

# Use of Collocations in Learning Arabic Vocabulary

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## Abstract

The use of collocations is considered a highly effective means of learning new vocabulary, as it has been demonstrated to substantially enhance students' proficiency and fluency in the target language. This study aims to investigate the impact of collocations on learning Arabic language vocabulary among the learners of Arabic as a foreign language in the Department of Arabic Language at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. A quasi-experimental design was employed, with a pre-test and post-test approach, using an intact class of 70 undergraduate students, which was divided into experimental (n=35) and control (n=35). A collocation test was used for data collection. After the data analysis, the study found that the p-value level of significance between the two groups was less than .05 ( $p=.000$ ,  $df=68$ ,  $t=4.673$ ). This suggests that there was a significant difference between learning Arabic vocabulary through collocations in the experimental group and the Grammar and vocabulary method in the control group. Consequently, to effectively teach Arabic vocabulary, it is crucial for teachers of Arabic as a foreign language to prioritize collocations in their lesson content. Moreover, the study provides theoretical and pedagogical implications and recommendations for future research.

**Keywords:** Collocations, Foreign Languages Learning, Arabic Vocabulary, Lexical Approach, Grammar and Translation.

## Introduction

Learning a foreign language involves several subsystems, which include the language's grammar, phonology, and vocabulary. Although vocabulary is obviously a critical aspect of foreign language learning, as noted by Kroll and De Groot (2005), several approaches have emerged to facilitate the learning of vocabulary and enhance fluency in language production. Among these approaches is the Lexical Approach, which aims to make the vocabulary learning process more accessible for language learners. According to Lewis (1993), this approach

emphasizes the importance of vocabulary learning through the use of collocations as a lexical item rather than individual words. In this regard, learners of foreign languages need to be competent in using vocabulary in the form of collocations rather than resorting to casual memorization of individual words.

However, many studies have been conducted regarding the learning of Arabic vocabulary, whereby various strategies have been employed to facilitate the learning process for non-native Arabic speakers. For instance, Akhyaruddin et al (2022) employed a direct method of vocabulary teaching to enhance the speaking skills of students who enrolled in a basic linguistic course at the University of Al-Raya. Conversely, Fibriyani (2019) used a motion picture strategy in Arabic vocabulary learning to improve students' speaking ability at the school of al-Jawami'l al-Aliyyah al-Islamiyyah Bandoung. Moreover, Al-Husnah (2020) explored the effectiveness of the flashcard approach as a pedagogical tool for promoting Arabic vocabulary comprehension among grade-eight students at Solok Al-shimali government secondary school. Some researchers have directed their attention towards examining the impact of instructional materials on the teaching of Arabic vocabulary in Arabic as a foreign language, such as (Tauhid, 2020; Bahrudin and Ismail, 2015). Others, like Maskor et al (2016), have adopted a questionnaire-based approach to investigate the perspectives of instructors of Arabic as a foreign language in relation to vocabulary learning. Furthermore, in the context of previous research on collocations, Suleiman (2018) has proposed a collocation learning template to facilitate the Arabic learning process. Although Al-Dubyan (2016) has explored the importance of collocations in language learning, Hindu (2020) has designated a program based on collocations and idioms to foster language proficiency in constructing well-formed sentences among intermediate-level students at Al-Azhar institution. Meanwhile, Salam and Fatri (2020) have examined the use of collocations in improving the quality of composition writing among Arabic language students at Islamic University Ponorogo.

However, previous studies that used various techniques in order to facilitate the learning of Arabic vocabulary have demonstrated favorable outcomes. Nonetheless, these studies have failed to explore the utilization of collocations as a facilitative strategy to simplify and expedite the learning of Arabic vocabulary. Therefore, this means that there is a need for empirical research to address this problem. However, the identified gap can be attributed to the overwhelming prevalence of the Grammar and Translation method in Arabic vocabulary learning especially in the Nigerian context, as noted by (Adam and Adebisi, 2021). Eisa (2020) corroborates this assertion by contending that the Grammar and Translation method has been dominant in foreign language learning for a long time in history, owing to its effectiveness in promoting communication between native Arab speakers and foreigners. Similarly, it has been noted by Maskor et al (2016) that the method of Grammar and Translations throws a significant weight behind the mastery of grammatical rules and structures in the learning of foreign languages. As such, the prioritization of grammar is deemed an indispensable component in the process of learning Arabic language, since it facilitates learners' comprehension of the morphological and syntactical structures of the language. According to Selim (2018), the Grammar and translation method has established itself as a conventional and widely accepted method in Arabic language education.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the impact of collocations on the facilitation of Arabic language vocabulary learning among Arabic learners as a foreign language in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. In the context of foreign language learning, collocations refer to a "combination of two or more lexemes among which there is a strong semantic affinity" (Grimm, 2010, p.166). Gass (2013;

