ENGLISH STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING LEXICAL COLLOCATIONS VIEWED IN THEIR SPEAKING PERFORMANCES: A CASE AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FBS UNP PADANG

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Abstract
This research was a descriptive quantitavie research about English students' ability in using lexical collocations viewed intheirspeaking performances. The uses of lexical collocations has been concerned as the 2013 batch English students had been practicing English at classes they had taken and at schools they had taught their temporary students. Lexical collocations indicated natural English which knowledge of it is necessary to gain as they are going to teach their students in the future. 18 students who had done PLK activity were involved in speaking test and interviews. The lexical collocations found in students sentences were analyzed and the types were classified to see the correct uses or collocation problems. It was found that the students' ability in using lexical collocations was poor. All types of lexical collocations were used with different proportions with Verb and adjective and Adjective and Noun as the most frequent types of lexical collocations used. The problems were frequently of Verb and Noun and Adjective and Noun types. The causes of the problems were the limited knowledge of lexical collocations, the ignorance of the use of lexical collocations, and the use of direct translation from L1 to L2. It is concluded the more lexical collocations used, the more possible problems to occur.

Key words: Lexical Collocations, Speaking Performance

INTRODUCTION
Speaking is one of the skills taught in language learning. The students are expected to master this skill because it is a way of communication which is significant to the students' language learning. Speaking plays the role to lead the communication and allows the speakers send messages orally which are then directly understood by the listeners. By speaking, the students can express their

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emotions and ideas, tell stories, make requests, and show other functions of language. Cameron (2001) defines speaking as an active use of language. It is used to express meanings. As it is done, other people involving in speaking can make sense of the meanings someone utters. Luoma (2004:9) states that speaking can be defined as a meaningful interaction between two or more people. To elaborate more in what a speaker shares while speaking Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) define speaking as a productive skill of language learning in which the speakers make choices of lexicon, structure and discourse.

In English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang speaking is one subject that is required to be taken by the English students. In curriculum 2013, speaking is divided into three classes. They are Speaking 1 in semester 1, Speaking 2 in semester 2, and Public Speaking in semester 3. The students must take these three classes in sequence to fulfill credits of Strata 1 degree. Speaking is pit in an early semester because it is believed that the students need to practice speaking as early as possible to make them accustomed to speak English. Therefore, speaking is put in semester 1 along with Grammar 1 and Intensive Course (IC). In addition, in IC class speaking is performed almost every meeting to make the students practice speaking as much as possible. In addition, English language teaching program students are expected to speak English while teaching for their future students in order to make the students familiar with English. In fact, they have to speak English in every subject of either English study program or English teaching program.

Brown and Yule (1993, cited in Richards (2008: 21) suggest three kinds of speech activities in speaking. Those activities are classified based on the form and the function. They are talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance. Instead of identifying speaking as activities, on the contradictory, Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) states five types of speaking performances. Those types are listed based on the level of difficulty. They are imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive. The speaking performance of them will be explained in this review with the similarities and differences with Brown and Yule's (1993).

To speak in English the students are supported by the elements of speaking skill. The elements are vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Vocabulary as element of speaking means that while speaking, the speakers use right and appropriate vocabulary (Ur: 2003). Grammar used by the speakers must be correct because incorrect use of it can cause misunderstanding. Pronunciation is about sounding words correctly as they are sound by the native speakers. The last is fluency. It is about the ability of speakers to run communication without any hesitation and long pauses.

Concerning the elements mentioned above, it is sometimes difficult for the students to speak in English because they do not know much vocabulary in English. In addition, they sometimes do not know the right and appropriate vocabulary to speak. The students tend to translate word by word in their native language to English. For example to say in English '*Dia melakukan kesalahan.*' many of the students say '*She did a mistake.*' instead of '*She made a mistake. did*

does not collocate with *a mistake*; *made'* does. This tendency can occur because English have different rules of word choices and word orders.

