it keeps*". Using natural English collocations is one of the challenges that adult second language learners have to deal with in their process of English language learning. They often come across quite a large number of difficulties in all language skills. These difficulties vary in their intensity and nature depending on a variety of variables such as students' native language, background, age in addition to personality.Moreover, Palmer (1933 p: 32) uses the term collocation and defines it as two or more words which co-occur and must be learnt as an integral whole on whole. He claims that "*even a selection of common collocations exceeds by for the popular estimate of the number of using words contained in an everyday vocabulary*". This means that, these collocations need to be meaning units in using correct words that co-occur together. However, Bahn (1993) points out that "*there are tens of thousands of collocations and this is an obstacle to reach collocations systematically*". This means, it's difficult for learners

of English to know which words collocate, as natural collocations are not always logical, because there is no reason why we say making friends rather than getting friends, in addition to the famous linguist Peter, Ann. (1977, 1983) also emphasizes learning words as groups which comprise the units of first and second language acquisition. In line with the above mentioned studies, Anderson and Nagy (1991), elaborate on the significance of deep meanings including collocation properties in words, they also claimed that "*students have to know the words that put together*" .This means that, learning collocations is an efficient way to improve the learner's language fluency.

Collocation knowledge helps learner to create more native-like sentences. In addition, the most frequent collocations will usually be useful because they have a chance of being met and used. Nation (2001) states that, "*students need to use collocation in their* writing *so as to develop their writings*".

1.1Statement of the StudyProblem:

Collocations are a challenging area of English language in both learning and teaching, because they are problematic for university learners in terms of usage.

Collocations create some troubles for university EFL learners of English language due to the nature of collocation's structure in English and the interference of mother tongue. For example, Arabic speakers say drink tea instead of sip tea, drink cigarette

instead of smoking cigarette , quick food instead of fast food , take a bus instead of catch a bus ,and catch a taxi instead of take a taxi.

This study attempts to investigate these problems and difficulties which face university students in using collocations. The correct usageof collocations is one of the serious difficulties faced by university learners of English especially those who learn English as aforeign language (EFL).These problems are shown by the fact that, many universitiesEFL learners fail to decide which collocations should follow a certain verb or adjective.

1.2Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1- To investigate the challenging and difficult areas in using natural structure of English collocations which face university EFL learners so as to raise students' awareness of different types of collocations and facilitate to grasp the meaning.
2- To endeavor to find out suitable solutions to these problems so as to promote self-confidence in using collocations and to show more techniques that can be beneficial in using and understanding collocations.

3- To identify the area of difficulties which are encountered by university learners in using English collocations in order to investigate reasons behind these difficulties.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study arises from the necessity in helping universitystudents with collocations to avoidconfusion in usage.

This study will be beneficial to both university students and teachers of English language. The result of this study will be implemented to promote the university students performance to use collocations properly as well as to build vocabulary and enrich their writing and speech.

This study is valuable in building university students' confidence in dealing with collocations, and provides them with tools to help and enable them to make the meaning more comprehensible.

The significance of studying university learners' errors makes immediate contribution to the task of language teaching. Thus, the importance of this study stems from the significance of English collocations as well as error analysis studies.

This study will be beneficial touniversity EFL learners especially students of translation, providing them with tips to avoid using literal translation.

1.4 The StudyQuestions

In this study, the following questions have been raised:

1-To what extent are university EFL learners poor in using collocations?

2-What are the causes of the weakness in using collocations among university EFL learners?

3- To what extent does the interference between university EFL learners' first Language (L1) affect the usage of collocations onsecond Language (L2)?

1.5 The StudyHypotheses:

In considering the questions of the study, certain hypotheses have been formulated. These hypotheses can be stated as follows:

1-University EFL learners are poor in using collocations.

2-There are many causes behind the difficulties that face university EFL learners in using collocations.

3-There are strong correlations between university EFL learner's mistakes in using English collocations and their mother tongue in terms of translating possible equivalents.

1.6 Methodology of the Study

The current study will use the descriptive and analytical method. The researcher will employ a questionnaire as a tool for data collection which will be administrated to third year students of English language at Alneelain University.

1.7 delimits of the Study

This study will be limited to the problems of using and understanding collocations facing university EFL third year students in department of English, Faculty of Arts in the Academic year 2017-2018 atAlneelainUniversity.

1.8Outlines of the Study

The present study will be arranged into five chapters as follows:

Chapter one will include introduction, the statement of the problem, hypotheses of the study, and methodology of the study.Chapter two will provide a theoretical review of the literature relevant to this study. Chapter three will describe the method of the study. Chapter four will include the data analysis, results, and discussion. Chapter five will comprise the summary of the study, conclusion, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with reviewing some definitions of collocations, classification of collocations, and importance of collocations, list of collocations; In addition to that it will deal with some previous related studies and the summary of the chapter.

2.1 Various Definitions of Collocations

  The origin of the term collocation is the Latin verb (collocatus) which means to set or arrange in place or position; especially to set side by side. The word collocation itself can be traced as far back at the first time in 1513, according to Merriam Webster dictionary (2016).

 Since the early introduction of the notion of collocation by Palmer in (1938), and its first used as a technical term by Firth in (1957), a number of definitions have been advanced for the term collocation as the researcher mentioned them in chapter one an overview. Sinclair defines collocations as "*the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text*" (1991, p: 170). A clear and well phrased definition is Lewis (1997, p: 44) who explains that" *collocations are those combinations of words*

which occur naturally with greater than random frequency ". Hence, collocations refer to words which are combined together. Any words combination that don't exhibit frequent co-occurrence are not classified as collocations. For example, blonde hair is a collocation, but black hair is not normally categorized as a collocation. The researcher considers that this arbitrariness represents the area of difficulties for university EFL learners in using natural English collocations because it doesn't follow any logic, but it is only based on linguistic conventions. Moreover, this arbitrariness is only explaining why we say to break rules, but not to break regulations, to hold a funeral but not to hold the a burial , to make an attempt but not to have an attempt , to have a try but not to make a try , (Sinclair 1991, p :107). In addition to the arbitrary nature of collocations, which requires memorizing possible word combinations in every language for effective production, the meaning of words may be determined by their collocations. This is what some linguists refer to as a collocation restricted meaning such as (Caristers and McCarthy, 2002), give more examples about the meanings of the word white changes in each of the following collocations: white coffee, white wine, white noise, white man, and white lie. Likewise, a full understanding of the word heavy requires knowing it's meanings in heavy man, heavy rain, heavy meal, heavy traffic, and heavy smoker. The researcher believes that, it's not easy to master English collocations without practicing them and to know which

words can collocate together because some of university EFL learners think they use English collocations naturally when they speak, but in fact they use them unnaturally.

2.2 **Classification of Collocations:**

Classification of collocations relies on the word class of the combining words. For example, Benson et al (1986) divides collocations into two major groups' lexical collocations and grammatical collocations, which consist of preposition-noun, adjective-preposition, and noun-infinitive. McCarthy (2008) divides lexical collocations into the following:

2.2.1 Lexical collocations: are composed of two or more words as:

Verb- noun: commit crime.

Noun-noun: surge of anger.

Noun – verb: an opportunity arises.

Adjective – noun: plain truth.

Adverb – adjective: stunningly attractive.

Verb-adverb or prepositional phrase: burst into tears.

Noun – adjective: handsome boy.

2.2.2 **Grammatical collocations:** is a phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, and verb) and a preposition or

grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause as illustrated below:

Noun – preposition: an increase in

Preposition – noun: in advance or on probation.

Adjective – preposition: afraid of or interested in.

Verb – preposition: familiar with.