524) has defined collocations as a “group of words that often function as a single unit for a learner,” for example, شن غارة *Shanna gharatan* (To lunch a raid) شرح سلاحا *shahara silah* (To raise a weapon against) شهر عسل *sharu aslin* (Honey moon) شهوة طعام *shahwatu ta’amin* (Desire for food) as stated by Al-Hafiz (2004). According to Wray (2002), Collocations are crucial in enhancing vocabulary accuracy and fluency. Moreover, Nation (2008) has reaffirmed that the use of collocations can greatly promote both written and oral communication by providing a higher degree of precision in vocabulary selection. Similarly, Carter and McCarthy (2005) advocate for the idea of teaching vocabulary in context, specifically in the form of collocations. Learning of vocabulary in the form of collocations is an easier way for retrieval. According to Andarab (2019; 981), “ collocating vocabulary items is a type of association that is considered to be more efficient retrieval”. Krashen and Terrel (2000) have expressed their support for contextualizing the vocabulary items to facilitate the retention process in long-term memory rather than relying on the memorization of individual words. Ellis (2001) has also acknowledged that when collocations are learned and occur together, they become associative, increasing the likelihood of recalling the entire chunk when encountering any piece of collocations. For instance, Grimm (2010) posited that instead of simply memorizing the single word: كبير *Kabirun* (Big), students should learn it through its collocated words such as مسرح كبير *Masrahun Kabirun* (Big theatre), رجل كبير *Rajlun Kabirun* (old man), مشكلة كبيرة *Mushkilatun kabiratun* (a significant problem), خسائر كبيرة *Khasa’ir kabiratun* (Terrible loss). Hill (2000) further reaffirms that learning collocations will lead to better communication both in written and spoken forms, resulting in greater fluidity. He also asserts that approximately 80% of written texts comprise collocations. Therefore, collocations serve as an illustration of how words are commonly combined in language, making it crucial for language learners to learn them proficiently (Sadeghi, 2010).

The current study offers a more effective approach for the participants to learn Arabic vocabulary, comprehend their meanings, and utilize them appropriately in the form of collocations rather than individual words. This is because the learning of Arabic vocabulary through collocations provides learners with a deeper understanding of how words are used in specific contexts (Zaabalawi, 2019). Furthermore, the learning of collocations is regarded as a means of achieving linguistic competence and improvement of writing skills in foreign language learning (Lewis, 1993). Similarly, Altun (2021) emphasizes the crucial importance of acquiring mastery of collocations in order to attain lexical competence and idiomatic control of a language.

Based on the purpose of this study, the hypothesis posited in this study is that the implementation of collocations in the process of learning Arabic language vocabulary will yield a positive outcome for the participants. In addition, it has been established that collocations have demonstrated remarkable efficacy in streamlining the learning of vocabulary, as noted by the study by (Talebinezhad, 2018; Pakdaman and Gilakjani, 2019). To achieve this objective, this paper is divided into the following sections: The first section describes the background, importance, and objective of the study. The second discusses the methods used in data collection and data analysis. Then, the third section presents the findings of the study, and the last section discusses the meaning of the findings, implications, limitations, and conclusion.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study used a quasi-experimental design featuring two distinct groups. One group is the experimental group, and the other is the control group. In this regard, a quasi-experimental design is a prevalent form of experimental research utilized in the social sciences and psychology, mainly for the purpose of comparing groups and evaluating changes due to the experimental treatment (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003). In the present study, a pretest was administered to both groups. Subsequently, the experimental group underwent instruction on learning vocabulary through the use of collocations in the Lexical Approach as a treatment. In contrast to the control group, which received instruction based on grammar and translation methods in learning vocabulary. After the completion of the training, a posttest was administered to both groups in order to compare their mean scores and ascertain the impact of the instruction. In addition, this study used an intact class as its sample. As stated by Al-Mahmoudi (2019), an intact class is studied when it is not possible to select a sample from it, based on ethical reasons or in educational settings. In this research, an intact class was used because it was conducted in an educational setting where the class already existed with 70 students, and it was divided into an experimental group (n=35) and a control group (n=35) for the purpose of this study. To have a strong quasi-experimental design, the internal threats to validity were controlled by pretest for both groups. To make sure there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups, an independent sample t-test was carried out to ensure equal variances between the two groups.