The association between *made* and *a mistake* is called collocations. McCharty and O'dell (2008) define collocations as natural combinations of words and it can refer as the way English words are closely associated with each other. Words couple up to form multi words unit as they seem to frequently occur, and they are called collocations (Thornburny: 2002). According to Benson (2009, cited in Biskri (2012), "collocations are recurrent, fixed, identifiable non idiomatic phrases and constructions," and he categorize them on the basis of grammatical and lexical collocations. He also states that lexical collocations are words associations of two lexical words (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb) for example verb and noun, adjective and noun, noun and noun, etc.

Collocations including lexical collocations need to be learned because of two reasons (McCharty and O'dell: 2008). First, collocations will help the speakers of English to speak in a more natural and accurate way. *I'm making my homework* may be understood by other English speakers, but it will lead unnatural sound to your speech and perhaps confusion. Second, learning collocations increases the range of English vocabulary. Therefore, the speakers can find alternative ways of saying something. One example, using words like very in *very dark* to be *pitch dark* and *very beautiful* to be *gorgeous*. In addition, according to Biskri (2012) to become proficient speakers of spontaneous conversations, students have to acquire skills and knowledge concerning elements of speaking like grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency which in particular they have to acquire collocations and retrieve them once they used by native speakers.

Yalmiadi et al. (2013) found several causes of students' difficulties in using lexical collocations. They were mastery of vocabulary, ignrance of word restriction, use of direct translation, the lack of collocation properties, etc. Conforming those findings, Syarif (2014) found that the students lack of vocabulary in English caused the transferring of Bahasa Indonesia words into English. It made problems occur. As a consequence, it was found wrong words combinations, for example, "*master the time*" instead of "*control the time*."

A research about students' ability in using lexical collocations in speaking performances is necessary to be conducted because of two conditions. *First,* there is no descriptive research investigating students' ability in using lexical collocation in speaking performances. One research done by Mongkolchai (2008) investigated the students' ability in using English collocations by using sentence completions and multiple choice items. That research is different from the research proposed by the researcher because the students' ability in using lexical collocations will be viewed in students' speaking performances. Another research done by Yalmiadi et al. (2013) investigated students' ability in using lexical collocations is descriptive writing.

Second, the fourth year students of English in language education study program have been speaking English for more than four years in academic time on the campus. In the last semester they also have used English in their internship in schools in West Sumatera. They taught English to their temporary students at schools in English. Even though not in all occasions they used English at classes

they took, at least they made their students exposed to English. The skill used the most was speaking. They spoke in English in front of the class in order to explain concepts of the material to the students. As they spoke in front of the students, their temporary students were exposed to an actual use of English. As speaking is almost done every day, other elements of speaking such as grammar, pronunciation and fluency are considered to be used correctly while they speak. In addition, they have taken classes in which they used English to speak and present materials in almost every class since the first year.

The lexical collocations have several types and the use of it indicates natural use of English. In speaking class, students are not exposed to lexical collocations because the sillabus maybe only focus to check grammar and pronunciation without paying much attention to lexical collocations. Because of that the students themselves are not aware of combinations of lexical words that co-occur and called lexical collocations as they have less practice which is affected by insufficient contact with native speakers or with English texts that they can obtain lexical collocations by watching English movies or English classes available online. In addition, the students may tend to translate each word of their mother tongue into English, and it leads to unnatural sound of English speaking. With those problems identified, this research was aimed at finding the English students' ability in using lexical collocations and analysing how students used lexical collocations, types of lexical collocations students used, problems students had in using lexical collocations, and the causes of the problems.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was descriptive research as it shows the ability of English students in using lexical collocations (LC) in speaking performances. 30% of 51 students of bach 2013 or 18 students were the selected as subjects of this research. The instruments of this research were speaking test in form of interview by Michael Canale's (1984) which was framework for oral proficiency testing, one handphone to record the interviews, and one interview guide in Bahasa Indonesia. The framework has four levels. In each level the students were asked about various things related to their experiences at schools while taking internship. Lastly, they were asked about their feelings after the interview. The types of LC analyzed were Verb and Noun (VN), Adjective and Noun (AdjN), Adverb and Adjective (AdvAd)j, Verb and Adverb (Vadv), Verb and Adjective (Vadj), Nun + Noun (NN), and Noun and Verb (NV).

