มหาวิทยาลัยอุบลราชธานี

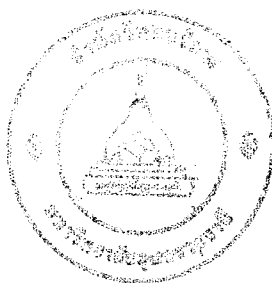# AN INVESTIGATION OF COLLOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL (HVCL) STUDENTS AT SURIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE, SURIN
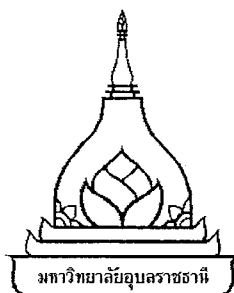
RUANGTHONG TANGWATTANA

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS MAJOR IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS UBON RAJATHANEE UNIVERSITY YEAR 2007

มหาวิทยาลัยอุบลราชธานี

INDEPENDENT STUDY APPROVAL

UBON RAJATHANEE UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF ARTS

MAJOR IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS

TITLE   AN INVESTIGATION OF COLLOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF
HIGHER VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL (HVCL) STUDENTS
AT SURIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE, SURIN

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FOR THE PRESIDENT OF UBON RAJATHANEE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has been successful with a lot of help, supervision, patience and helpful suggestions from many people. Especially, I would like to express my appreciation to all people with whom I have worked to complete this study. First of all I would like to express my sincere thanks to Dr. Lugsamee Nuamthanom Kimura, my major advisor who has not only encouraged and supported me through this study, but also given me a lot of ideas and suggestions. I also would like to express my sincere thanks to Assistant Professor Dr. Saowadee Kongpetch and Assistant Professor Dr. Wuttit Leenam for their valuable comments. Without their assistance, this study would not have been successful.

I would also like to thank the director of Surin Technical College who encourages and allows me to further my graduate study and 40 Higher Vocational Certificate Level students who devoted their time to the participation in this study. And finally, I would love to thank Mrs. Unchalee In-on, Mr. Sookhapan's family, Mrs. Phoothipremdet's family and all in my family who have encouraged me to complete this study.

I am very grateful to all of you. Thank you very much.

Ruangthong Tangwattana

(Ms. Ruangthong Tangwattana)

Researcher

บทคัดย่อ

ชื่อเรื่อง	: การตรวจสอบความรู้ในเรื่อง Collocations ของนักศึกษาระดับ
	ประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพชั้นสูง วิทยาลัยเทคนิคสุรินทร์ จังหวัดสุรินทร์
โดย	: รวงทอง ตั้งวัฒนา
ชื่อปริญญา	: ศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
สาขาวิชา	: การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ
ประธานกรรมการที่ปรึกษา : ดร. ลักษมี นวมถนอม คีมูระ	

ศัพท์สำคัญ : กลุ่มคำที่ถูกใช้ด้วยกัน คำที่มีความหมายเฉพาะตัวและถูกนำมาใช้ด้วยกันเป็น
กลุ่มคำ กลุ่มคำที่ใช้ตามโครงสร้างของภาษาหรือไวยากรณ์ ความตระหนัก

การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อตรวจสอบว่านักศึกษาระดับประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพ
ชั้นสูง วิทยาลัยเทคนิคสุรินทร์ มีความรู้และมีความตระหนักในการใช้ English Collocations หรือไม่
กลุ่มประชากรที่ใช้ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้คือ นักศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 1 ระดับประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพชั้นสูง
วิทยาลัยเทคนิคสุรินทร์ จังหวัดสุรินทร์ ที่กำลังศึกษาในภาคเรียนที่ 2 ปีการศึกษา 2549 จำนวน
40 คน โดยแบ่งนักศึกษาเป็น 2 กลุ่ม คือ กลุ่มที่มีความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษดี จำนวน 20 คน
และกลุ่มที่มีความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษอ่อน จำนวน 20 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการเก็บรวบรวม
ข้อมูลคือ แบบทดสอบชนิด 3 ตัวเลือก จำนวน 30 ข้อ แบบทดสอบถูกแบ่งเป็น Lexical Collocation
จำนวน 15 ข้อ และ Grammatical Collocation จำนวน 15 ข้อ ข้อมูลที่ได้ถูกนำมาวิเคราะห์หาค่าทาง
สถิติ สถิติที่ใช้คือ ค่าร้อยละและค่าเฉลี่ย ผลการศึกษาพบว่า นักศึกษาระดับประกาศนียบัตรวิชาชีพ
ชั้นสูง วิทยาลัยเทคนิคสุรินทร์มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับ English collocations น้อย มีความตระหนักในการ
ใช้ English Collocations น้อย เพราะนักศึกษาที่สอบได้คะแนนตั้งแต่ร้อยละ 50 ของจำนวนข้อสอบ
30 ข้อ มีเพียงร้อยละ 10 (4 คน) ของประชากร 40 คน คะแนนเฉลี่ยของนักศึกษาที่มีความสามารถ
ด้านภาษาอังกฤษดี เป็น 12.45 คะแนนเฉลี่ยของนักศึกษาที่มีความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษอ่อน
เป็น 9.90

ABSTRACT

TITLE : AN INVESTIGATION OF COLLOCATIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF
HIGHER VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATE LEVEL (HVCL)
STUDENTS AT SURIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE, SURIN

BY : RUANGTHONG TANGWATTANA

DEGREE : MASTER OF ARTS

MAJOR : TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

CHAIR : LUGSAMEE NUAMTHANOM KIMURA, Ph.D.

KEYWORDS : COLLOCATIONS / LEXICAL COLLOCATIONS /
GRAMMATICAL COLLOCATIONS / AWARENESS

The purpose of this study was to investigate English collocational knowledge of Higher Vocational Certificate Level (HVCL) students at Surin Technical College, Surin province. The subjects of this study were 20 good language ability students and 20 poor language ability ones. They were studying in the second semester of the academic year 2006. The research tool was multiple-choice test which contained 30 items. Each item had 3 distracters (choices). The test was basically divided into 2 groups: 15 items were lexical collocation and the rest was grammatical one. The obtained data was analyzed by using the mean and percentage. The results indicated that a small number (10 %) of subjects could pass the test. The mean scores of the good and poor language ability subjects were 12.45 and 9.90 respectively. This indicated that the HVCL students at Surin Technical College were not yet well aware of English collocations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the rationale, purpose of the study, research question, significance of the study and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Rationale

According to Gough (2001, p.3), vocabulary plays a significant role in carrying the content of what we want to say, while grammar joins groups of these vocabulary items together, "but most of meaning is in the words". Thus, no one can deny that effective communication can not take place if an individual knows grammar alone. Acquiring large vocabulary is one of the most important tasks for everyone, especially those of second/foreign language learners or users (Lewis, 2000). Recent studies have also shown that vocabulary consists of different kinds of prefabricated chunks (Huang, 2001; Yong, 1999; Bonk, 2000). In addition, these studies suggest that English native speakers tend to store the large amount of language in chunks and the most important type of chunk is known as collocation.

McCarthy & O'Dell (2005, p.6) define collocation as "a pair or group of words that are often used together". Collocation also refers to how words combine in predictable ways (Lewis, 2000). It is in this way that words co-occur naturally. For example, in English, one can say "heavy rain" and "strong wind," but not "strong rain" and "heavy wind" (Oxford University Press, 2002). Generally, there are two main types of collocations: lexical and grammatical collocations (McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005). On the one hand, lexical collocations are recurrent word combinations that mainly involve content words (Yong, 1999). Examples of this type includes a combination of adjectives and nouns (e.g. strong tea), nouns and verbs (e.g. the economy booms), or nouns and nouns (e.g. a sense of pride). On the other hand, grammatical collocations are recurrent word combinations that involve mainly a preposition or grammatical structures (Yong, 1999). Examples are phrasal verbs (e.g. aware of) and various kinds of grammatical structures (e.g. avoid + gerund or

make someone + infinitive without to).