Table 1

*Research Design*

Groups	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental	O <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>
Control	O <sub>1</sub>	-	O <sub>2</sub>

X=Intervention program (treatment)

O=Measurement of the dependent variables

Table 1 above shows the design used in this study.

### Participants & Sampling

The study was conducted in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. The research involved an intact class of 70 undergraduate students from the Department of Arabic Language, specifically those in their 300 level who were purposively selected as a sample. The participants, aged between 18-45 years, comprised 57 males and 13 females in the 2021/2022 session. In educational settings, the use of an intact class is the most common sampling technique known to be used to study an entire population like an intact class (Etikan et al., 2015). Therefore, the selection was based on the fact that the participants have a background in Arabic language learning, having completed various Arabic courses during the first two years of their study. In addition, given the complex nature of the collocations, an advanced level of linguistic proficiency is deemed necessary. Furthermore, the course of Arabic essay writing is taught at this level to the participants, which necessitates an intensive use of vocabulary in order to effectively express their ideas. Thus, this study provides the participants with a means to equip themselves with sufficient vocabulary to be used in their essay writing. At the beginning of the training session, the participants were divided into two groups, experimental (n=35) and control (n=35). A homogeneity test was

administered to ensure the equality of the two groups at the beginning of the training since they were going to receive different treatments. The effect of the treatment will be decided based on the outcome of the comparison between the pretest and posttest of both groups.

### Instruments

The instrument used for the data collection in this study was the collocation test, which comprised pre- and post-tests. The aim of this instrument was to evaluate the participants' level of vocabulary knowledge through the use of collocations before and after the training session. Since the instrument was developed by the researchers, it was validated by four experienced teachers of Arabic as a foreign language, two of whom were from Egypt and the other two from Nigeria. Furthermore, a statistician from Nigeria also participated in the validation process. The test consists of multiple choice, fill-the-gap, and cross-matching techniques based on the lexical and grammatical collocation classification by Al-Atiyah (2018). However, the test comprised 60 collocations, which were distributed between the nominal collocations *al-mutalazimatul Ismiyyah* (20 questions), the verbal collocations *al-mutalazimatul Fi'iliyyah* (20 questions), and the particle collocations *al-mutalazimatul Harfiyyah* (20 questions). Each question carries 1 mark, and the total marks will be 60 marks. The internal validity of the instrument was tested after confirmation of its face validity. The instrument was used for the pre-test and post-test for both the experimental and control groups to collect the data.

### Materials

The present study utilized collocations as its primary materials. These particular collocations were extracted from two books. The first one was '*Kaifa taktubu maudhu'a Insha'in*' (كيف تكتب موضوع إنشاء) written by Abubakar Aliyu Abdul Alim. The aforementioned book is among the prescribed textbooks for the participants at the 300 level, covering a variety of topics and narratives that enable the students to acquire diverse vocabulary for their future daily usage. The second book was the Al-Hafiz Arabic Collocations Dictionary, written by Al-Tahir A. Hafiz.

### Procedure of Data Collection

The present study utilized quantitative data which had been generated through the collocation test, comprising a total of sixty questions. The data was collected in two distinct phases, wherein the first phase involved a pretest of both experimental and control groups. Subsequently, the second phase, which followed the training sessions, involved the administration of a post-test for both groups.

Initially, the researchers secured all the necessary permissions to conduct the training. Subsequently, the participants were given an information sheet containing comprehensive details pertaining to the project, data storage, their rights, and their involvement. Additionally, the participants were also given the option to withdraw from the study at any point when they wished to do so and asked to fill out a consent form if they willingly chose to partake in the research. In order to ensure complete anonymity, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

The training program spanned six weeks, encompassing eleven sessions. Two weekly sessions were designated for each group, with each session having a duration of two hours. Therefore, the Lexical Approach was employed to instruct the experimental group in Arabic vocabulary learning through the use of collocations, whereas the control group was instructed through

the use of individual words and their respective definitions or translations in the Grammar and Translation method.