To collect the data, the researcher met the student one by one to have a n interview as a speaking performance, then described conversations and anlyzed the LC in sentence level and then categorized the types bu using Oxford Online Collocation Dictionary and calculated the LC used. With those LC the students' ability was classified. By calculating the percentage of each student the ability was classified. The classifications were very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent. Since the number of LC used by the students were various, to classify the students the classifications of students's ability in using LC, equal interval system suggested by Slocum (1999) was used to see the the ability of the students among them only. The percentage below were derived from students' total uses of

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LC. To classify the percentage into five cetegory, the range was 6. The lowest range is 61% and the highest one is 95%.

Next, result to find was proportions of each type of LC used and of collocation problems. The formula was:

$$\text{Type Percentage} = \frac{Collocations\ found}{Total\ collocations} \times 100\%$$

The next data was to check the causes of the students' problems in using lexical collocations in their speaking performances. Five students with the highest number of incorrect uses were identified to have interview with. The answers students as interviewees gave were the data. The causes of collocation problems in using LC in their speaking performances told by the students were classified

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
1. Research Findings

After analyzed, the data found were in tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1. Students' Lexical Ccollocations (LC)

St	Types of Lexical Collocations							Collocation Problems (CP)	Σ
	1 Verb and Noun (VN)	2 Adjective and Noun (AdjN)	3 Adverb and Adjective (AdvAdj)	4 Verb and Adverb (Vadv)	5 Verb and Adjective (Vadj)	6 Noun + Noun (NN)	7 Noun and Verb (NV)		
1	10	12	3	1	1			14	27
2	17	8	2	1	3	1		19	32
3	26	17			1			14	44
4	18	11	11	5	1			20	46
5	30	13	7	4		2	3	22	59
6	16	5			1	1		9	23
7	20	14	2	3	3	2		26	44
8	27	12		4		2		6	45
9	17	12	1	1				12	31
10	23	11	6	3		1		15	44
11	27	12	5	3	1	2	1	3	51
12	19	11	3	2		1		8	36
13	15	12	2	3	1			21	33
14	11	7				1		10	19
15	30	8	1		1		1	13	41
16	25	13	2	2	2			19	44
17	30	3	1	2	1		1	9	38
18	15	17	3					8	35
Total	376	208	47	34	16	13	6	248	692
%	53,71%	29,71%	6,71%	4,85%	2,28%	1,85%	0,85%		

Tabel 2. *How Students Used Lexical Collocations (LC)*

St.	Total Collocations	Correct Uses (CU)	Collocatin Problems (CP)	%	Classification
1	41	27	14	65,85	Very Poor
2	51	32	19	62,75	Very Poor
3	58	44	14	75,86	Average
4	66	46	20	69,7	Poor
5	81	59	22	72,84	Poor
6	32	23	9	71,88	Poor
7	70	44	27	61,97	Very poor
8	51	45	6	88,24	Good
9	43	31	12	72,09	Poor
10	59	44	15	74,58	Poor
11	54	51	3	94,44	Excellent
12	44	36	8	81,82	Average
13	54	33	21	61,11	Very poor
14	29	19	10	65,52	Very poor
15	54	41	13	75,93	Average
16	63	44	19	69,84	Poor
17	47	38	9	80,85	Average
18	43	35	8	81,4	Good

Table 3. *Students' Collocation Problems in Speaking Performances*

Types	Stn.									Σ	Proportion (%)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
VN	9	10	6	11	7	8	14	4	7	77	57.96
AdjN	3	6	6	6	11		8	1	5	45	28.98
AdvAdj		1	1	3	1	1	3	1		11	7.34
Vadv	2		1				1			4	3.26
Vadj		1								1	0.40
NN					3					3	1.22
NV											1.22
Σ	14	19	14	20	22	9	27	6	12		

Types	Stn.									Σ
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
VN	14	2	6	17	3	10	7	4	2	65
AdjN	1	1	2	3	4	2	8	2	2	25
AdvAdj					3				4	7
Vadv					1		1		2	4
Vadj										0
NN										0