2.3 Types of Collocations patterns

There are many linguists wrote about patterns of collocations. Moreover, McCarthy (2008 p:8) classifies these patterns into strong collocations, fixed collocations, and weak collocations. They will be illustrated as follow:

2.3.1 Strong collocations

A strong collocation is one in which the words are very closely associated with each other, for example, the adjective mitigating always collocates with circumstances or factors; rarely collocates with any other word, inclement weather, deliriously happy and blond hair are strong collocations.

2.3.2 Fixed collocations are collocations so strong that cannot be changed in any way. For example, *I was walking to and fro.* This means I was walking in one direction and then in the opposite direction, a repeated number of times. No other words can replace *to* or *fro* or *and* in this collocation. It's completely

fixed. The meaning of some fixed collocations cannot be guessed from the individual words which are called idioms.

2.3.3 **Weak collocations**: are made up of words that collocate with a wide range of other words. For example, you are in broad agreement with someone. This means generally in agreement with him. However, broad can also be used with a number of other words as, abroad smile, abroad accent, and abroad avenue. These are called weak collocations. The researcher considers these patterns are important ones; especially university EFL learners should pay attention to use appropriate patterns of English collocations.

2.4. **Importance of Collocations for Second Language Learners**

The importance and value of collocations for university EFL learners can help them at different levels, to communicate well in both spoken and written language especially at the early stages of learning then learners will be fluently and accurate in the advanced levels. There are many linguists theories assumes the importance of English collocations such as Hill (2000, p:53) estimates that "*collocations are found in up to 70 % of everything we say, hear, read, or write*", in addition to that Lewis (2000) considers collocations as" *the most common and most representatives of English multi-word expressions*". A language phenomenon with such high frequency of occurrence deserves

considerable attention. Besides, the using of prefabricated chunks reduces processing effort, and enhances language comprehension and productions. (Cantos and Sanchez, 2001, Wiktorsson, 2003, Schmitt, 2000) point out that "*It is thus high recommended to train learners on the identification, memorization, and retrieval of readymade collocations instead of letting them create deviant word combinations".* The researcher agrees with this idea because learning readymade collocations is more useful and easy than creating deviant word combinations. In addition to that, Aghbar (1990) in his study emphasizes on the importance of collocations and indicates that "*the reason EFL learners have poor performance in the test of short formulaic expressions is not simply lack of vocabulary but insufficient acquision of language chunks*". This means, any language consists of idioms, proverbs, sayings, collocations, short set of expressions, and long set of expressions are a vital elements of language capability and they are used to distinguish native speakers from non-native speakers. In addition to that, Nattinger and Decarrico (1992) in their book lexical phrase and language teaching also record formulaic units or lexical phrases, including collocations, as the very center of language acquision and they provide some applications of lexical phrases for language teaching including teaching spoken discourse, listening , comprehension , reading and writing. In recent years, more researchers and language teachers have advocated the significance of collocations in language development and teaching. Laufer, B.

(1988) pointes out in his research; "*collocations are superior to using encyclopedic knowledge to solve lexical ambiguities*". As a result, the book teaching collocations further development in the lexical approach. Collocations enormously contribute to the efficient language comprehension and prediction, regarding comprehension memorizing chunks to help learners predict the content of texts, and automatically enhance comprehension.

In conclusion, collocations are considered as a key component of language competence. The fact that collocations are arbitrary, highly frequent in natural language and unpredictably varied across languages call for special attention to their teaching in second language classes, in addition to that, collocations largely contribute to the definition of word meanings, reduce processing load during language usage and support learners on the path of efficient comprehension and production. It is due to this importance of collocations that research studies are identified in this area.

2.5 Collocation in First and Second Language Acquisition:

Any language has collocation and Brown (1974) was one of the first few pioneers to propose the incorporation of collocations for EFL learners.

Learning collocations is not only increase university EFL learners of collocations but also improve learners' oral fluency, listening comprehension, and reading speed. Additionally, Brown points

out that "*learning collocations enable learners gradually to realize language chunks used by native speakers in speech and writing so as to get the feeling of using words in natural combination with other words as well*". The importance of collocations in the process of first language acquisition is highlighted by Wray (2002, p: 128). He describes several essential roles of collocation in learning first language. By usage of collocations, young children supplement gestures and other nonlinguistic behaviors when conveying salient messages prior to the development of their rule-governed language. Thus, children store and usage complex strings before developing their grammatical knowledge. For example, a child may produce the string what's that? before they know the internal make up of wh-questions. Another role that their usage of collocations can play is to reduce the child's processing load once novel construction is possible. This allows the child to maintain fluency while obtaining control of processing. The significant role of collocations in the acquisition and use of a first language is also underlined by Peters (1983). In her study, Peters reveals that, "*young children adopt both a gestalt (holistic) and an analytic (inferential) approach to acquiring a language*". Children begin by extracting speech formulas from adults and then store and later reuse them creatively as both analyzed or segmented units and unanalyzed or whole chunks. In the field of second language acquisition, children seem to have many advantages over adults with regard to the acquisition of

collocations. Leaving aside the biological factor, children interact with other children who are very lenient to incomprehension. There are many researchers' and linguists are pointed to this area which considers as important area of collocation in first and second language acquisition.

In conclusion, findings in the area of both first and second language acquisition have underscored the role of collocations in language acquisition. While collocations are important building blocks in children's language acquisition, the researcher believes that collocations play a significant role in adult second-language learning. The current study will find out the needs for developing university EFL learners' collocation knowledge, which will result from the process of learning and storing the collocations they encounter.

2.6 **How to Learn Collocations:**

There are many steps which play an important role in the process of learning collocations especially university EFL learners. Here are some steps cited from corpus linguistics as follow:

1-Be aware of collocations, and try to recognize them when you see or hear them.

2-Treat collocations as a single block of language think of them as individual blocks or chunks.

3-When you learn a new word write other words that collocate with it.

4-Intensive reading is an excellent way to learn vocabulary and collocations in context.

5- Revise what you learn about collocations regularly.

6- Try to practice new collocations in context as soon as possible after learning them.

7-Learning collocations in groups as collocations of time, weather, family, or by particular word as take action, take a chance, and take an exam.

2.7 List of Collocations:

Here are short lists of collocations to give university EFL learners more ideas about them. Many good learners' dictionaries show collocations associated with specific words. There are also dictionaries of collocations; here are common collocations of some common verbs:

Collocations by using make and have as:2.7.1

Have	Make
Have a bath	Make a different
Have a brink	Make noise
Have a good time	Make an effort
Have a hair cut	Make furniture
Have a holyday	Make progress

Have a problem	Make trouble
Have a relationship	Make a mess
Have a rest	Make a mistake
Have a lunch	Make money
Have a sympathy	Make progress
	Make room
	Make trouble
	Make a profit
	Make a suggestion

Source: The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English 1990.

The table (2.7.1) shows the importance of using collocations by using the verbs have and make and the words which follow them. It's natural English to say have a rest or lunch, but it's unnatural English to say make a rest or lunch. Any mixes between tables makes it unnatural English.

2.7.2 **Collocations by using do and get:**

Do	Get
Do business	Get a job
Do nothing	Get a shock
Do someone a favor	Get angry
Do cooking	Get divorce
Do the house work	Get drunk
Do the shopping	Get frightened
Do the washing up	Get home
Do your best	Get lost

Do your hair	Get married
Do your home work	Get permission
Do something wrong	Get pregnant
Do something right	Get ready
Do the dishes	Get upset
Do damage	Get a life
Do laundry	Get the impression
Do good	Get wet
	Get worried

Source: The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English 1990.

The table (2.7.2) shows the list of English collocations by using do and get, both of them are mostly common in everyday English. Most of university EFL learners may confuse in terms of usage. When we say do your homework means to make efforts to achieve it. To get worried means to feel nervous and uncomfortable so, the meaning between two do and get are different according to their context.