In the past, the role of collocation has scarcely been recognized in a language classroom where memorizing and increasing a list of word definitions receive most attention (Gitsaki, 1999). Vocabulary that includes collocation was seen as secondary and grammar as primary. Grammar has been considered as the "king" in language learning (British council, 2006). In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, language teaching approaches were based on American linguistic theories which emphasized grammatical and phonological structures (Celce-Murcia, 2001). These theories contained Audiolingual method that focused on the drill of basic sentence patterns and their pronunciation. This is supported by Celce-Murcia (2001, p.285) who stated that:'

> "Because the emphasis was on teaching grammatical and phonological structures, the vocabulary needed to be relatively simple, with new words introduced only as they were needed to make the drill possible (Larsen Freemen 2000b; Zimmerman 997). The assumption was that once students learned the structural frames, lexical items to fill the grammatical slots in frames could be learned later, as needed."

As a consequence, students have to memorize the meanings of words in order to substitute them in the drill of basic sentence patterns and fill the grammatical slots.

As already mentioned, however, vocabulary is more than a single word. Rather, it comprises different types of chunks that are memorized as prefabricated multi-words, resulting in its significant role in an English as a Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) classroom. Lewis (2000), pointed out that the way words combine in collocation is the basic to all language use. That is, the lexicon is not arbitrary. Moreover, there are patterns of collocation which can make learning easier and predictable, and the collocations make up a large percentage of all naturally occurring texts, both spoken and written. McCarthy and O'Dell (2005) added that students with good collocational knowledge would be able to say something in the most natural way such as *"smoking is strictly forbidden,* which is more natural than *smoking is strongly forbidden.*" Moreover, collocational knowledge provides alternative ways of saying something more expressive and colorful such as *"It was bitterly cold and pitch dark."* instead of repeating the same adverb in *"It was very cold*

and very dark."

Nonetheless, there seems to be a wide range of problems concerning collocation faced by ESL/EFL language learners. For instance, learners may not have much available processing capacity to pay careful attention to how words are conventionally tied together in speech or written texts. It may also be unclear to them how restricted a given collocation is (Howarth, 1998 cite in Bonk, 2000). Furthermore, different languages have different collocational modes: what collocate in one language does not necessarily collocate in another language (Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah, 2003). As a result, some collocations may sound odd and out of place when translated. Also importance is the work of (Liu, 2000) who provided insights into EFL learners' collocational problems. Liu stated that his learners did not have enough knowledge of acceptable collocations. Most of them seemed to rely heavily on the use of direct translation in producing lexical collocations, which later led to an unacceptable word combination.

These unacceptable invented collocations such as ***open the lights, open the television and I am a cold*** are not only witnessed in Liu's work, but they are also evident in Surin Technical College in the northeast of Thailand, where the researcher has been working for many years. It was observed that students tended to repeatedly produce a variety of unacceptable collocations, many of which may be due to direct translation or L1 transfer. Examples include "***You close the television* before you want to go out,*** " "***Dang always opens the radio* in the afternoon,*** " or "***I make my homework* everyday.*** " Moreover, it was found that students could not perform well in any language task when dealing with expressions that go beyond a single word although they knew the word meaning and grammar. This may be because the classroom practice was likely to be focused on a single word exercise such as one word gap filling or one word dictation, and not on a combination of words or collocation. Finally, it was observed that students only paid attention to a technical terminology that was taught in vocational courses. These technical terms were particularly used in their workshop, thus giving students' an impression that knowing a number of individual words of technical terminology would be useful for their future career.

This study is one of the first attempts to make a preliminary systematic investigation of collocational knowledge of HVCL students at Surin Technical College, Surin. A multiple-choice test plays an important role as a major research tool to measure students' knowledge of collocations. The test is basically divided into two categories, where lexical collocations are of the major emphasis on the one hand, and grammatical collocations are on the other. Results obtained from this study will hopefully reveal the extent to which students at Surin Technical College are aware of collocations in English. The results will also prove useful for the development of language learning and teaching here at Surin Technical College.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the English collocational knowledge of Higher Vocational Certificate Level students at Surin Technical College.

1.3 Research question

Are students at Surin Technical College aware of lexical and grammatical collocations?

1.4 Significance of the study

The results of the study will shed light on the extent of which students at Surin Technical College are aware of collocations. The results will also provide teachers at Surin Technical College with useful information for improving their students' knowledge of English collocation. The results will also enable English teachers at Surin Technical College to incorporate collocations into the teaching of English.

1.5 Definitions of key terms

1.5.1 Collocations are the way words combine in a language to produce natural sounding speech and writing (Oxford University Press, 2002). They can roughly be classified into lexical collocations (e.g. *Forward a message*) and grammatical collocations (e.g. *Take off* your shoes.).

1.5.2 Higher Vocational Certificate Level (HVCL) students are the students of Surin Technical College who are studying in the Developing Skills for English Communication 1 (3000-1201) course. This course is offered in the second semester of the academic year 2006.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the literature on the topics of the definition of collocations, types of collocations, types of collocational tests and previous studies on collocations.

2.1 Definitions of collocations

Gabrielatos (1994, p.1) stated that "Originally, the term "collocation" was introduced by J.R. Firth (1951) as one of the "level" of meaning". He distinguished "meaning by collocation" from both the "conceptual of idea approach to the meaning of words" and "contextual meaning". Lewis (2000, p.48) also mentioned that "Many years ago, J.R. Firth defined collocation as "the company words keep" their relationships with other words". Similarly to Firth, Thornbury (2004) refers to collocation as "the way words typically combine with other words, as in *take a break, short hair, or get on with*" (p.3). And these combinations sound natural to any native speakers of English. In the line with this, Lewis (1997) stated that collocation is "the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in a natural text with greater than random frequency" (p.8). Collocation is not determined by logic or frequency, but is arbitrary, and it is decided only by a linguistic convention (Moudraia, 2001). Collocations are often difficult to guess their meaning partly because the meanings may be varied from the original words when they are combined with others (Lewis, 2000). Collocations allow us to name complex ideas and help facilitate the thinking process. Lewis (2000, p.55) provides support to this claim as follows:

> Paradoxically, the reason we can think about new things and speak at the Speed of thought is because we are not using new language all the time. Collocation allows us to name complex ideas quickly so that we can continue to manipulate the ideas without using all our brain space to focus

on the form of words. Try to say *manipulate ideas* or *brain-space* more efficiently! Both are recognized *verb* + *noun* and *noun* + *noun* collocations. It is a safe conclusion that collocation is an important key to fluency.

In short, collocations enable language users to process and produce language at a much faster rate. They also enable us to think more quickly and communicate more appropriately and efficiently.

2.2 Types of collocations

Lewis (2000) mentioned that collocations could be described as a wide range from least to most fixed, open collocations or free combinations, restricted collocations, figurative idioms and pure idioms. *Open collocations* or *free combinations,* for instance, consist of the literal meanings of individual elements and their compositions are freely substitutable. An example of *free collocations* or *open collocations* was "*make a decision*", when "*make*" can be replaced by certain other verbs such as *reach* and *take*. All three possibilities (make, reach and take) are collocations and have the same meaning. *Restricted collocations* compost non-literal meaning of one element and the other used in its normal meaning. They are more limited in the selection of compositional elements (e.g. *jog someone's memory, blow a fuse*). *Figurative idioms* that have metaphorical meanings are generated from their interpretation, and clearly motivated. They may allow free synonymous substitution of one or more elements. The example provided by Wright (1999) is "*Life is gambling.*" This means *you win some, you lost some*. *Pure idioms* are invariant and unpredictable from the meanings of their constituents. They do not permit almost substitution, and are unmotivated. A typical example provided by McCarthy & O'Dell (2002) is *drive somebody round the bend*, meaning *make somebody angry or frustrated*.

McCarthey & O'Dell (2005), McKeown & Radev (2006) and Gabrielatos (1994) identified two main types of collocations: lexical collocations and grammatical collocations. On the one hand, *lexical collocations,* also called semantic collocations, are lexically restricted word pairs, where only subset of the synonyms of the collocator

can be used in the same lexical context (McKeown & Radev, 2006). They are recurrent word combinations that mainly involve content word combinations such as verbs + nouns (e.g. *destroy the building* not *destroy the problem*) (Yong, 1999).