At the commencement of the training program, the researchers administered the collocation test for both groups with the intention of assessing the level of Arabic vocabulary knowledge through the use of collocations for the two groups to ensure homogeneity. Subsequently, the training commenced for both groups.

During the training, the experimental group received treatment based on McCarthy and O'Dell's (2005) model of collocations teaching technique. The model presents the process of teaching collocations in three phases namely: finding, recording, and practicing phases. The researchers dedicated four sessions to the finding phase, where the participants were adequately guided to identify and acknowledge the collocations and their meanings in context with the collocated words present across three selected topics drawn from the Books '*Kaifa taktubu maudhu'a Insha'in*' written by Abubakar Aliyu Abdul Alim and "*Al-Hafiz Arabic collocation Dictionary*," written by Al-Tahir A. Hafiz. In addition, the researchers provided supplementary examples of how certain vocabulary has multiple collocations and different connotations. For instance, the word فصل *fasl* (Class) has many collocates that determine its specific meaning. Such as فصل الشتاء *Faslusshita'l* (Winter season), الفصل الدراسي *Al-fasl al-darasi* (Semester), فصل الكتاب *fasl al-kitabi* (book chapter), قول فصل *Qawlun faslun* (Details story), يوم الفصل *Yawm al-fasl*, (The Judgement-day). These were the kinds of activities to which the researchers exposed the participants in the experimental group during phase one.