Collocations by using take and break as following:2.7.3

Take	Break
Take a break	Break a habit
Take a chance	Break a leg
Take a look	Break a promise
Take a rest	Break a record
Take seat	Break a window
Take a taxi	Break someone's heart

Take an exam	Break the ice
Take notes	Break the law
Take someone's place	Break the rules
Take someone's temperature	Break

Source: The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English 1990.

The table (2.7.3) shows collocations by using take and break. The meaning between two verbs are different according to their context. To take someone's place means to replace him, while to break the rule means to disobey it. if university EFL learners' change any list of certain words, it will be un natural English so, university EFL learners' should know which words can co-occur together.

2.7.4 Collocations by using catch and pay as following:

Pay	Catch
Pay a fine	Catch a bus
Pay attention	Catch a ball
Pay by credit card	Catch fire
Pay cash	Catch sight of
Pay interest	Catch someone
Pay someone a compliment	Catch a cold
Pay someone a visit	Catch a thief
Pay the bill	Catch someone's attention

Pay the price	Catch someone's eyes
Pay your respects	Catch the flu

Source: The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English 1990.

The table (2.7.4) shows collocations by using pay and catch. To pay someone a visit means to visit him, while to catch someone's attention means to attract him. University EFL learners should be aware to distinguish between words which follow pay and catch.

Collocations by using save and keep as following: 2.7.5

Save	Keep
Save electricity	Keep a diary
Save energy	Keep a promise
save money	Keep secret
Save one's strength	Keep an appointment
Save someone a seat	Keep calm
Save someone's life	Keep control
Save something to a disk	Keep in touch
Save space	Keep quite
Save time	Keep the change
Save yourself the trouble	Keep someone's place
Save someone's place	
Save electricity	
Save energy	
Save money	

The table (2.7.5) shows collocations by using save and keep which are considered to be as common collocations that are used in everyday English. To save money in the table above means to save it in the day that you need it, while to keep the change means to be up to date about current affairs.

Collocations by using come and go as following:2.7.6

Come	Go
Come close	Go abroad
Come complete with	Go astray
Come direct	Go bad
Come early	Go bald
Come first	Go bankrupt
Come into view	Go blind
Come last	Go crazy
Come late	Go dark
Come on time	Go deaf
Come prepared	Go fishing
Come right back	Go mad
Come second	Go missing
Come to a compromise	Go on foot
Come to a decision	Go online
Come to an agreement	Go out of business
Come to an end	Go overseas
Come to a standstill	Go quite

Come to terms with	Go sailing
Come under attach	Go to war
Come to total of	

Source: The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English 1990.

The table (2.7.6) shows collocations by using come and go. Both of them are important in helping university EFL learners to know which words can go together with the verbs come and go. When you say they come to an agreement means, they are on the table of agreement and to go overseas means to go round the world. These tables help university EFL learners to use collocations properly and speak more naturally.

In conclusion, collocations play an important role in first and second language learning and they are considered as a key component of language competence so, this will help university EFL learners to add especial flavor to their speech because some individual words cannot collocate with certain group of words due to the different range of lexical items as shows in the tables above.

2.8 Previous related Studies

The previous studieswhich have been investigated are relevant to this study. Most of the studies endeavor to find out the nature of the problems and errors that were made by the learners of English

as a foreign Language (EFL), when using collocations. So, the researcher demonstrates the aims and the findings of each study, as well as the recommendations and the researcher points of view about each study.

The First study was conducted by Elsir Mohammed Abdalla (2015) supervised by Dr. Mohammed EltayebAbdalla, under the title "*Investigating collocations Knowledge among Learners of English as a foreign Language*" 4th level, College of Languages, Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST). He used test as a tool for data collection. He tested hundred students at third and fourth level learners of English as second language, Sudan University of Science and Technology. Data were collected and analyzed statistically by (SPSS) program. The result was inadequacies in the subjects as shown by the score of the test, below the score. The reason behind that is mother tongue interference, Interlingua, and numerous of synonymous of lexical expression, similarity. Elsir comes to conclude that the performance was unsatisfactory. In addition he suggests the raising awareness of collocations among teachers and learners thoroughly. The researcher agrees with him about the pedagogical solutions for collocations errors and problems, consequently, the researcher would like to see that collocation should be at the early stage of foreign language learning so as to improve their knowledge of collocations.

The Second study related to research was edited by Muiz Mohammed Ubeid, WadiAlneel University, (Valley Nile University 2014), supervised by Dr. Ahmed Abulgasim Osman, under the title" Investigating The Ability of Students of English to Use Collocations in Writing" at Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST). The tool for data collocation was a test which includes different questions on collocations. The test distributed to forty students, random choice for testing. Ten were retested for the reliability; the data were collected and analyzed by using the statistical program (SPSS). The result stated that the students' performance was weak according to the many mistakes they made, and that was created by the ignorance of collocations. The researcher agrees with Muiz about the difficulties and problems that encountered the students of English (EFL), but the researcher disagree with him about the way he tested the students, because writing is not an easy task. So, writing might be the main reason behind poor performance. The test will be better if it is a tick or a cross, to check the knowledge of collocations, and other types of questions that test the problematic area of using collocations.

The Third study was submitted by Mustafa Abdalla (2011) attempts to investigate the knowledge of collocation because it is a problematic area for EFL/ESL learners. The aim of the study is to come out with constructive recommendations for both teachers and learners in order to improve the process of teaching

and learning language. The subjects of the study were one hundred and fifty students drawn from second, third, and fourth year majoring in English from Khartoum University, Faculty of Arts. A collocation test of 50 items was used to collect data. The data have been statistically analyzed by using the (SPSS) packages. The findings of the study indicated that the subjects' knowledge of collocation is poor. The result of the statistical analysis indicated that there is a significant difference in students' knowledge of collocation among the three levels. It reveals that the adjective-noun is the easiest, while verb-noun is found to be the most difficult one. The researcher recommends that teachers should enable students to be aware of collocations through making more emphasis on collocation while teaching English.

The Fourth study related to research was conducted by Younis (2008). He investigates Sudanese EFL learners' collocation knowledge and assessed the majoring causes of learners' collocation problems. He administrates a collocation test of 42 items to 312 students in their final B.A year at six Sudanese Universities. He reaches to the following results: firstly, there was a deficiency in the subjects' collocation knowledge. Secondly, there were significant differences in the subjects' performance in the 4 collocation patterns. He attributed the deficiency in the subjects' collocation knowledge to a number of reasons such as (1) reliance of the subject on lexical overgeneralization. (2) Negative interlingua transfer. (3) Synonyms and insufficient exposure to the

quality of the input. There is relationship between the researcher study and the above ones. The researcher agrees with Mustafa in the difficulty of lexical collocations and recommendations for teachers to shed light on collocations. The researcher also agrees with Younis concerning the reasons of the difficulties that have mentioned in the three points above.

There is another study by Bahn and Eldaw (1993). They used translation and close test to investigate 58 German advanced EFL students' productive knowledge of English verb + noun collocations. The German University EFL students participated in the study were divided into two groups, one group of students took a close test including 10 sentences, each sentence had a verb + noun collocations with the verb missing. The other group took a German English translation test consisting of 15 sentences; each sentence has a verb + noun collocation. Only about half of English collocations used by students in both tests were found to be accepted. Even in translation test, in which there were more than twice as many errors in their translations of verbal collocate as in their translations of general lexical words. The researcher comes to the conclusion that collocation is a problem, even for advanced students.

In conclusion, the previous related studies have come out with a clear evidence that EFL learners are poor in using collocations due to many reasons such as interference of mother tongue,

ignorance of collocations in the way of teaching English and negative interlingua transfer. They also come out with recommendation for teachers to improve the process of teaching and raising awareness of collocations among teachers and learners thoroughly. Thus, in contrast with the previous studies, the present study expects to add more points for university EFL learners not only to be aware of collocations but also to build the self confidence in dealing with collocations also enable them to make the meaning more comprehensible in addition to avoid making mistakes in using English collocations.