On the other hand, **grammatical collocations** are recurrent word combinations which often contain prepositions, including paired syntactic categories such as verbs + prepositions (e.g. *come to*) and adjectives + prepositions (e.g. *fond of*). McCarthy & O'Dell (2004) then added that phrasal verbs are these kinds of collocations. They are verbs that consist of a verb and a particle, propositions or adverbs (e.g. *look up. Get through, make out*). Phrasal verbs are sometimes followed by a particular preposition to make three – part verb (e.g. looking forward to, going out with). Nouns and adjectives are sometimes possible to create phrasal verbs such as: His daughter **drops out** of college this year. (phrasal verb), There are a lot of **dropouts** this year. (noun), There are *broken-down* vehicles on Lukmuang Road. (adjective).

In addition, Gabrielatos (1994) gave the details of types of lexical (L) and grammatical (G) collocations by presenting the typology of collocations of BBI (The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English). The following categories were taken from Benson, M., Benson, E. & Ilson, R. (1986).

Lexical (L) collocations:

L1 = verb (meaning *creation, activation*) + noun/pronoun/prepositional phrase (e.g. *give a performance, go on tour*),

L2 = verb (meaning *eradication, nullification*) + noun (e.g. *hand in your notice, reverse a decision*),

L3 = adjective + noun (e.g. *forward a message, high-powered job, brief chat*),

L4 = noun + verb (the verb names an action characteristic of the person or thing designated by it) e.g. *car bombs, e-mail bounces,*

L5 = noun + noun (usually noun + of + noun) e.g. *a surge of anger, a pang of nostalgia,*

L6 = adverb + adjective (e.g. *happily married, fully aware*), and

L7 = verb + adverb (not adverbial particle) e.g. smile proudly, pull steadily.

Grammatical (G) collocations:

G1 = noun + preposition (e.g. *witness to*),

G2 = noun + to – inf. (e.g. *This is the right way to cut wood.*),

G3 = noun + that-clause (e.g. *The hammer that you use is damaged.*),

G4 = preposition + noun (e.g. *by accident*),

G5 = adjective + preposition/prepositional phrase (e.g. *good at typewriting*),

G6 = predicate adjective + to-inf. (e.g. *It is possible to wear properly at a party.*),

G7 = adjective + that-clause (e.g. *I am afraid that we can not eat outside food in the theater.*),

G8 = verb patterns (distinguished by a single capital letter),

A = verb allowing dative movement transformation (e.g. *I sent my son the letter., I sent the letter to my son.*),

B = transitive verb no allowing dative movement transformation (e.g. *I demonstrates using the lathe to them.*),

C = transitive verb + *for* [(allowing dative movement transformation) (e.g. *Duangchai brought the shoes for her husband, Duangchai brought her husband the shoes.*),

D = verb + preposition (e.g. *Walk into the room.*),

E = verb + to- inf. (e.g. *She starts to run.*),

F = verb inf. without to (e.g. *They make her fail the exam.*),

G = verb + verb-ing (e.g. *We like watching TV.*),

H = transitive verb + object + to-inf. (e.g. *My mother allowed me to go the concert.*),

I = transitive verb + object + inf. without to (e.g. *I let my students do the homework.*),

J = verb + object + verb-ing (e.g. *I saw her dancing alone on the floor.*),

K= verb + possessive + gerund (e.g. *Accept her speaking, please.*),

L = verb + that-clause (e.g. *They admired that my sons are very good.*),

M = transitive verb + direct object + to be + adjective/ past participle/noun/pronoun (e.g. *The commission selected Bancha to be the winner in English Contest.*),

N = transitive verb + direct object + adjective / past participle/ noun/ pronoun (e.g. *The students keep their tools clean.*),

O = transitive verb + two object [not normally used in a prepositional phrase with *to* or *for* (e.g. *I asked my students a hard questions.)*],

P = verb + (obligatory) adverbial (but not a particle) e.g. *Chokchai presented himself with intelligence way.*,

Q = verb + interrogative word (e.g. *Sasithon suggested how to use the computer.*),

R = *it* + transitive verb + to-inf./ that-clause (e.g. *It surprised me that she never went out her house.*), and

· S = transitive verb + predicate noun/adjective (e.g. *This steel is melt, it become red hot.*).

Although the scholars' ideas on the types of collocations are slightly different, the main concepts of these categorized collocations remain similar. That is, each classification emphasizes naturally co-occur words which sound natural to any native speaker of English (Lewis, 2000; Gabrielatos, 1994; McCarthy & O'Dell, 2002).

2.3 Types of collocational tests

The knowledge of different types of collocation is usually measured by different language tests such as multiple choice and gap filling tests. Multiple choice tests are the most popular for collocational studies because they are easy to score and design Thornbury, 2002). The scoring could be highly reliable and should be rapid and economical (Hughes, 1993). However, there were some limitations of multiple-choice to mention. For example, guessing may have a considerable but unknowable effect on the test scores. It was also very difficult to write successful items, and cheating may be facilitated (Hughes, 1993). Here are the examples of collocational multiple choice tests suggested by Thornbuty (2002, P.131).

1) The flight attendant asked the passengers to .... attention to the safety demonstration.

a) give   b) devote   c) pay   d) lend

2) The delegates blamed each other when the peace talks broke..............

a) off   b) up   c) on   d) down

On the other hand, gap or blank filling tests required students to recall the word from memory in order to complete a sentence or text (Thornbury, 2002). It is an alternative to multiple choices. Gap or blank filling tests seemed to offer economical ways of measuring the overall language ability (Hughes, 1993). Here are the examples of gap or blank filling collocational tests that were writen by Gitsaki (1999, P.161).

The intended collocation is underlined. And fill in the blanks.

1) You need a holiday. Why don't you _____ a trip?

2) Good students _____ notes during classes.

3) I _____ stamps and old coins. It is my favorite hobby.

As suggested, multiple choice and gap filling tests have widely been used to measure ESL/EFL collocational knowledge. However, it is also important to maintain that other types of tests are also employed to measure the same language aspects. For examples, the translation of collocations from one language into another and the matching of the definitions or meanings of collocation seem to receive a lot of attention. The type of test which is a major type concerned of this study is a multiple-choice. It will be discussed in details in chapter 3.

2.4 Previous studies on collocations

There are many studies concerning EFL/ESL learners' knowledge of English collocations, which also include strategies used in producing, developing and teaching collocations. Huang (2001) for instance, investigated Thaiwanese EFL learners' knowledge of English collocations and the collocational errors they made. Huang's study focused on the measurement of learners' knowledge of four types of lexical collocation: free combinations, restricted collocations, figurative idioms, and pure idioms. The results indicated that students created free combinations of the least amount of difficulty, while pure idioms were the most difficult one. They performed well on restricted collocations as well as figurative idioms. The results finally pointed to the fact that these EFL learners had insufficient knowledge of English collocations,

and the errors they made could be traced back to their first negative language transfer.

Bonk (2000) is another interesting study which examined the collocational knowledge of EFL learners of a wide range of proficiency level. Bonk's work employed three sub-tests that were developed and administered to 98 ESL learners of low intermediate to advanced proficiency. The results obtained from Bonk's showed that a measure of general ESL proficiency and the length of residence had a little predictive power of collocations on the test performance. Obviously, Huang's and Bonk's research's goal was to measure learners' collocational competency. While Huang's results had implications on the development of an effective teaching technique for teaching collocations, it seems that Bonk's findings were more applicable to the development of collocational test administration.

Also importance is the work of Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah (2001), who investigated learners' productive ability of collocations and idioms by means of their performance on two interdependent tasks. The two tasks consisted of a multiple-choice task that contained 16 randomly selected Arabic idioms and collocations of the verb "kasara" (broke). The subjects were two groups of EFL undergraduate and graduate learners from the English department at Jordan's Yarmouk University. This study was designed to reveal learners' ability to recognize the correct collocations among four distracters. In particular, the translation task of the same idiomatic expressions and collocations were intended to explore learners' proficiency in this linguistic area. It was concluded that the performance of the learners in the target idiomatic expressions and collocations was unsatisfied.

Moreover, Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah (2003), tried to determine the extent to which university English language majors could use English collocations properly. A two-form translation test of 16 Arabic collocations was administered to both graduate and undergraduate students of English. Data analysis had displayed twelve communicative strategies manipulated by the subjects when rending into English collocational sequences of the Arabic verb *Kasara*. They found that the role of the native language in foreign language production have been substantiated as well as the need for explicit instructional focus on collocation in school, college, university and community.