The following figure illustrates more about the above explanations

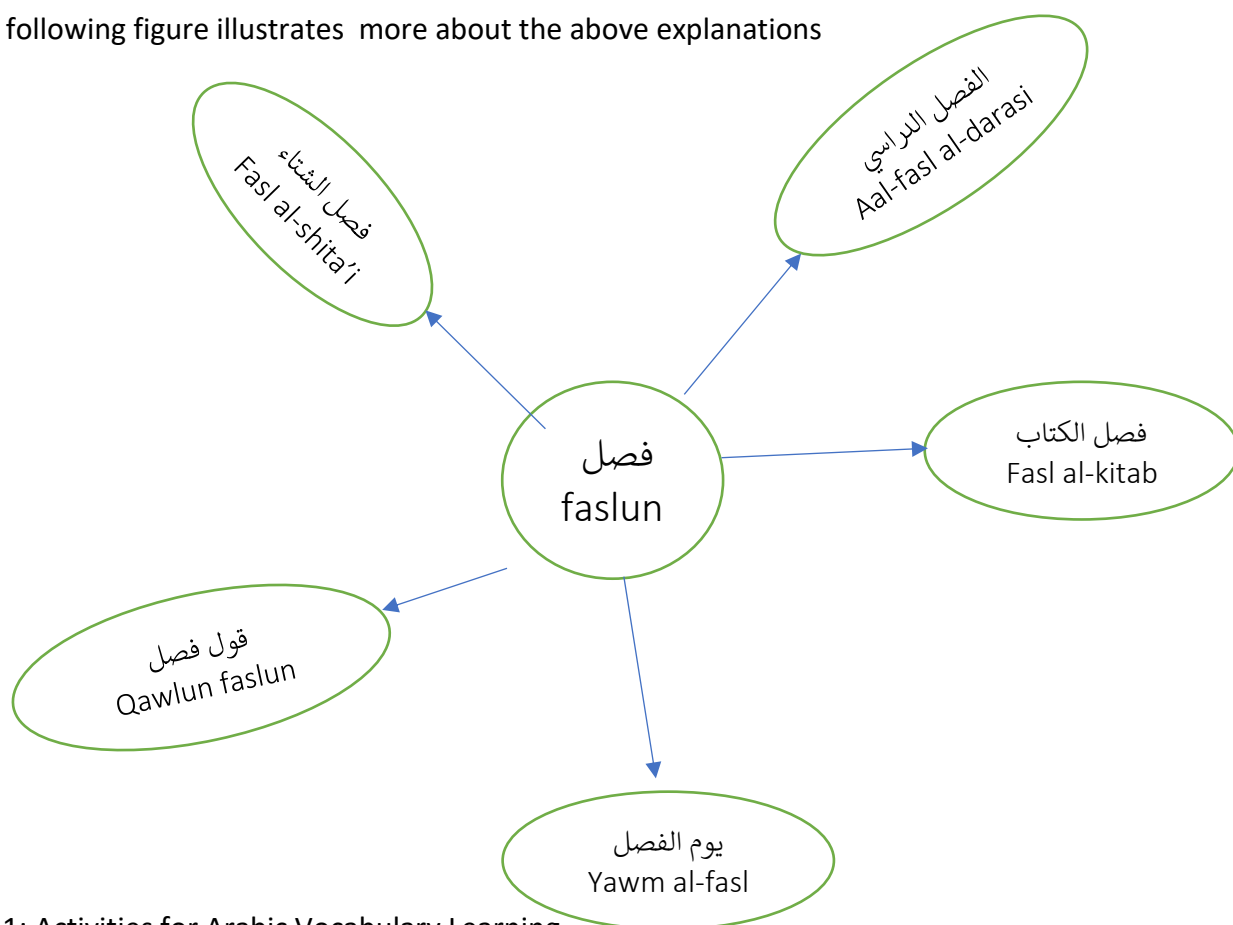


Fig. 1: Activities for Arabic Vocabulary Learning



In the second phase, referred to as the recording phase, the researchers instructed the participants to use their personal notebooks to record some of the identified collocations ascertained in the finding phase. Then, the participants were advised to memorize these collocations very well in their respective contexts. These activities lasted for three sessions. The final phase, known as the practicing phase, also comprised three sessions. The participants were presented with individual words and instructed to form collocations using these individual words. With the assistance of the researchers, some of these collocations were incorporated into sentences. For instance, نبح *Nabaha* (To bark), غرد *Gharrada* (To tweets), سفك *safaka* (To shade blood), لى *labba* (To answer), راحة *rahat* (comfort), إخلاء *Ikhla'a* (to vacate), حرية *Hurriyyah* (freedom), حفلة *Haflah* (Party), العملة *al-umlah* (Currency). These were the kinds of vocabulary given to the participants and were asked to provide their collocated words, such as follows; نبح الكلب *Nabaha al-kalbu* (The dog barked), غرد العصفور *Gharrada al-usfuru* (The bird tweeted), سفك الدم *Safaka al-dama* (He shed the blood), لى النداء *Labba al-nida'a* (He answered the call), راحة البال *Rahat al-bal* (peace of mind), إخلاء الطرف *Ikhla'a al-tarf* (Disclaimer), حرية التعبير *Hurriyat al-ta'abir* (Freedom of speech), حفلة الزفاف *Haflat al-zifaf* (The Wedding party), العملة المشفرة *Al-umlah al-mushaffara* (Cryptocurrency).

On the contrary, the control group underwent intensive vocabulary training employing the Grammar and Translation method, which involved defining and translating individual words throughout the entire training sessions, using the same materials.

Then, a post-test was administered to the participants in both the experimental and control groups to enable the researchers to find the differences between the two groups that would allow them to determine whether the null hypothesis should be rejected.

### Data Analysis

At the end of the training program, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 26 version and subjected to descriptive and inferential analysis. In an effort to ascertain the effectiveness of collocations on the learning of Arabic vocabulary as opposed to individual words, an independent sample t-test was carried out. This test served the purpose of comparing the mean scores of the pre-tests and post-tests for the two groups, ultimately leading to a decision regarding the efficacy of the collocations on the learning of Arabic vocabulary over individual words.

### Results

#### Demographic Data

For the purpose of this study, an intact class of 70 undergraduate students at the 300 level in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua Katsina, Nigeria, voluntarily participated. The participants were selected using a purposive sampling method and divided into an experimental group (n=35) and a control group (n=35). The groups consisted of both male and female participants, ranging in age from 18-45 years old. Both groups received the pre-test at the beginning of their respective training sessions and were then given different treatments before being subjected to a post-test at the end of the training sessions. The demographic data of the participants is presented in the following table

Table 2

*Demographic Data of Experimental and Control Groups*

Variables	Experimental group (n=35)		Control group (n=35)	
Mela	28	80%	29	82.9
Female	7	20%	6	17.1
Age				
18-24	11	31.1%	10	28.6%
25-34	16	45.7%	19	54.3%
35-44	8	22.9%	6	17.1
Language	Hausa language	100%	Hausa language	100%
Nationality	Nigerians	100%	Nigerians	100%