Summary of the chapter

This chapter consists of conceptual framework, definitions of collocations, the importance of collocations, classification of collocations, collocations in first and second language a acquisitions, and part two which consists of the previous studies about collocations that are related to the research. The next chapter (Chapter Three) will be devoted for Methodology.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the methodology of the study. It will describe the methods and techniques adopted, the instruments, the population, the sample and the procedures of data analysis.

3.1 The Research Methodology

In this study an analytical descriptive method has been used to analyze the data collected. It adopts quantities in its design. This study investigates the university students' problems in using collocations in English language.

3.2 Population of the Study

The subjects of this study involve both male and female learners of the Third Year majoring in English Language at the Department of English Language, Alneelain University, Faculty of Arts for Academic Year 2017-2018.

3.3 Instruments

Instruments of a study are the tools, for the required data for the study. In this study a questionnaire has been utilized to collect data.

3.4 Sampling

The sample of this study is selected randomly from the population. The sample of the study consists of 50 learners male and female.

3.5 Content of The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 15 statements which design to check wither the learners strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree. See (Appendix).

3.6 Validity of The Questionnaire

The first draft of questionnaire is presented to supervisor who made some modifications in addition to 4 Ph.Ds. holders who helped in proof reading and making some modifications.

3.7 Reliability of The Questionnaire

The reliability measure is analyzed by using   SPSS (Statistical packages for social science). Validity and reliability are important aspects to the questionnaire, this   ensures the quality of the instrument which is used throughout this study.   The statistical value of reliability confirms the three hypotheses all together as strongly agree 40,8%, agree 41,2%, neutral 26,4%, strongly disagree 22,2% and disagree 19.4%.

3.8 Procedure of Data Analysis

The obtained data were collected from the participants' responses. Then, every single paper inserts into SPSS. Frequencies and percentage were calculated for each statement. The tables and charts in chapter four will provide further demonstrations and explanations.

Summary of the Study

In this present chapter the researcher gives full description of the research population, sample, tools, validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

The next chapter "Chapter Four" will be devoted for data analysis.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis, Results and Discussions

4.0 Introduction:

In this chapter, the researcher analyzed the questionnaire, displayed and also discussed the results of the analysis.

4.1 Analysis of university Students' Questionnaire:

Statement No (1) Verbs which collocate with nouns are difficult to university students to whom English is a Foreign Language.

Table one :(4.1) Results of Statement (1).

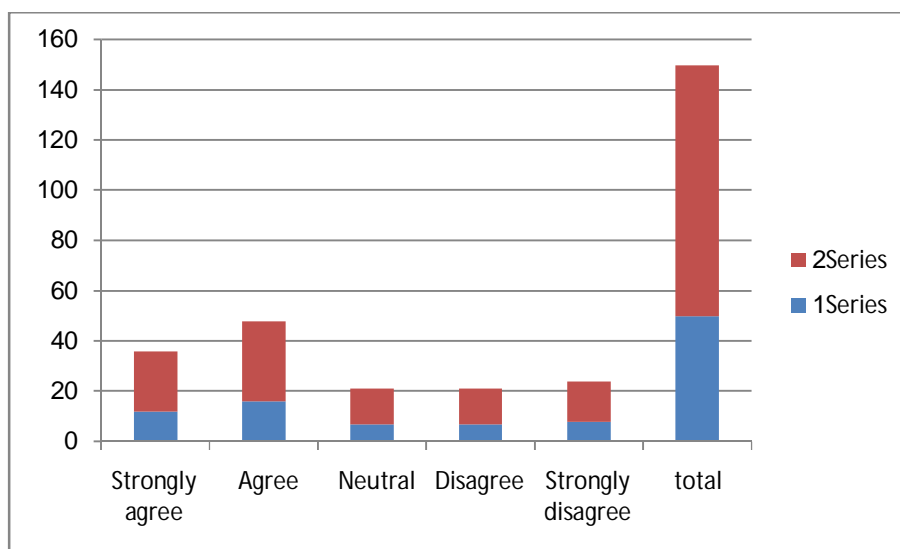| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	26%
Agree	17	34%
Neutral	8	16%
Disagree	4	8%
Strongly disagree	8	16%
Total	50	100%
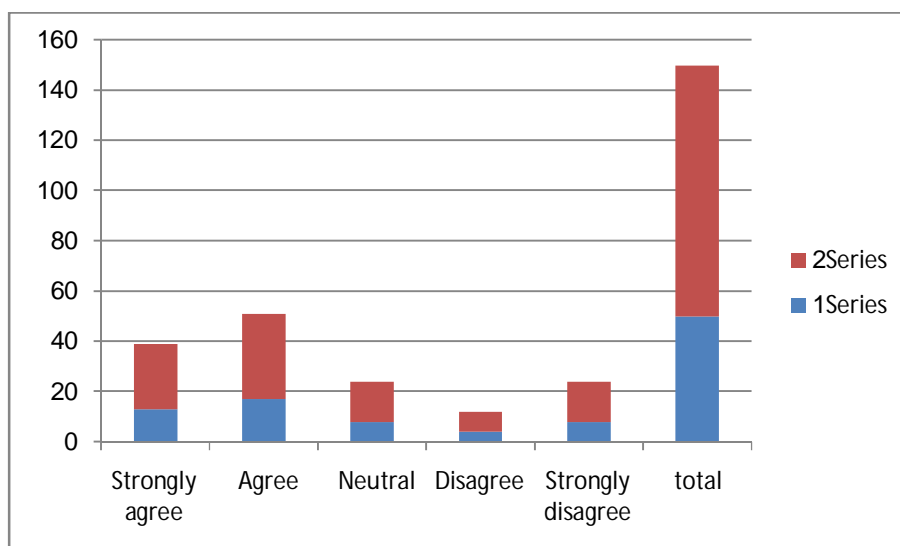
Diagram [4.1] shows the distribution of the sample of statement one.

The tables and figures above show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (26%), agree by (34%) , neutral by (16%), disagree by (8%)and strongly disagree by (16%). This result indicates that verbs collocate with nouns are troublesome to university students to whom English is a Foreign Language.

Statement (2): Verbs which collocate with prepositions expressions are difficult for university EFL Learners.

Table (4.2) Results of Statement (2):

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	24%
Agree	16	32%

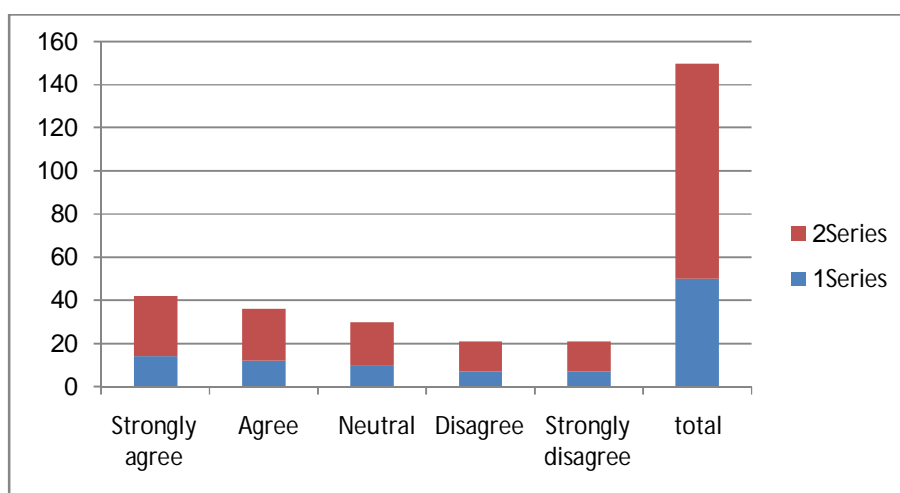| Neutral	7	14%
Disagree	7	14%
Strongly disagree	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.2) shows the distribution of the sample of statement two.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (24%), agree by (32%) , neutral by (14%), disagree by (14%) and strongly disagree by (16%). This result indicates that verbs collocate with prepositions expressions are difficult for university students to whom English is a Foreign Language.