In addition, Liu (2000) investigated strategies used in producing lexical collocations among freshman English majors at the Chinese Culture University. Liu used seven types of strategies for investigating: retrieval, literal translation, approximate translation, use of de-lexicalized verbs, use of synonym, appeal to authority and appeal for assistance. Liu found that the retrieval strategy was the most effective type of strategy used, leading to the production of acceptable collocations.

In conclusion, there are various studies which examine collocational knowledge of EFL/ESL students. All of these tend to lead to the importance of awareness raising among language learners about how words combine. The awareness of collocations definitely help enable learners to produce sentences that are grammatically and lexically acceptable. The more learners can produce a correct form of collocations, the less hesitation pauses they make in long sequences of words. Consequently, this helps students become more competent in the language they try to acquire (Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah, 2001).

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the subjects of this study, the research instrument, the data collection and analysis as well as scoring criterion

3.1 Subjects of the study

The subjects of this study were 40 HLVC students at Surin Technical College, Surin. They were divided into two groups: 20 were categorized as having good language ability while another 20 were classified as poor language proficiency. The subjects' grades were used to indicate the language ability. That is, the Grade Average Point (GPA) of English courses at the high school or vocational certificate level was taken into account. Students with the GPA of 3 up wards were labeled as good language learners whereas those with the GPA below 3 were put in a poor group. These subjects were registering for the Developing Skills for English Communication 1 (3000-1201) course in the second semester of the academic year 2006. The following tables were the details of the subjects in this study.

Table 1 The subjects with good language proficiency

			Present study	
			Field	Major
1.	Vocational Cert.	3.50	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
2.	Vocational Cert.	3.38	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
3.	Vocational Cert.	3.35	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
4.	Vocational Cert.	3.25	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
5.	Vocational Cert.	3.13	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
6.	Vocational Cert.	3.00	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
7.	Vocational Cert.	3.00	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
8.	Vocational Cert.	3.38	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
9.	Vocational Cert.	3.25	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
10.	Vocational Cert.	3.00	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
11.	Vocational Cert.	3.00	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
12.	Vocational Cert.	3.00	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
13.	High School Cert.	3.50	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
14.	High School Cert.	3.10	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
15.	High School Cert.	3.03	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
16.	High School Cert.	3.00	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
17.	High School Cert.	3.50	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer
18.	High School Cert.	3.00	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer
19.	High School Cert.	3.00	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer
20.	High School Cert.	3.00	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer

Table 1 shows 20 good language ability subjects who got the Grade Point Average of English as 3.00 upward. There were 2 women and 18 men who were from 3 major fields of study, which were Machine shop, Mechanical and Electronic Technological fields.

Table 2 The subjects with poor language proficiency

			Present study	
			Field	Major
1.	Vocational Cert.	1.63	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
2.	Vocational Cert.	1.63	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
3.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
4.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
5.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
6.	Vocational Cert.	1.00	Machine Shop Technology	Plastic Mould
7.	Vocational Cert.	1.88	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
8.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
9.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
10.	Vocational Cert.	1.50	Mechanical Technology	Auto-Mechanics
11.	High School Cert.	1.81	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
12.	High School Cert.	1.68	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
13.	High School Cert.	1.64	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
14.	High School Cert.	1.50	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
15.	High School Cert.	1.44	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
16.	High School Cert.	1.42	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
17.	High School Cert.	1.42	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
18.	High School Cert.	1.11	Electronic Technology	Industrial Electronics
19.	High School Cert.	1.75	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer
20	High School Cert.	1.36	Electronic Technology	Technical Computer

Table 2 shows 20 poor language ability subjects who got the Grade Point Average of English lower than 3.00. All were men: 10 graduated with a Vocational Certificate and 10 graduated with a High School Certificate. They were studying in Machine Shop, Mechanical, and Electronic Technology.

3.2 Research instruments

A multiple- choice test which contained 30 items was used as a major research instrument. Each item contained three choices: A,B and C the three multiple choices was used to help facilitate the test takers since they have had a low degree of exposure to English collocations in their textbooks or classroom instruction. Finally, the test was sub–divided into two major categories: lexical and grammatical collocations. The two major types of collocational items were selected from the textbooks that the subjects have seen before. However, these words were not taught seriously in the classroom.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

The subjects who had scarcely been exposed to collocations before took the test in the second semester. They took 30 minutes to complete the 30 item test. Then, the raw scores of the two major types of test were statistically calculated and compared, using means and percentages to reveal the extent to which students at Surin Technical College perform on the collocational test. Furthermore, it is important to conduct an informal interview to gain additional information after the subjects completed the test. On the informal interview, some good and poor language ability subjects were require to answer questions such as "When taking the test, did you use a guessing strategy?" and "If son, what strategy did you use?" Then, data from the interview were supplied to explain the unexpected tendency found in the study.

As suggested, the scores of the test were calculated after the subjects finished the test. The raw scores were converted into means and percentages and classified into 2 major groups. One group composed of the subjects with the scores higher than 50% whereas another group consisted of those with the score lower than 50%. In particular, the former with the scores of more than 50% was assumed to demonstrate the awareness of collocations. The base line of 50% was chosen to comply with a Vocational Education Commission standard testing criterion which stated that any student taking a college examination will pass the test only when he/she receives a score higher than 50% while those who got a score lower than 50% are labeled as failing the exam.

3.4 Scoring criterion

The scoring was set as one mark for one item. The total scores of the test are 30. The subjects who could select the correct answer of each item got one mark whereas those who selected the incorrect choice received a zero mark.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The findings of this study are presented in this chapter.

4.1 The results

After the subjects took the test, the scores were calculated. The correct answers were counted as well as the incorrect ones. They were then changed into percentages and means. These scores were expected to reveal the extent to which HVCL students at Surin Technical College performed on the collocational test.

The following tables illustrated the subjects' scores on the collocational test, including good and poor language ability.

Table 3 The scores of each good language ability subject on the collocational test

No	Total scores	Correct scores received	Incorrect scores received	Results
1	30	13	17	Fail
2	30	15	15	*Pass*
3	30	17	13	*Pass*
4	30	14	16	Fail
5	30	13	17	Fail
6	30	16	13	*Pass*
7	30	11	19	Fail
8	30	12	18	Fail
9	30	14	16	Fail
10	30	10	20	Fail
11	30	15	15	*Pass*
12	30	12	17	Fail
13	30	14	16	Fail
14	30	10	20	Fail
15	30	11	19	Fail
16	30	6	24	Fail
17	30	10	20	Fail
18	30	12	18	Fail
19	30	10	20	Fail
20	30	14	16	Fail

As table 3 shows, a small number of good language ability subjects who could pass the test were four while those who failed were 16. This was an indication that the majority of subjects could not pass the test. (See Figure 1 for an accompanied illustration of this table.)
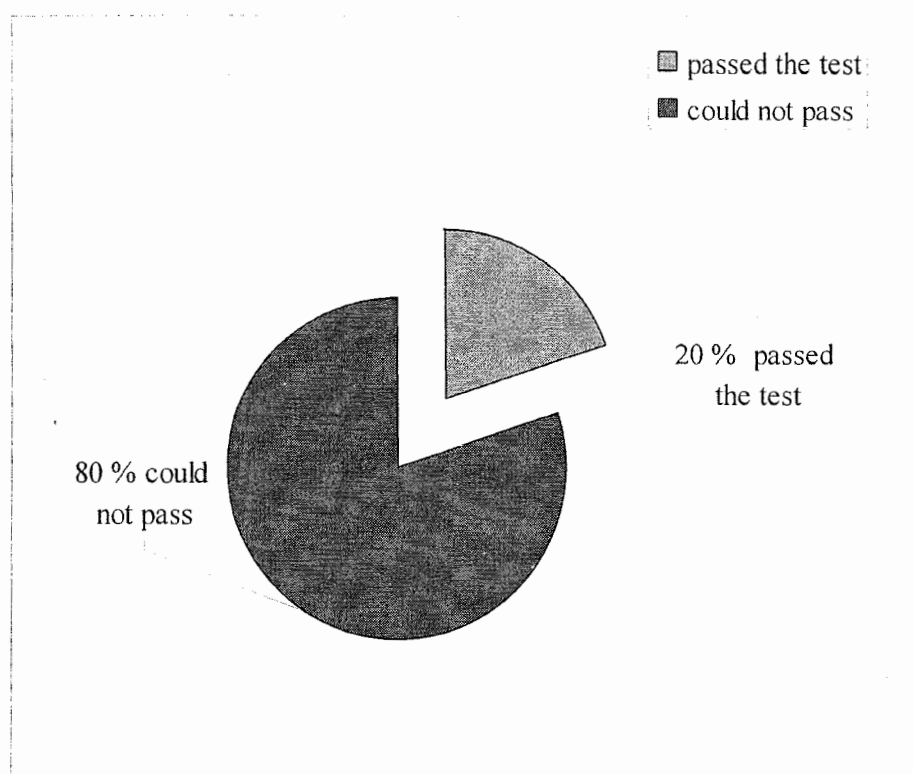
Figure 1 The percentages of good language ability subjects who passed and failed the test.