NV	1					1	1		3
Σ	15	3	8	21	10	13	15	9	8

a. . Students Ability in Using Lexical Collocations viewed in Their Speaking Performance (How students used lexical collocations in speaking performance)

In using LC in speaking performance, the results show that students had poor ability. The average percentage of score of the students was 73.33% (within 61% - 95%) which was classified as poor. From 18 students five students were classified to have very poor ability, six students had poor ability, four students had average ability, two students had good ability, and one student had excellent ability. To compare the proportions of each classifications, see Figure 3.
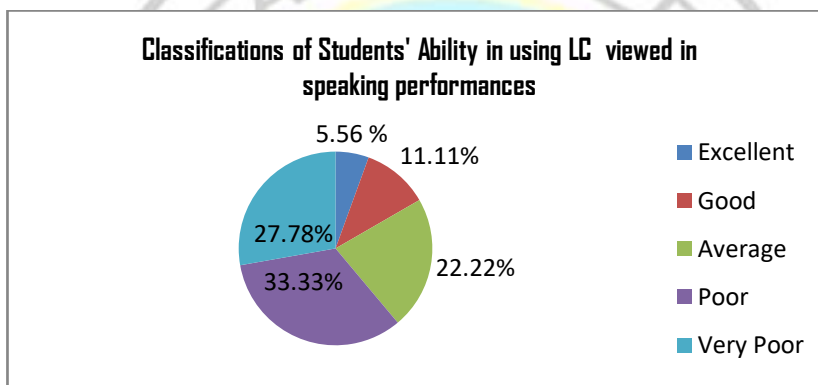

Figure 1. *Classifications of Students' Ability in using LC in Speaking Performance*

Figure 1 shows that in using LC in speaking performance 33.33 % students had poor ability, 27.78 % students had, 22.22% students had average ability, 11.11% had good ability and 5.56% had excellent ability.

b. Types of LC Students used in Speaking Performance

The next finding was the types of LC students used in speaking performance. The resut was obtained by proportioning all LCs correctly used by the students. After that, the most frequent types correctly used by the students in speaking performances were found. The proportions of two frequent types and the least type used were presented in Figure 2 below
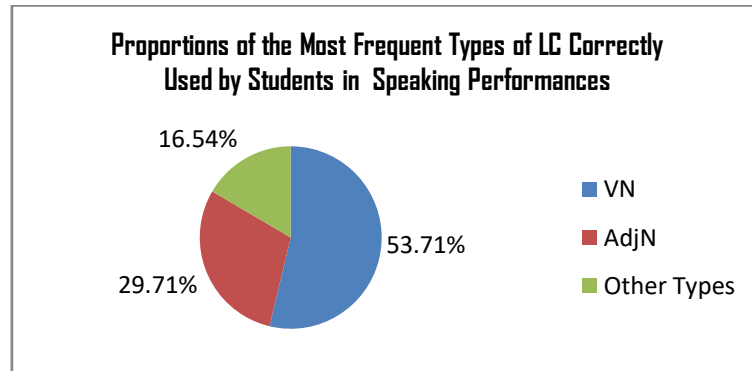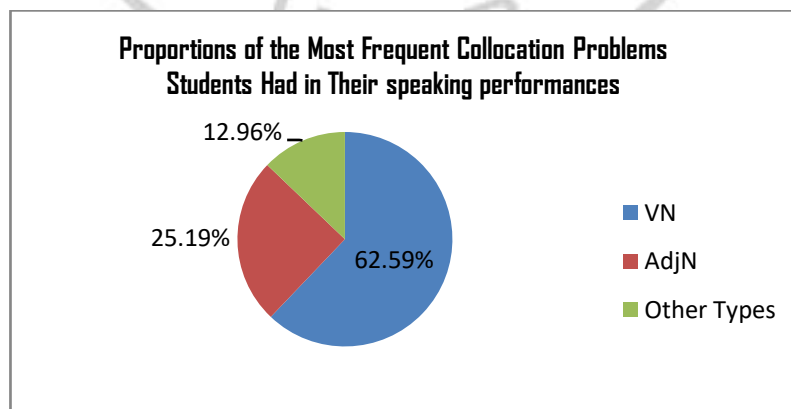
Figure 2. *Proportions of the Most Frequnt Types of of LC Correctly Used*

by Students in Speaking Performances

In general all types were used by the students. The most frequently used was VN (53.71%). It was followed by AdjN (29.71). Then, AdvAdj and Vadv followed respectively. NV, Vadj and NN were least frequently used with total 15.54%.