Statement (3):Verbs which collocate with adverbs are difficult for university EFL Learners.

Table (4.3) Results of Statement (3):

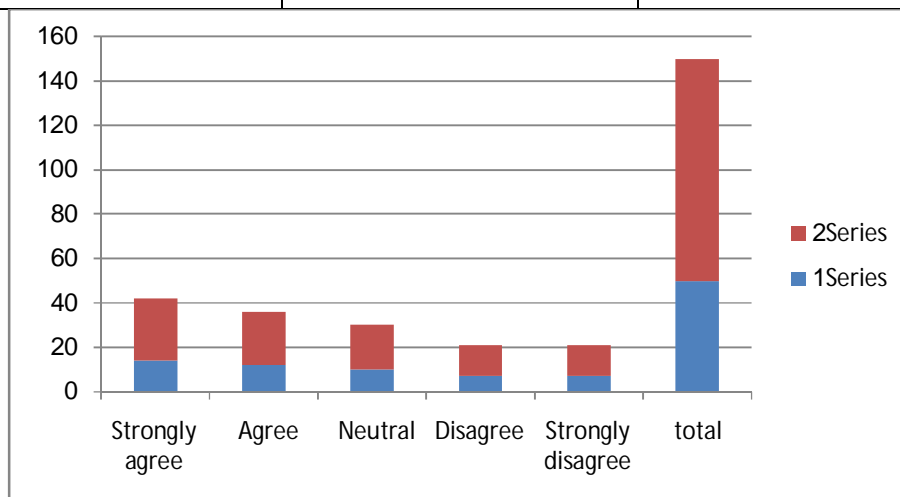| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	28%
Agree	12	24%
Neutral	10	20%
Disagree	7	14%
Strongly disagree	7	14%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.3) shows the distribution of the sample of statement three.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (28%), agree by (24%) , neutral by (20%), disagree by (14%) and strongly disagree by (14%). This result indicates that verbs collocate with adverbs

are troublesome to university students to whom English is a Foreign Language. This relevant to first hypotheses that students are poor in using collocations due to the structure of English collocations.

Statement (4):Adjectives which collocate with nouns are troublesome to university students to whom English is a Foreign Language.

Table (4.4) Results of Statement (4).

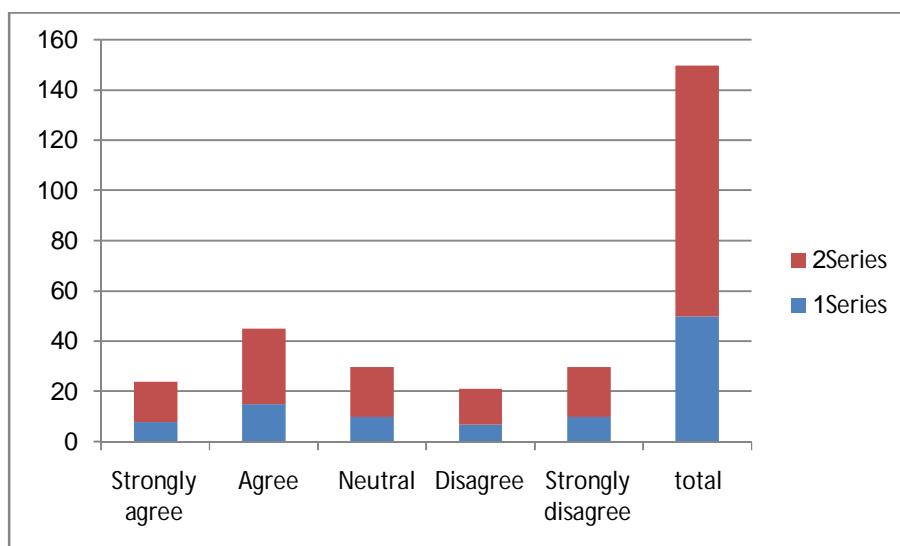| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	9	18%
Agree	14	28%
Neutral	10	20%
Disagree	9	18%
Strongly disagree	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.4) shows the distribution of the sample of statement four.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (18%), agree by (28%) , neutral by (20%), disagree by (18%) and strongly disagree by (16%). This result indicates that adjectives collocate with nouns are troublesome to university students to whom English is a Foreign Language.

Statement (5):Adverbs which collocate with adjectives are problematic area for university EFL Learners.

Table (4.5) Results of Statement (5):

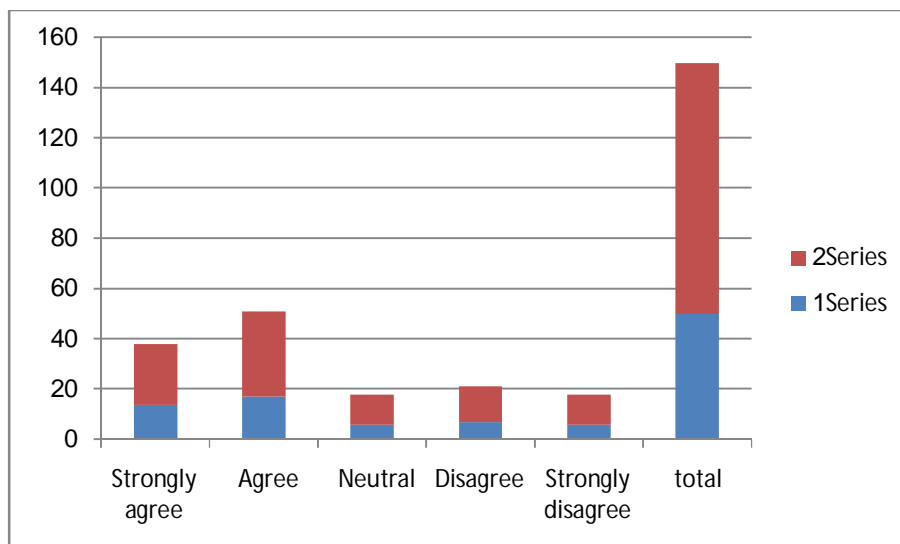| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	16%
Agree	15	30%
Neutral	10	20%
Disagree	7	14%
Strongly disagree	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.5) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (16%), agree by (30%) , neutral by (20%), disagree by (14%) and strongly disagree by (20%). This result indicates that adverbs collocate with adjectives are problematic area for university students to whom English is a Foreign Language. This approved the first hypotheses.

Statement (6):University EFL learners do not have enough information to understand collocations.

Table (4.6) Results of Statement (6):

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	28%
Agree	17	34%
Neutral	6	12%
Disagree	7	14%

Strongly disagree	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.6) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (28%), agree by (34%) , neutral by (12%), disagree by (14%) and strongly disagree by (12%). This result indicates that university EFL learners do not have enough information to understand collocations.

Statement (7):University EFL learners should be exposed to enough practice on how to use collocations.