Table 4 The scores of each poor language ability subject on the collocational test

No	Total scores	Correct score received	Incorrect score received	Results
1	30	10	20	Fail
2	30	11	19	Fail
3	30	11	19	Fail
4	30	12	18	Fail
5	30	11	19	Fail
6	30	10	20	Fail
7	30	11	19	Fail
8	30	10	20	Fail
9	30	8	22	Fail
10	30	8	22	Fail
11	30	6	24	Fail
12	30	8	22	Fail
13	30	9	21	Fail
14	30	11	19	Fail
15	30	11	19	Fail
16	30	11	19	Fail
17	30	11	19	Fail
18	30	10	20	Fail
19	30	8	22	Fail
20	30	11	19	Fail

Table 4 displays all of the poor language ability subjects' scores on the collocational test. As one can say, every subject received a correct score lower than 15, which means all in this group (100 %) failed the test.

Table 5 The classification of correct and incorrect scores into two groups: lexical and grammatical collocations of good language ability subjects
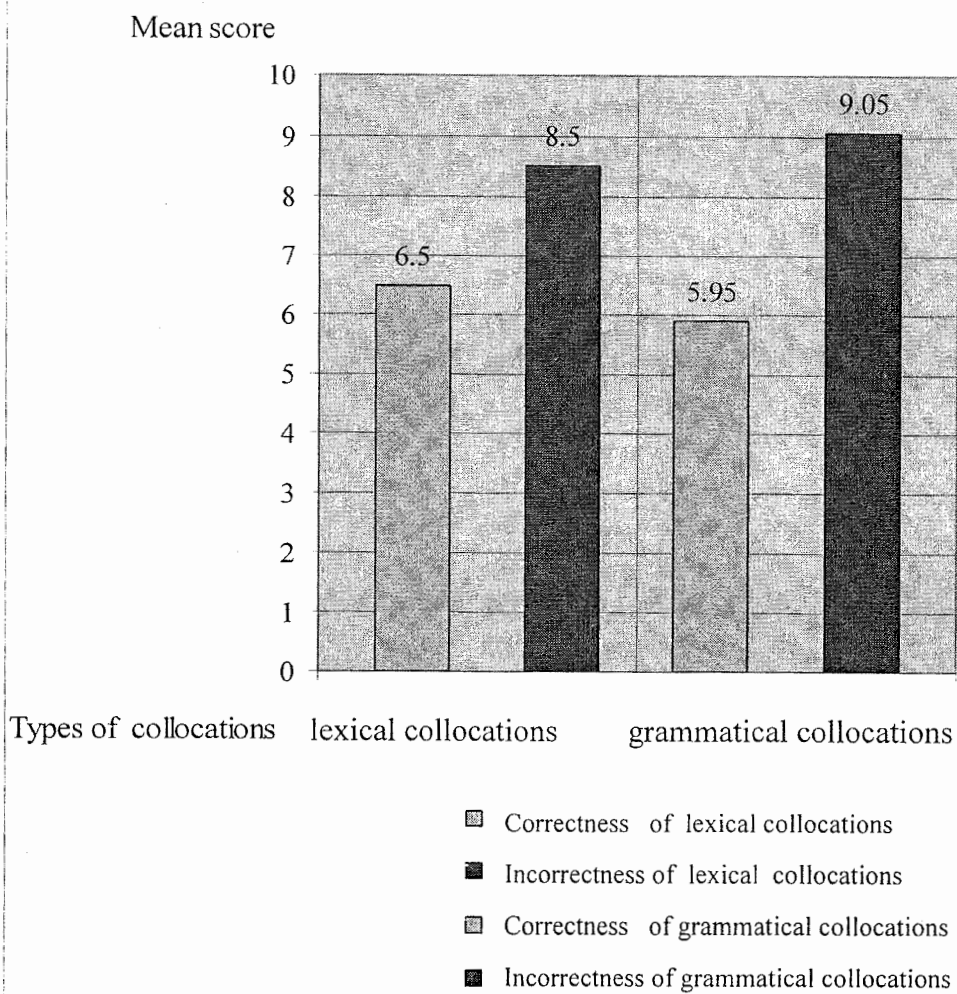
No	The scores of lexical collocations				The scores of grammatical collocation			
	Correct score	%	Incorrect score	%	Correct score	%	Incorrect score	%
1	5	33.33	10	66.67	8	53.33	7	46.67
2	9	60.00	6	40.00	6	40.00	9	60.00
3	9	60.00	6	40.00	8	53.33	7	46.67
4	7	46.67	8	53.33	7	46.67	8	53.33
5	9	60.00	6	40.00	4	26.67	11	73.33
6	9	60.00	6	40.00	7	46.67	8	53.33
7	5	33.33	10	66.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
8	7	46.67	8	53.33	5	33.33	10	66.67
9	8	53.33	7	46.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
10	7	46.67	8	53.33	3	20.00	12	80.00
11	7	46.67	8	53.33	8	53.33	7	46.67
12	6	40.00	9	60.00	6	40.00	9	60.00
13	8	53.33	7	46.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
14	4	26.67	11	73.33	6	40.00	9	60.00
15	5	33.33	10	66.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
16	3	20.00	12	80.00	3	20.00	12	80.00
17	3	20.00	12	80.00	7	46.67	8	53.33
18	8	53.33	7	46.67	4	26.67	11	73.33
19	5	33.33	10	66.67	5	33.33	10	66.67
20	6	40.00	9	60.00	8	53.33	7	46.67
Mean	6.50	43.33	8.50	56.67	5.95	39.67	9.05	60.33

Table 5 illustrates the number of correct and incorrect scores on lexical and grammatical collocations performed by good language ability subjects. On lexical collocation, the information in table 5 indicated that the highest score of correctness was 9 which belonged to only 4 subjects while the lowest was 3. The mean score of the correctness was 6.50 (43.33%). As seen from the same table, seven subjects with good language ability received the scores on lexical collocations higher than 7.5 (50%). On the other hand, the highest incorrect score was 12 whereas the lowest was 6. The mean score of the incorrectness was 8.50 (56.67%).

On grammatical collocation, the highest score of correctness was 8 which belonged to the 4 subjects whereas the lowest was 3. The mean score of the correctness was 5.95 (39.67%). In contrast, the highest incorrect score was 12 while the lowest was 7. The mean score of incorrectness was 9.05 (60.33%).

Moreover, the mean scores of lexical and grammatical collocations were 6.5 and 5.95 respectively. This indicated that the subjects could perform better on lexical collocational section than the grammatical one. (See Figure 2 for a better picture of the information discussed above.)