Table 3

*Normality Distribution of Vocabulary test scores of Shapiro-Wilk*

Variables	Groups	Statistics	Df	Sig.
Pre-test	Experimental	.984	35	.882
	Control	.957	35	.186
Post test	Experimental	.966	35	.338
	Control	.098	35	.067

Table 3 represents the Shapiro-Wilk normality test as the number of participants falls below one hundred. The table displays the normal distribution of pre-test and post-test data for both the experimental and control groups. The p-value for the pre-test of the experimental group was (.882). While the control group exhibited a p-value of (.186). On the other hand, the post-test for the experimental group displayed a p-value of (.338) and (.067) for the control group. As the p-values for both groups in the pre-test and post-test exceed (0.05), the normality assumptions have been met. Subsequently, inferential statistics can be run on the data.

Table 4

*The Independent T-Test for The Pre-Test Scores of The Experimental and The Control Group*

	Levene's test for Equality of variances					t-test for Equality of Means		95% confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error difference	Lower	upper
Equal Variances assumed	1.132	.291	.179	68	.858	371	2.073	-3.765	4.508
Equal variances not assumed			.179	65.809	.858	371	2.073	-3.768	4.511



Table 4 above presents the p-value of Levene's test result, which exceeded the alpha (0.05) yielding a value of ( $p=.291$ ) which indicates the meeting of equality of the variance for both groups. However, it has been found that the result of the independent samples t-test shows the level of significance was greater than (0.05) which was ( $p=.858$ ,  $df=58$ ,  $t=.179$ ). This implies that there was no significant difference in vocabulary knowledge between the two groups prior to the training. It is noteworthy that the homogeneity assumption of variance was met.

Table 5

*Description of Post-test of the Experimental and the Control Groups*

Post test	Groups	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Std. Errr mean
	Experimental	35	43.46	7.314	1.236
	Control	35	34.80	8.163	1.380

Table 5 illustrates the mean scores of the post-test for both the experimental group (43.46, with a standard deviation of 7.314) and the control group (34.80, with a standard deviation of 8.163) as determined by the paired t-test. The statistical analysis reveals a remarkable improvement in Arabic vocabulary knowledge among the participants in the experimental group as compared to the control group.

Table 6

*Independent Samples T-test of the Experimental and Control groups for post-test*

Levene's Test for Equality						T-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Diffence	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig.	Mean difference	Std err difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variance assumed	.688	.410	4.673	68	.000	8.657	1.853	4.960	12.354
Equal variance not assumed			4.673	67.195	.000	8.657	1.853	4.960	12.355

An inferential test of independent samples t-test was run in order to determine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental group and control groups after receiving the different vocabulary learning training. The table above indicates the p-value from Levene's test is above .05 ( $p=.410$ ) which meets the equality of the variance for the two groups. The result of independent t-test samples showed that the level of significance was less than .05 ( $p=.000$ ,  $df=68$ ,  $t=4.673$ ) signifies the existence of a difference between the Arabic vocabulary knowledge of the experimental group and the control group.

Table 7

*Paired Samples T-Test for The Three Components of Collocations in Pre and Post-Test of The Experimental Group.*

Variables	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Nominal pre	11.14	35	2.713	.459
Nominal post	14.74		2.582	.436
Verbal pre	11.83	35	3.213	.543
Verbal Post	15.43		2.627	.444
Particle pre	10.03	35	2.538	.429
Particle post	13.63		2.991	.506

From table 7 above, it is evident that there was a noticeable improvement in all the components of nominal collocations المتلازمات الاسمية *al-mutalazima al- Ismiyyah*, verbal collocations المتلازمات الفعلية *al-mutalazimat al- Fi'iliyyah*, and particle collocations المتلازمات الحرفية *al-mutalazimat al- Harfiyyah* in the post-tests of the experimental group as opposed to its pre-test. This signifies that the treatment provided to the experimental group was effective.

### Discussions

The objective of the current study is to investigate the impact of collocations on the facilitation of Arabic language vocabulary learning among the learners of Arabic as a foreign language in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. Therefore, the study employed a quasi-experimental design which incorporated pre-test and post-measurements. The study involved an intact class of 70 students from the 300 level as the study sample. The participants were assigned to the experimental (n=35) and control groups (n=35). The experimental group was exposed to vocabulary learning training based on collocations in the Lexical Approach, while the control group received Arabic vocabulary learning training through individual words and their definitions, known as the Grammar and Translation method. The instrument used for data collection was the collocation test. The collected data was subsequently subjected to an inferential analysis using statistical software known as SPSS. In order to compare the mean scores of the experimental and control groups to find the differences, both paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests were utilized. Therefore, the findings revealed that the experimental group had higher post-test mean scores in comparison to the control group. Furthermore, a significant difference was observed between the experimental and control groups in terms of vocabulary learning, as indicated by the results of the independent sample t-test.