Table (4.7) Results of Statement (7):

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	28%

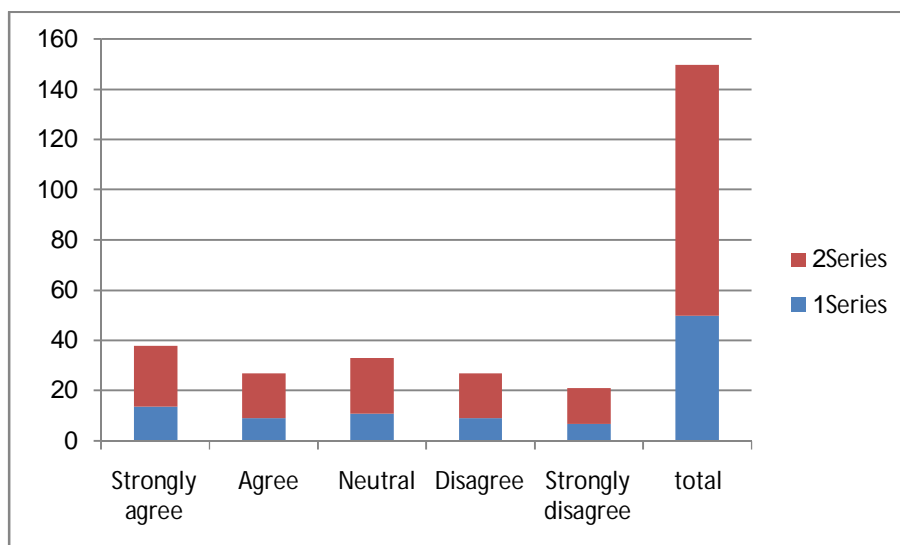| Agree	9	18%
Neutral	11	22%
Disagree	9	18%
Strongly disagree	7	14%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.7) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (28 %), agree by (18%) , neutral by (22%), disagree by (18%) and strongly disagree by (14%). This result indicates that university EFL learners should be exposed to enough practice on how to use collocations.

Statement (8): The meanings of some collocations represent great difficulties for university EFL learners.

Table (4.8) results of statement (8)

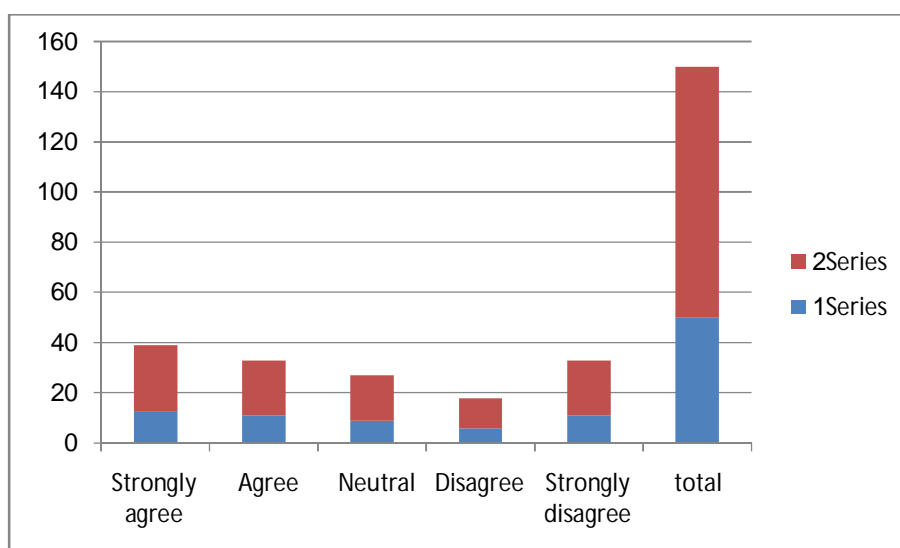| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	26%
Agree	11	22%
Neutral	9	18%
Disagree	6	12%
Strongly disagree	11	22%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.8) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (26%), agree by (22%) , neutral by (18%), disagree by (12%) and strongly disagree

by (22%). This result indicates that the meanings of some collocations represent great difficulties for university EFL learners and this approved the second hypotheses.

Statement (9): Teachers should include collocations in English Syllabus.

Table (4.9) results of statement (9)

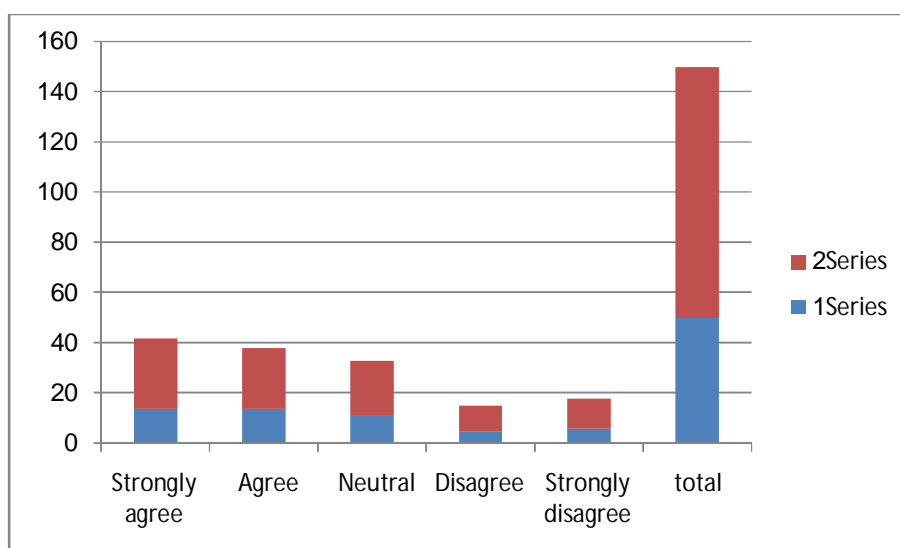| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	14	28%
Agree	14	28%
Neutral	11	22%
Disagree	5	10%
Strongly disagree	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.9) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (28%), agree by (28%) , neutral by (22%), disagree by (10%) and strongly disagree by (12%). This result indicates that teachers should include collocations in English syllabus.

Statement (10): Raising university EFL learners' awareness of collocations play a great role in developing learners' using of them.

Table (4.10) results of statement (10)

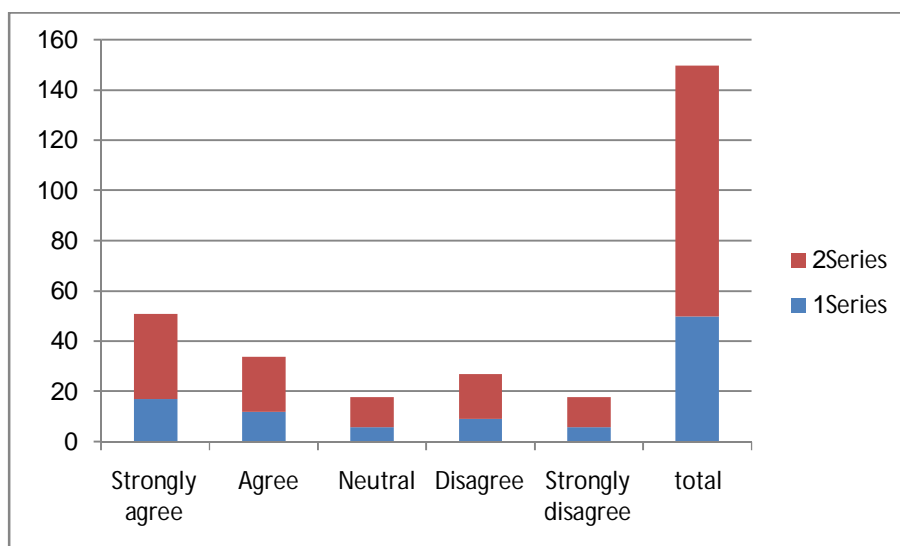| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	34%
Agree	12	24%
Neutral	6	12%
Disagree	9	18%
Strongly disagree	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.10) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (34%), agree by (24%) , neutral by (12%), disagree by (18%) and strongly disagree by (12%). This result indicates that raising university EFL learners' awareness of collocations play a great role in developing learners' using of them.

Statement (11): The problems of collocations might be due to complexity of understanding the collocations themselves.