Figure 2 The mean scores of lexical and grammatical collocations of good language ability subjects.
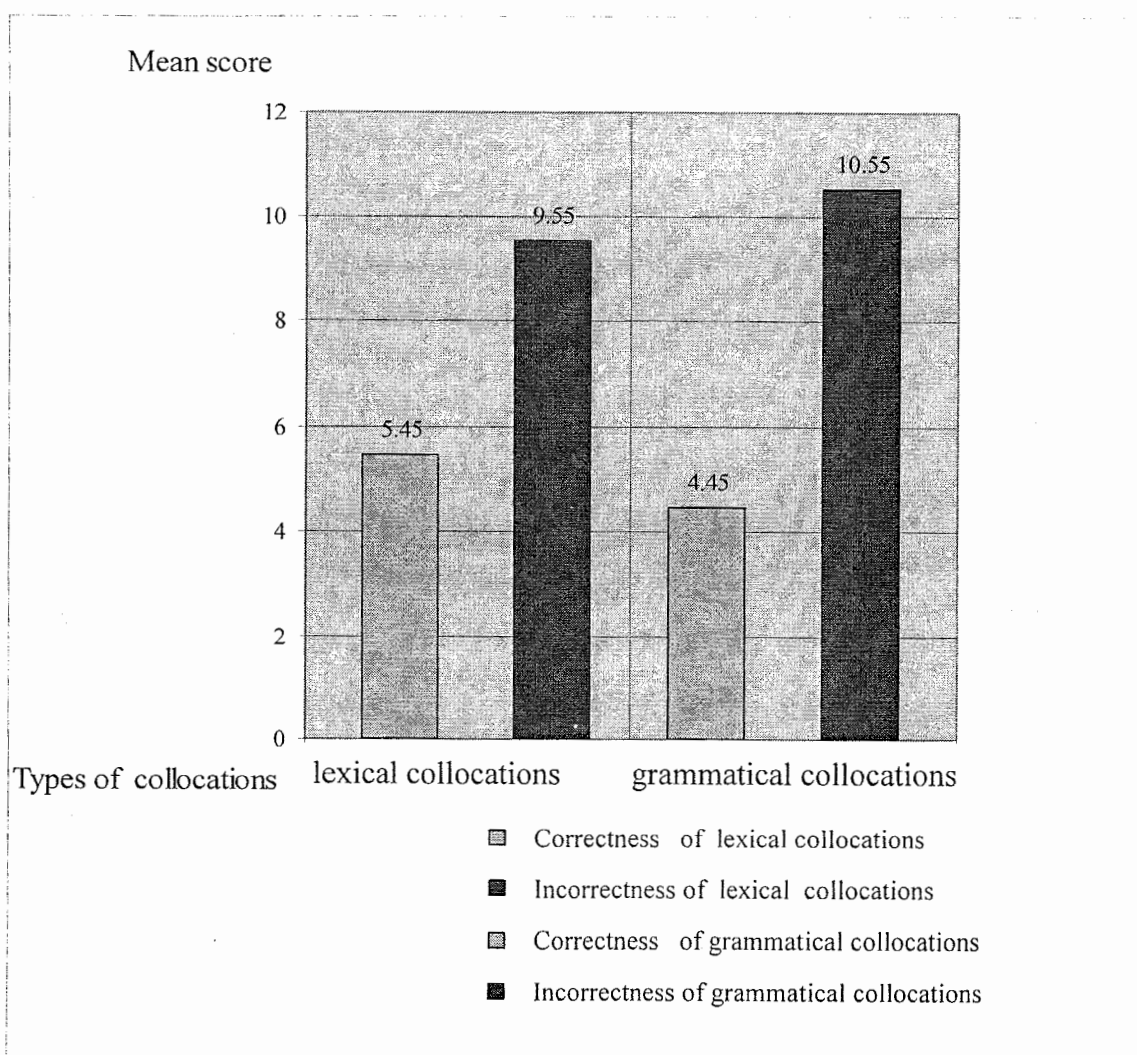
Table 6 The classification of correct and incorrect scores into two groups: lexical and
grammatical collocations of poor language ability subjects

No	The scores of lexical collocations				The scores of grammatical collocation			
	Correct score	%	Incorrect score	%	Correct score	%	Incorrect score	%
1	7	46.67	8	53.33	3	20.00	12	80.00
2	7	46.67	8	53.33	4	26.67	11	73.33
3	6	40.00	9	60.00	5	33.33	10	66.67
4	4	26.67	11	73.33	8	53.33	7	46.67
5	5	33.33	10	66.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
6	6	40.00	9	60.00	4	26.67	11	73.33
7	5	33.33	10	66.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
8	6	40.00	9	60.00	4	26.67	11	73.33
9	5	33.33	10	66.67	3	20.00	12	80.00
10	4	26.67	11	73.33	4	26.67	11	73.33
11	2	13.33	13	86.67	4	26.67	11	73.33
12	4	26.67	11	73.33	4	26.67	11	73.33
13	4	26.67	11	73.33	5	33.33	10	66.67
14	7	46.67	8	53.33	4	26.67	11	73.33
15	6	40.00	9	60.00	5	33.33	10	66.67
16	5	33.33	10	66.67	6	40.00	9	60.00
17	7	46.67	8	53.33	4	26.67	11	73.33
18	6	40.00	9	60.00	4	26.67	11	73.33
19	5	33.33	10	66.67	3	20.00	12	80.00
20	8	53.33	7	46.67	3	20.00	12	80.00
Mean	5.45	36.33	9.55	63.67	4.45	29.67	10.55	70.33

Table 6 displays the number of the scores on lexical and grammatical collocations of subjects with poor language ability. The table illustrated the highest correct score of lexical collocation as 8 which belonged to only one subject whereas the lowest was 2. The mean score was 5.45 (36.33%). For the incorrectness, the highest score was 13 while the lowest was 7, and the mean score of the incorrectness was 9.55 (63.67%).

On the grammatical collocation, the highest score of correctness was 8 while the lowest was 3. The mean score of the correctness was 4.45 (29.67%). The highest score of the incorrectness was 12 whereas the lowest was 7, and the mean score of incorrectness was 10.55 (70.33%).

As the information in the table reveals, eventhough everyone failed, there was a tendency where the subjects could perform well on the lexical part if compared to the grammatical one. (Also see Figure 3 for an accompanied illustration.)

Mean score

Types of collocations

- Correctness of lexical collocations
- Incorrectness of lexical collocations
- Correctness of grammatical collocations
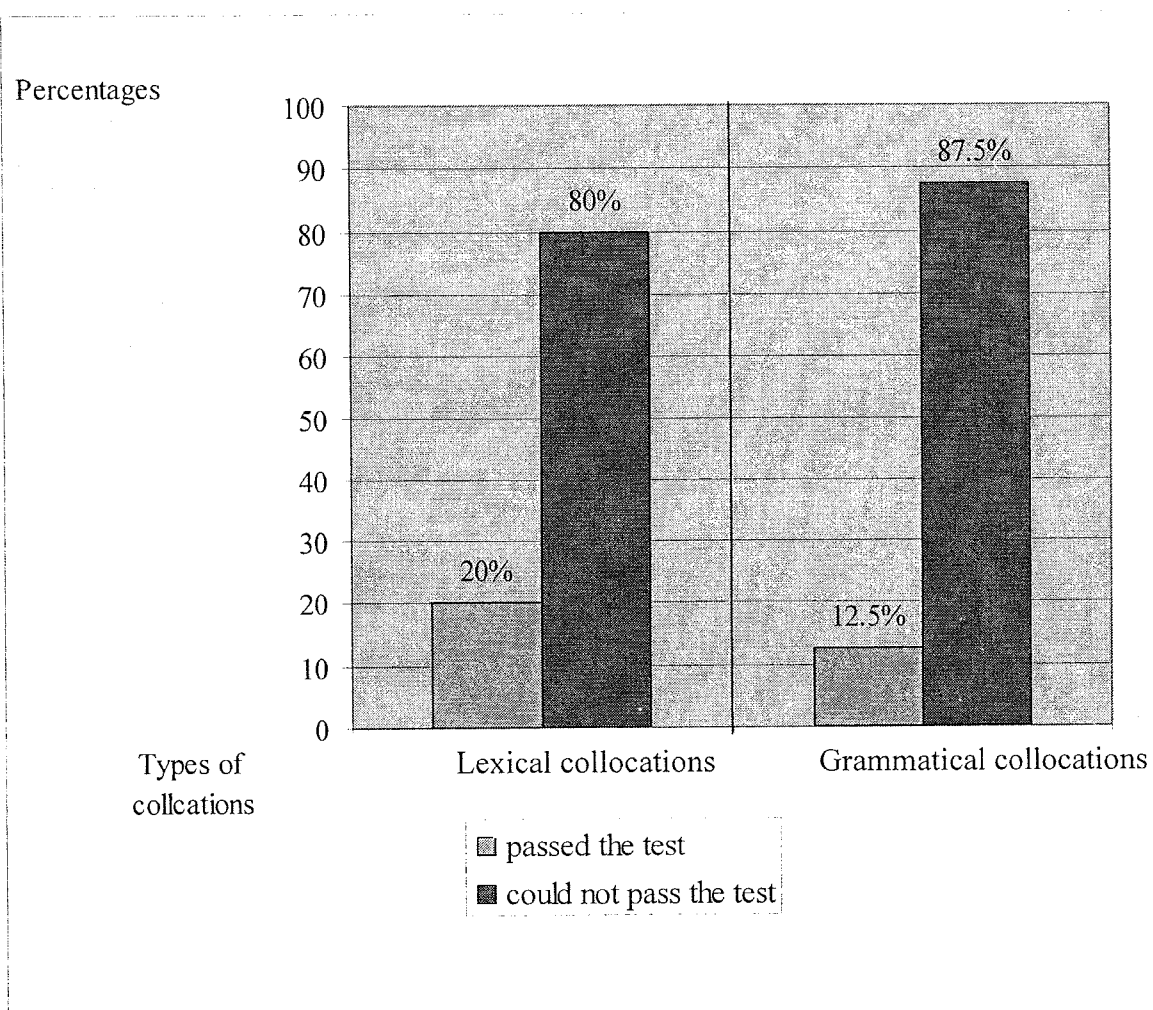- Incorrectness of grammatical collocations

Figure 3 The mean scores of lexical and grammatical collocations of good and poor language ability subjects.