Therefore, these findings suggest that the implementation of the Lexical Approach through the use of collocations for learning Arabic vocabulary in the experimental group was more effective than the application of the Grammar and Translation method employed in the control group. Hence, the present study's hypothesis has been substantiated. From this point of view, the researchers conclude that collocations yield a considerable impact on simplifying the learning process of Arabic vocabulary for the learners of Arabic as a foreign language in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, Nigeria. This implies that when instructing Arabic vocabulary to foreign Arabic learners, at the university, emphasis should be placed on teaching the vocabulary through the use of collocations in the Lexical Approach. This is due to the fact that the observed results have demonstrated an increase in the mean scores of the experimental group whose participants were trained on

collocations for learning Arabic vocabulary, in contrast to the control group, whose participants were not provided with collocation instruction.

Therefore, the findings of the current study are in line with those of Talebinezhad (2018) who found the impact of collocations on teaching medical vocabulary to nursing students at Kashan University of Medical Sciences, Iran. Similarly, the research conducted by Pakdaman and Gilakjani (2019) was in support of the current findings, as it demonstrated the effectiveness of collocational activities on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners at Pardis Institute in Lahijan, Iran. In addition, the current findings also confirmed the assertion made by Carter and McCarthy (1988); Andarab (2019), as well as Krashen and Terrel (2000), advocating for the idea of teaching vocabulary in the form of collocations to facilitate the retention process in long term memory, leading to easier retrieval for learners of foreign languages. In the same vein, the findings corresponded with the perspective of Nation (2008) who posits that the utilization of collocations provides learners of foreign languages with a high degree of precision in the selection of vocabulary.

The current research has, additionally, found the effectiveness of collocations in providing lexical competency to the participants, as demonstrated by the results of their post-test in comparison to their pre-test. This finding is similar to that of Hindu (2020), which observed the impact of collocations on the enhancement of lexical competence in essay writing among non-Arabic native speakers. Hindu implemented a collocation-based program for intermediate-level, female students who were non-Arabic native speakers at Al-Azhar institution. In addition, this finding has substantiated the claims made by certain linguists regarding the significance of collocations in lexical competence, such as Hill (2000) who observed that collocations serve as a source of lexical competence, that leads to better communication both in written and spoken forms. Altun (2021) has further reaffirmed the vital nature of acquiring mastery of collocations in order to attain lexical competence and idiomatic control of a language.

The present study has identified an additional noteworthy finding, indicating that the learning of collocations is advantageous to the learning process of Arabic as a foreign language. This finding is consistent with Salam and fatri's (2020) findings which revealed the significance of collocations in facilitating the learning process of Arabic language among students at the Islamic University Ponorogo, ultimately aiding in their ability to compose a well-written essay. Furthermore, the finding aligns with most previous research regarding the importance of collocations in learning Arabic as a foreign language, such as the research of (Mohammed 2018; Nawi and Zainuddeen 2018; Sulaiman,2018). Additionally, the finding aligns with Wray's (2002) assertion that collocations are vital in foreign language learning since they can enhance both accuracy and fluency .

However, one thing that made the current study's findings unique is that the current study used the Lexical Approach to teach collocations to the experimental group and employed the Grammar and Translation method for the control group, thereby achieving a robust design that was absent in previous research about the learning of Arabic as a foreign language in Nigeria.