Table (4.11) results of statement (11)

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	20	40%
Agree	11	22%

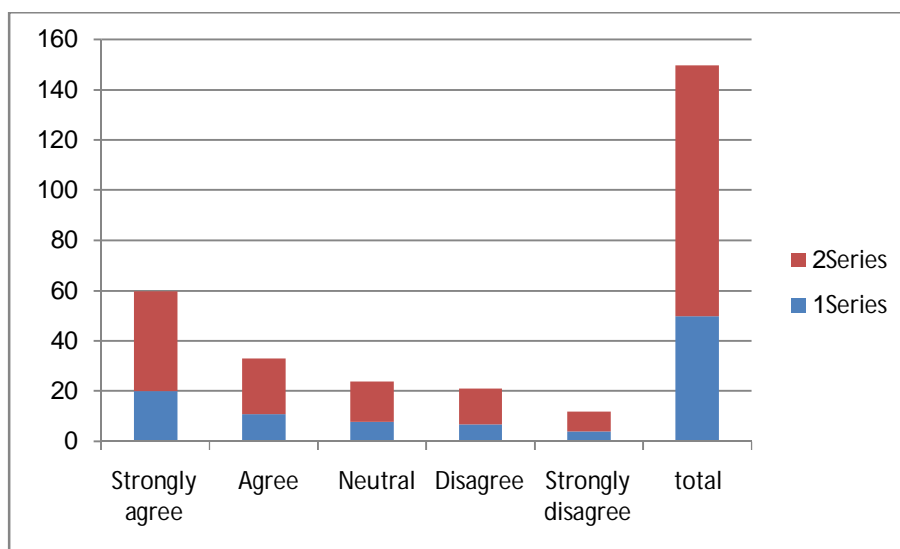| Neutral	8	16%
Disagree	7	14%
Strongly disagree	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.11) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (40%), agree by (22%) , neutral by (16%), disagree by (14%) and strongly disagree by (8%). This result indicates that the problems of collocations might be due to complexity of understanding the collocations themselves.

Statement (12): There are insufficient specialized collocation materials in using collocations at universities.

Table (4.12) results of statement (12)

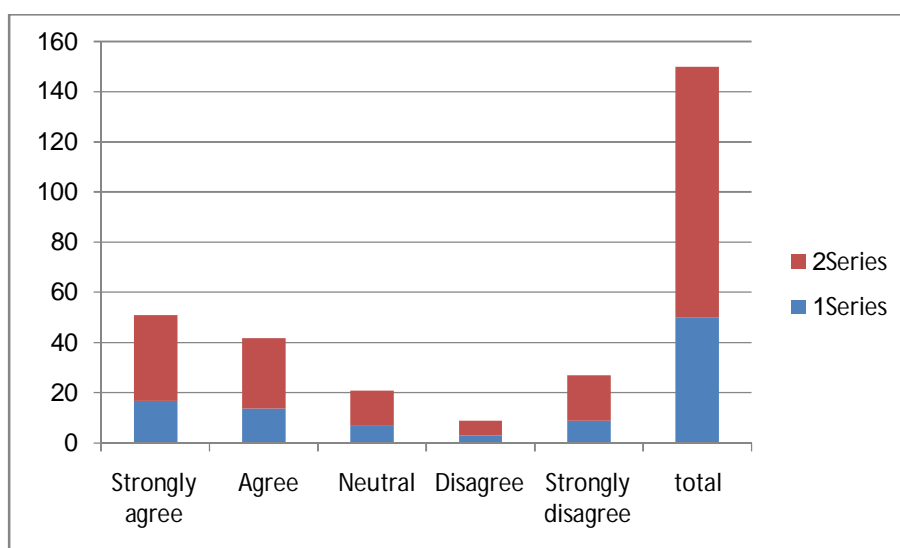| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	34%
Agree	14	28%
Neutral	7	14%
Disagree	3	6%
Strongly disagree	9	18%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.12) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (34%), agree by (28%) , neutral by (14%), disagree by (6%) and strongly disagree

by (18%). This result indicates that there are insufficient specialized collocation materials in using collocations at universities.

Statement (13): English collocations have always been a source of great difficulties for university EFL learners with regard to their mother tongue.

Table (4.13) Results of Statement (13)

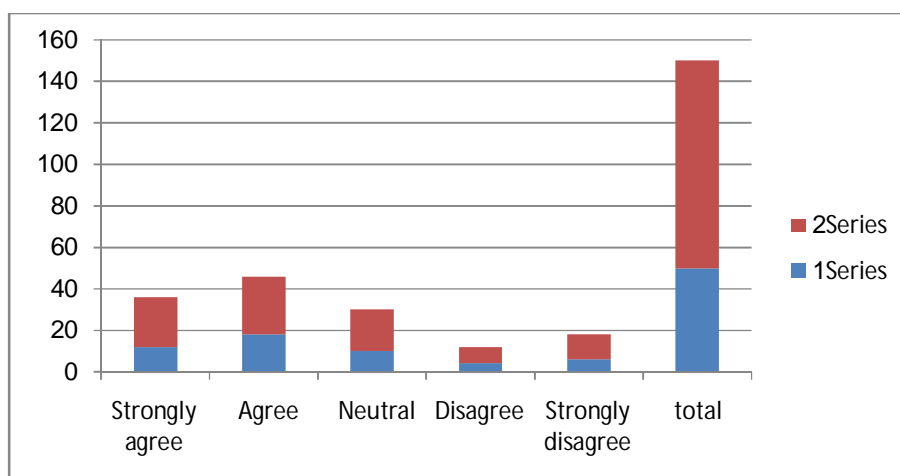| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	24%
Agree	18	36%
Neutral	10	20%
Disagree	4	8%
Strongly disagree	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.13) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (24%), agree by (36%) ,neutral by (20%), disagree by (8%) and strongly disagree by (12%). This result indicates that English collocations have always been a source of great difficulties for university EFL learners with regard to their mother tongue.

Statement (14): University EFL learners translate Arabic words into English when they speak English.

Table (4.14) Results of Statement (14)

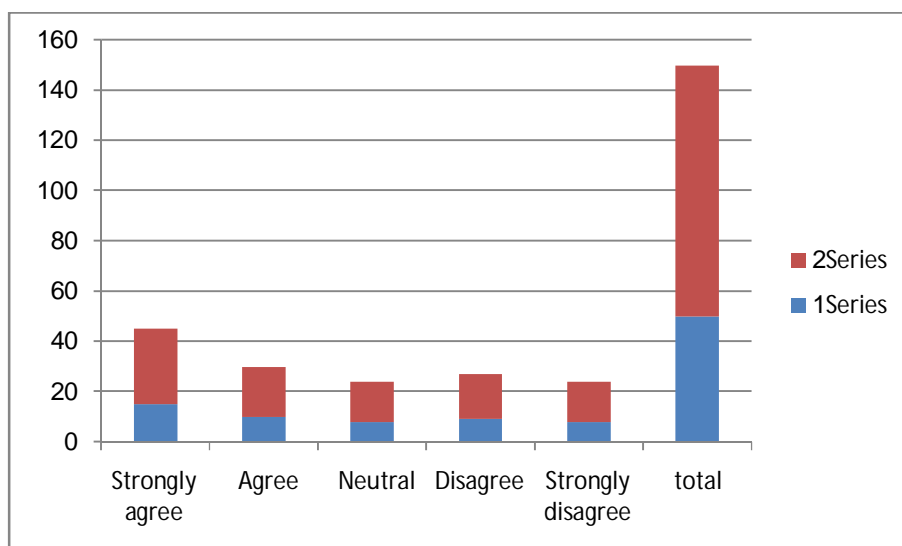| Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	30%
Agree	10	20%
Neutral	8	16%
Disagree	9	18%
Strongly disagree	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.14) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by (30%), agree by (20%) , neutral by (16%), disagree by (18%) and strongly disagree by (16%). This result indicates that university EFL learners translate Arabic words into English when they speak English.

Statement (15): Inaccuracy in collocations usage is a result of cross Linguistics differences between Arabic and English collocations system.