Table 7 The overall picture of all subjects' performance on the collocational test

The subjects	No. of lexical collocation					No. of grammatical collocation				
	Total	Pass		Fail		Total	Pass		Fail	
	number	No.	%	No.	%	number	No.	%	No.	%
Good	20	7	35	13	65	20	4	20	16	80
Poor	20	1	5	19	95	20	1	5	19	95
Total	40	8	20	32	80	40	5	12.5	35	87.5

As table 7 shows, only seven good language ability subjects (35 %) could pass the lexical collocational test while 13 subjects (65%) could not. On the grammatical collocational test, only four good language ability subjects (20 %) could pass whereas 16 of them (80%) failed. This could be an indication that the subjects perform better on the lexical collocational test than the grammatical collocational one.

For the poor language ability subjects, the results were not far different from those of the good language ability group. That is, only one subject (5 %) could pass the lexical and grammatical tests while 19 subjects (95 %) could not. This indicated that the ability to perform the lexical collocational test is the same as that of the grammatical collocation.. (Also see Figure 4 for an accompanied illustration.)

Percentages

Figure 4 The percentages of all subjects' performance on the lexical and grammatical collocations

Table 8 The details on the two groups of the subjects' performance on each test
item

The test items	A number of correct scores of all subjects on each item of the test		The total Number	Word combination
	Good subjects	Poor subjects		
1	11	13	24	Verb + Noun
2	7	4	11	Verb + Noun
3	6	10	16	Adj. + Noun
4	6	4	10	Verb + Noun
5	4	7	11	Verb + Noun
6	14	12	26	Verb + Noun
7	1	1	2	Verb + Noun
8	12	11	23	Adj. + Noun
9	14	9	23	Verb + Noun
10	9	5	14	Verb + Noun
11	10	7	17	Verb + Noun
12	12	7	19	Verb + Noun
13	11	7	18	Adj. + Noun
14	4	5	9	Verb + Noun
15	9	7	16	Adj. + Noun
16	13	11	24	Adj. + Prepo.
17	9	7	16	Adj. + Prepo.
18	11	9	20	Phrasal verb
19	5	5	10	Verb + Prepo.
20	9	7	16	Phrasal verb

Table 8 The details on the two groups of the subjects' performance on each test item (continued)

The test items	A number of correct scores of all subjects on each item of the test		The total Number	Word combination
	Good subjects	Poor subjects		
21	8	5	13	Verb + Prepo.
22	13	8	21	Phrasal verb
23	4	6	10	Phrasal verb
24	6	4	10	Tr.V+O.+Inf.without.to
25	8	2	10	Verb + Gerund
26	6	6	12	Verb + Gerund
27	7	2	9	Verb + Prepo.
28	7	6	13	Phrasal verb
29	5	7	12	Phrasal verb
30	8	4	12	Phrasal verb

Table 8 shows that item 6 (have + a hair cut) posed the least difficulty for the most subjects while item 7 (catch + a cold) posed the most difficulty. This is because while item 6 received the highest correct scores, item 7 received the least ones. It is also noticeable that the poor language ability subjects could perform better on item 1,3,5,14,23 and 29 when compared to the good language ability subjects. Whist, item 1,3, 5 and 14 are lexical collocations: *make some phone call, strong wind, do activity* and *do homework* respectively, item 23 and 29 are grammatical collocation: *hand in your homework* and *slow down* respectively.

The results obtained from this study as stated above will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses some interesting findings and their interpretations.

5.1 Summary and Discussion

Summary of the Results

The purpose of this study was primarily to investigate the English collocational knowledge of Higher Vocational Certificate Level (HVCL) students at Surin Technical College. In particular, the study focused on the awareness of students at Surin Technical College of English collocations, both lexical and grammatical ones. The results obtained from this study indicated that only 4 out of 20 good language ability subjects could pass the test. They got the scores of more than 15, and the highest was 17. On the other hand, 16 good language ability subjects and all of poor language ability subjects failed the test. That was, they received the scores of lower than 15 points when the lowest score was 6. It was also observed that the two subjects who got the score of 6 were one good language ability subject and one poor language proficiency subject. The mean scores for good and poor language ability subjects were 6.23 and 4.95 respectively, which implied that the language ability on collocation of good and poor subjects were not significantly different.

Discussion

Overall, the quantitative results mentioned above might be an indication that the subjects of this study possessed insufficient knowledge of English collocations. As one can tell, the good language ability students' mean scores on lexical and grammatical collocation were 6.50 and 5.95 respectively. There were 9 subjects who received a score lower than 6.50 on lexical collocation, whereas 6 subjects received a score lower than 5.95 on grammatical one. For the poor language ability group, subjects' mean scores on lexical and grammatical collocations were 5.45 and 4.45 respectively. There were 10 subjects who got a score lower than 5.45 on lexical

collocation, while 13 subjects got a score lower than 4.45 on grammatical one. One subject got the score of 8 on lexical collocational test and one subject got the score of 8 on grammatical one. However, there were 4 subjects who received the score of 7 on lexical collocational test, which means that they could nearly pass the test.

The above findings interestingly point to the fact that good and poor language ability subjects did not show significantly differences in terms of collocational ability. Nonetheless, the two groups could perform on the lexical collocational test better than the grammatical one. This tendency might partly be explained by the fact that lexical collocations were mostly based on the combination of content words (e.g. nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs) in English. Grammatical collocation, on the other hand, were largely resulted from the grammatical words (e.g. prepositions, pronouns and articles) and content words.

As Thonbury (2007) suggested "Most written texts comprise at least one-third grammatical words and two-thirds content words" (P.18). Since subjects were exposed to more of the content or lexical words than the grammatical words in real life situations, they might be more familiar with the lexical collocations than the grammatical ones. This familiarity can in turn lead to their better performance on the lexical collocational test.

On the lexical collocation, there were 15 items: 11 items were verb + noun, whereas 4 items were adjective + noun. The study revealed that the subjects could perform better on the adjective + noun. (Please refer to table 8.) This could be assumed that adjective + noun were used more often than verb + noun. In other word, this tendency can be explained in relation to the frequency of occurrence of adjective + noun collocations. The SARA Search Results (2007) revealed the tendency of the adjective + noun more than verb + noun collocations. Take for example, the words "exchange, hand, and change" are likely to collocate with adjectives rather than verbs as in "plasma exchange, foreign exchange and peculiar exchange, other hand, imperious hand and second hand, curricular change, base change and structural change. This might be an indication that students at Surin Technical College were exposed to more of the adjective + noun collocations, resulting in the higher scores on this collocational type.

In general, the results of this study were in consistency with Zughoul and Abdul – Fattah (2001) who investigated learners' productive ability of collocations and idioms by mean of their performance on two interdependent tasks. The study was set to show learners' ability to recognize the correct collocations among four distracters. It was found that subjects displayed the unsatisfied performance on the productivity of collocations and idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, the findings of the present research resembled to Huang's (2001) who investigated Taiwanese EFL students' knowledge of English collocations and the collocational errors they made. The results of Huang's study showed that EFL students had the insufficient knowledge of English collocations. In addition, she found that the errors they made could be explained in connection with their negative language transfer

An informal interview with subjects of the present study also revealed some interesting points of view. The good language ability subjects acknowledged that even though they felt they could do the test quite well since they had heard a number of words on the test before in the classroom. Many of their answers were chosen based on the translation of them from Thai into English. In doing so, the subjects made a lot of mistakes on the test. This kind of problem was evident in Huang's study as well when it was suggested that the errors made by Taiwanese EFL learners were in connection with her subjects' native language. She found that EFL learners collocational errors could be attribute to the negative first language transfer.