Based on the findings, this study offers some theoretical and pedagogical contributions that can be useful in the domain of study. Therefore, the study confirmed the theory employed in guiding the study, which is the Lexical Approach proposed by Lewis (1993). This is a theory of teaching a foreign language that emphasizes the learning of vocabulary based on collocations, rather than concentrating on grammar rules and the meaning of individual words. On the pedagogical contribution, the current study has opened up an avenue for the

instructors of Arabic as a foreign language in the Department of Arabic at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, to implement the collocational approach in their teaching method. It would also be a great idea for the policy makers at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University to duly consider the present findings in order to undertake a comprehensive review of the participants' syllabus. This review should aim to effectively integrate collocations within the learning framework, thereby facilitating a more efficacious learning of Arabic vocabulary. In addition, the study has unequivocally exhibited the significance of learning Arabic vocabulary through the use of collocations, which undoubtedly provided the participants with assistance in learning Arabic vocabulary. Moreover, the current study has notably contributed to the existing literature on the use of collocations in learning Arabic vocabulary among learners of Arabic as a foreign language in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that, upon reviewing the available literature in this study, there was a scarcity of empirical studies concentrating on Arabic collocations that pertain to Arabic vocabulary learning.

However, the present study has some limitations which could potentially impinge upon the generalizability of its findings. Therefore, these limitations include the use of an intact class of 70 students at the Arabic 300 level in one of the Nigerian universities, which will not allow its findings to be generalized to the students of other levels or other universities in Nigeria. Furthermore, the absence of randomization in the participant assignment represents another limitation, as does the time constraints imposed on the study, which was conducted over a period of just six weeks. A study with a longer period will yield better results. To mitigate the effects of these limitations, the researchers implemented a number of strategies. These strategies included the use of a pre-test to ensure sample homogeneity prior to commencing the training program, as well as the management of both classes by a single facilitator in order to control for a confounding variable. Finally, the use of a control group was implemented as a means of avoiding bias.

Despite these limitations, the current study is expected to serve as a turning point for research in Arabic to focus on the role of collocations in teaching the Arabic language as a foreign language in general. It is hoped that Arabic instructors will embrace the technique of teaching vocabulary through the use of collocations in the Lexical Approach in the light of the findings of this research.

## Conclusion

The study addressed the impact of collocations in facilitating the learning of Arabic language vocabulary for undergraduate students of Arabic as a foreign language at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Nigeria. The findings of the study confirmed that the Lexical Approach, which emphasizes the use of collocations, was more effective in enhancing Arabic vocabulary learning as compared to the Grammar and Translation method which emphasizes the learning of grammar and individual words along with their translation. Therefore, the research confirmed the hypothesis that collocations have a significant effect on the learning of vocabulary among learners of Arabic as a foreign language. This means that there is a need for teachers of Arabic as a foreign language to modify the method of their teaching from that of individual words to a multi-word approach known as collocations. This modification will facilitate the learning of vocabulary for learners of Arabic as a foreign language to attain lexical competency in the early stages of their learning process. Therefore, this research suggests a way for conducting similar research on Arabic as a foreign language to overcome some challenges in its learning process.

The implications of the research findings are of considerable significance, especially for instructors of Arabic as a foreign language at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, Nigeria, who ought to integrate collocations into their lesson contents. In addition, the study's findings provide a valuable method for policymakers and management at Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, as well as the Department of Arabic Language, to update their syllabus to align with the research's conclusions. Therefore, to incorporate collocations into the Arabic vocabulary learning method, the instructors should follow McCarthy and O'Dell's (2008) model of teaching collocations used in this study. The proposed model presents a three-phase approach to collocation teaching. The first phase is a searching process, in which the instructors should provide guidance to students on how to search for and identify collocations in some texts. In the second phase, which is the recording process phase. The instructors should provide students with guidance on how to incorporate the previously identified collocations from phase one into various collocational structures. In the third and final phase, the instructors should focus on the practical aspects of forming collocations and sentences. Therefore, for future research, there is a need for empirical research about collocations in Arabic language learning for non-Arabic native speakers, especially in the four language skills, due to their importance in learning a foreign language. In addition, the English language has classified collocations into lexical and grammatical categories. This classification needs to be harmonized with the classification of words in the Arabic language, as suggested by the current research according to (Al-Atiyyah, 2018). As such, this study also recommends that future research on Arabic collocations should concentrate on the language production of Arabic language learners in order to identify their weaknesses and propose solutions that enable them to learn Arabic in an easier way. Specifically, the emphasis should be placed on Arabic particles, which are commonly known as grammatical collocations, as the researchers have observed that this category poses significant challenges for second language learners. Henceforth, the teachers of Arabic as a foreign language should review the contents of their programs to incorporate the collocations in their classes. Consequently, learners of Arabic as a foreign language should change the style of learning vocabulary from individual words to a multi-word style which is known as collocations.

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