Table (4.15) Results of Statement (15)

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	24%
Agree	16	32%
Neutral	11	22%
Disagree	4	8%

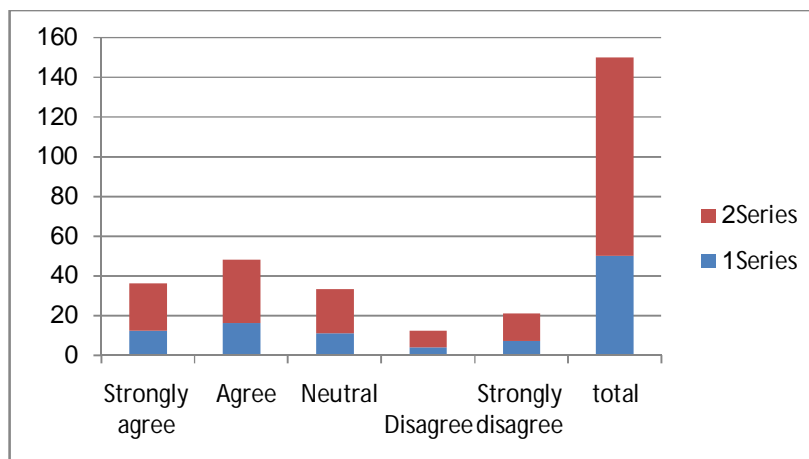| Strongly disagree	7	14%
Total	50	100%

Diagram (4.15) shows the distribution of the sample of statement five.

The tables and figures show that the distribution of the sample by the statement is as follow: strongly agree by(24), agree by (32%), neutral by (22%), disagree by (8%) and strongly disagree by (14%). This result indicates that inaccuracy in collocations usage is a result of cross Linguistics differences between Arabic and English collocations system. This result approved the third hypotheses.

4.2 Conclusion

It's crystal clear according to the results of table (4.8) that collocations represent great difficulties for university EFL learners. The above tables reveal that according to answers of the above respondents that teachers should include collocations in English Syllabus. The results of the respondents answers have proved that mother tongue has effect in using English collocations.

To sum up, collocations represent difficulties for university EFL learners and the previous points and discussion of tables indicate for that.

4.3 Verification of the Study Hypotheses

 There are three hypotheses as fallow:

First hypothesis: University EFL learners are poor in using collocations.

Second hypothesis**:** There are many causes behind the difficulties that face university EFL learners in using collocations.

The third hypothesis: There are strong correlations between university EFL learner's mistakes in using English collocations and their mother tongue in terms of translating possible equivalents.

The three hypotheses have been assumed and all percentages have been used as follow:

In the first hypotheses the answer strongly agree is 14% , agree 18%, neutral 10 % , disagree 8%, strongly disagree is 8,6% and The standard deviation is (4.4347) which shows that the first question is answered and the first hypothesis is accepted.

In the second hypotheses the answer is strongly agree is 19%, agree is 14%, neutral is 10%, disagree is7,8%, strongly disagree is 8,6% and the standard deviation is (5.1961) This shows that the second question is answered and the hypothesis is accepted.

In the third hypotheses the answer is strongly agree is 7,8%, agree is 7%, neutral is 5%, disagree is 3,4% , strongly disagree is 2,8% and the standard deviation is (2.2803) This means the third question is answered and the hypotheses is accepted.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provides the discussions of the current study focused on investigating university learners' problems in using English collocations. The data were statistically analyzed and the discussion of data gathered from the questionnaire answered by Third Year students of English language Alneelain University. This showed that students are poor in using English collocations. It also pointed out that there is insufficient specialized collocation materials for practicing collocations at universities, in addition to the interference of mother tongue.

Chapter Five

Main Findings, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Studies

5.0 Introduction

This is a final chapter of the study. It consists of conclusion of the study, findings, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study aims to investigate university students problems in using English collocations. It adopted analytical method and a questionnaire was used for data collections. The sample consisted of 50 learners from Alneelain University. Department of English, the researcher has come out with results that university EFL learners are poor in using English collocations in addition to findings and recommendations below.

5.2 Main Findings of the Study:

This study arrived at the following findings:

1- University EFL learners are poor in using collocations due to structure of English collocations. They don't know which verbs collocate with nouns, verbs collocate with prepositions

expressions, verbs collocate with adverbs, adjective collocate with noun and adverbs collocate with adjectives.

2-University EFL learners are poor in using English collocations because they do not have enough information to understand English collocations.

3-There are insufficient specialized collocation materials in using collocations at universities.

4-One of the possible causes of problems in using collocations is complexity of understanding the collocations themselves.

5-University EFL learners translate Arabic words into English when they speak English.

6-Mother tongue interference is one of the main causes of problems in using English collocations for university EFL learners.

7-Inaccuracy in the usage of English collocations is a result of linguistic differences between Arabic and English collocations system.

5.3 Conclusion

After the analysis of data, the researcher has come out with the conclusions thatlearning words in isolation do not necessarily help university EFL learners to become successful communicators. Learners also have to acquire a large number of collocations to be

able to produce and comprehend ideas accurately and fluency. The results of the present study indicate that collocations are inherent problem for university EFL learners due to structure of English collocations and the interference of mother tongue in addition to insufficient specialized materials for practicing collocations in the classroom.

5.4 **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following points:

1- University EFL learners should be exposed to enough practice in terms of English collocations usage.

2- University EFL learners should be encouraged to practice English collocations so as to build their own knowledge about English collocations.

3- Materials writers should include collocations in English syllabus at universities.

4- University EFL learners should be aware to distinguish between the patterns of English collocations such as strong collocations, weak collocations and fixed collocations.

5- University EFL learners should be aware of verbs collocate with nouns, verbs collocate with prepositions, verbs collocate

with adverbs, verbs collocate with adverbs, adjectives collocate with nouns and adverbs collocate with adjectives.

6- Teachers should raise the awareness of the importance of collocations among the students.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies:

Throughout this study, the researcher has noticed that the following areas need to be researched:

1- To investigate deeply the impact of collocations usage on writing stories.

2- To investigate the problems which face students' of translation in translating collocations.

3- To investigate the problems in teaching English collocations at secondary schools and educational institutes.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented the conclusions and findings of the study, in addition to recommendations offered and suggestions for further research are proposed.

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Appendix

Sudan University of Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

College of Languages

Department of English Language (Linguistics)

Students' Questionnaire

Dear learners,

This questionnaire is a part of Master degree in Linguistics entitled" Investigating University Students' Problems in Using Collocations in English Language".

I would be grateful if you would respond to this questionnaire accurately. The information in this questionnaire will be treated confidentially and will be used for academic purposes only.

Name: BahaAldeenGibreel Osman

M.A Candidate (SUST)

Please put a tick (√) in front of your own selections:

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagre

					e
1- Verbs which collocate with nouns are difficult to university students to whom English is a foreign language.					
2- Verbs which collocate with prepositions expressions are difficult for university FFL learners.					
3- Verbs which collocate with adverbs are difficult for university EFL learners.					
4- Adjectives which collocate with nouns are troublesome to university students to whom English is a foreign language.					
5- Adverbs which collocate with adjectives are problematic area for university EFL learners.					
6- University EFL learners do not have enough					

	information to understand collocations.					
7-	University EFL learners should be exposed to enough practice on how to use collocations.					
8-	The meanings of some collocations represent great difficulties for university EFL learners.					
9-	Teachers should include collocations in English Syllabus.					
10-	Raising university EFL learners' awareness of collocations plays a great role in developing learners' using of them.					
11-	The problems of collocations might be due to complexity of understanding the collocations themselves.					
12-	There is an insufficient specialized collocation material for practicing collocations at					

	Universities.					
13-	English collocations have always been a source of great difficulties for university EFL learners with regard to their mother tongue.					
14-	University EFL learners translate Arabic words into English when they speak English.					
15-	Inaccuracy in collocations usage is a result of cross linguistic differences between Arabic and English collocations system.					