Huang argued that the L1 or native language played a crucial role in her subjects' English collocational production. Language transfer reflected learners' presumption that there was a one – to – one correspondence between the L1 and L2. On the one hand, positive transfer occurred when the L2 collocations match those in the L1. On the other hand, the negative transfer occurred when no corresponding forms could be found in the L1. This type of phenomenon was also supported by Thornbury (2002) who claimed that "Meaning – related wrong - choice errors may derive from the learner's L1, where the meaning of an L1 word may not exactly match its L2 equivalent." (p.29). Some examples made by some subjects of this study are "I *am** a cold." and "Damrong *fell** the bus and had to wait for the next one." In Thai, one can uses "am" to mean "I catch a cold." which is unacceptable in English.

Moreover, Thais can use "fall the bus", whereas English speakers have to say "miss the bus".

Negative transfer that is called interference is something incorrect (Gass & Selinker,1994). That the native language of learners can influence the acquisition of the target language (L2) is proclaimed by Brown (2001). Brown suggested that the native system interferes on the production and comprehension of the target language. Common examples made by Thai speakers at Surin Technical College are *similar with*, *make homework* and *dial a phone call*. In Thai, anyone can say "His shirt is similar *with* yours." and "He is good *in* typing." The preposition "with" can be used after the word similar and "in" after the word good. On the contrary, in English, "to" is preferred over "with" and "at" is preferred over "in".

It was quite interesting to see that, as shown in the table 8, a number of poor language ability students could perform better than some of the good language ability subjects on item 1, 3, 5, 14, 23 and 29. Whilst, item 1, 3, 5 and 14 are lexical collocation, item 23 and 29 belong to the grammatical group. To explain this tendency, the follow-up interview with this group of subjects was set up. Unsurprisingly, the subjects mentioned that most of them used the guessing strategy when doing the test. As one may say, the guessing strategy was one of the multiple-choice test's limitations. Although a multiple-choice test has been frequently used to measure EFL/ESL learners' knowledge of collocations, there are some limitations of this kind. For instance, guessing and cheating may be considerable (Hughes, 1993). According to Bonk (2000)'s study, a cloze test and selected response-type items may offer a better alternative. They have been shown to be relatively reliable ways of measuring collocations, and items of these types are easy to construct, validate and score.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the conclusion, limitations of this study and recommendation for further study are provided.

6.1 Conclusion

This study focused on the investigation of English collocational knowledge of HVCL students at Surin Technical College. In order to answer the research question; Are students at Surin Technical College aware of collocations, both lexical and grammatical ones?, the collocational test was taken by 40 subjects. The score of 50% of the test was used for passing the test. Then, the test papers were scored and statistically analyzed. This study demonstrated that only 10% of the subjects (four students) could pass the test and thus it can be concluded that the HVCL students at Surin Technical College participated in this research were not well aware of English collocations.

6.2 Limitations of the study

Although the present study gives unfavorable results, it is important to consider some of its limitations. The first limitation falls into the test format while the second in concerned with the length of time for taking the test. Since the test format manifested itself as a multiple- choice test, then guessing may easily result. It is also worth mentioning that the use of 3 choices may allow a high possibility for guessing. The length of the testing time may be too limited. The expansion of it will allow subjects more time to carefully do the test. Moreover, there were only 40 students who took the test. The limited amounts of subjects will definitely not enough for the generalization of the findings. Finally, the test items have not yet undergone the reliability check by any expert on testing.

6.3 Recommendations for further studies

The teaching of collocations inevitably needs to be taught. Teaching collocations may be integrated with the teaching of vocabulary. To stimulate students' interest in collocations, ESL/EFL teachers may need to address the cultural issues, metaphorical meanings, a way of describing something by means of an image or symbol and the historical origins associated with the collocations. For example, upon encountering an idiom such as "Your cheeks are as red as beetroots."(English) and "Your cheeks are as red as coccinia grandis." (Thai), teachers may address cultural issues related to geographical areas of the western world and Thailand where different types of fruits and vegetables can be grown. This reality in turn has an influence on word choice appeared in the idioms of different languages.

Various types of class materials should be designed to suit students' language proficiency levels. As far as the test is concerned, other types of test may be considered for measuring students' knowledge of collocations. For example, a cloze-test may be administered as an alternative to multiple-choice type of test. A cloze-test may offer a wider variety of distracters than a multiple- choice test, thus lowering a chance of guessing. For further studies, the importance of teaching collocations in a language classroom may be worth investigating. This is because a lot of studies have found a significant amount of benefits when L2 students acquire knowledge of collocations.

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APPENDIX

Surin Technical College

Collocational Test

30 items, 30 minutes, 30 marks

Instruction: Complete the underlined word expressions (collocations) below by choosing A or B or C. Then, mark (X) on your answer sheet.

1. Mewiya has to _____ some phone calls before dinner.

   A. use   B. make   C. dial

2. You must _____ attention to your parents.

   A. pay   B. take   C. get

3. The wind was light this morning, but it's picking up now and will be

   very _____ by the evening.

   A. heavy   B. strong   C. thick

4. When you go to Surin Technical College, you will _____ a lot

   of new friends.

   A. look   B. find   C. make

5. Sorayoot and Kanok _____ many activities.

   A. do   B. make   C. practise

6. Wanna is bored with her long hair, so she decides to _____

   her hair cut.

   A. cut   B. have   C. make

7. I cannot go to school because I _____ a cold.

   A. am   B. catch   C. contact

8. Let's have a _____ lunch and then go shopping.

    A. quick   B. rapid   C. fast

9. Daranee _____ some interesting ideas with her colleagues at her school.

    A. changed   B. exchanged   C. passed

10. Damrong _____ the bus and had to wait for the next one.

    A. lost   B. missed   C. fell

11. Niwat _____ a joke on his wife by hiding behind the door before she came in to the house.

    A. made   B. played   C. did

12. Do you _____ a trip to Los Angeles?

    A. use   B. play   C. take

13. Anantaya likes soft drinks, but Wanna likes _____ drinks.

    A. hard   B. strong   C. alcoholic

14. What homework do you have to _____ tonight?

    A. do   B. make   C. assign

15. Sukanya : Are you enjoying your job?

    Wiyada   : Yes, it's _____ work, but I really like it.

    A. difficult   B. hard   C. strong

16. Anna is good _____ typing.

    A. at   B. in   C. on

17. Your shoes are similar _____ mine.

    A. with   B. to   C. for

18. Seree is a good brother. He always <u>looks</u> _____ his little sister.

    A. down   B. ahead   C. after

19. John is <u>engaged</u> _____ Janny. Their wedding is in next year.

    A. for   B. to   C. with

20. <u>Keep</u> your hand _____ from this new machine.

    A. off   B. clear   C. away

21. The shirt does not really _____ <u>with</u> this skirt, but it is comfortable.

    A. go   B. deal   C. cover

22. It is dark. Please _____ <u>the light</u>.

    A. press on   B. turn on   C. turn off

23. I plan to mark your paper tomorrow. _____ <u>your</u> <u>homework</u> today, please.

    A. Hand out   B. Hand in   C. Work out

24. My husband <u>made</u> me _____ my mind about building our house.

    A. to change   B. changing   C. change

25. My close friend tried to <u>avoid</u> _____ my teacher questions.

    A. answered   B. answering   C. to answer

26. We <u>stopped</u> _____ . There was silence.

    A. talk   B. talked   C. talking

27. This report is <u>divided</u> _____ five parts.

    A. on   B. in   C. into

28. Sorry I'm late. My car _____ down on the way here.

    A. closed   B. broke   C. turned

29. _____ ! There is a police car behind you.

    A. Slow up   B. Slow down   C. Turn down

30. I could not go to my college because my car was _____ gas.

    A. cut out of   B. stop out of   C. run out of

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