   c.   Proportions of Students' Collocation Problems

The forth finding was students collocation problems. As the third finding, the most frequent collocation problems found were found. The proportions of it and the proportion of the least frequent colloction problems are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. *Proportions of the Most Frequent Collocation Problems Students Had*

in Their Speaking Performances

In general, students had collocation problems of each type. The most frequesnt problems were with VN type (62.59%). It was followed by AdjN (25.19%). Then, other types AdvAdj, Vadv, Vadj, NN, and NV had least collocation problems (12.59%)

d. The causes of Students' Collocation Problems in Their Speaking Performance

The students' collocation problems were caused by students' limited knowledge of LC, students' ignorance of LC uses, and lastly, direct translation from Bahasa Indonesia or Minangkabaunese as L1 into English as L2 while speaking English.

b. Discussion

The ability of English students of batch 2013 in using LC in speaking was poor. The students were expected to have good ability or even excellent ability because they have been learning and speaking English in almost every class they had taken before received the speaking test from the researcher. By listening and reading texts in English the students should have had good ability in using LC. However, their ability was poor. This poor ability made them speak unnaturally in English as for example, stn. 13 said "*wash the plates*" instead of *"wash the dishes".* In conclusion, it is an irony that the students had poor ability while they have experienced learning English for more than four years.

The poor ability in using LC in speaking may be due to insufficient exposure to LC caused by both the students and the lecturer. The students may not be aware of LC while the lecturer only focusing on correcting grammar. This argument is in line with Yalmiady, et al. (2013), "the students' succes in learning English is only seen from the students' ability in grammatical mastery. The tearchers' attention to the forms and the functions of grammar are more serious than to the teaching of English vocabulary." This point of view of the teachers were one factor mentioned in their background of the problem. According to Zughoul, M.R and Abdul-Fattah, H. (2003, cited in Hammas:2013) some scholars suggest for teaching of collocations to EFL learners at schools and universities that Abstract (2003, cited in Hammas: 2013) states that there is need for focusing learning of collocations.

The seven types of LC received different proportions. Out of the seven types, the most frequent types of LC used by the students in speaking performance were VN and AdjN type of LC. This finding may be due to the fact that the students were given questions that enabled them to tell more actions than describing someone or something do actions. The pronouns students mostly used were I and We. It is because the students answered the researcher questions which mostly used pronoun You or it is because of the skill used to test students' sbility in using LC which was speaking.

To form a sentence, the students tent to form I / We + V+ N. It might be because they found it easy to make that form. It caused students used more active

voices. The students frequently said "I gain knowledge", "I give lesson", "I have a breakfast." It then also caused the rare use of NV because it was not found that the students told about things or animals in their speaking performances as the probing sentences did not give any opportunity or exposure to those kinds of topic to tell about. This finding conforms Kuo's (2009) which revealed the heavy uses of VN with more than 80 correct uses in students' first writing and more than 140 correct uses in students' second writing. The second use was Adjective and Noun. This big number of correct uses was due to the fact that they chose their own topic.

Due to the heavy uses of VN and AdjN students have more problems with VN and AdjN than other types of LC. It can be said that the more type of LC is used, the more probable the problems arise. This bigger number of collocation problems may be due to the students frequency in using VN and AdjN. As the number of uses were not predictable, the correct uses and the collocation problems were varied based on the students ideas shared in speaking. Therefore, students who tent to speak less than others will have more correct uses of LC and more collocation problems. This finding is in line with Al-Zahrani's (1998) that commented that VN and AdjN were the two types of lexical collocations with most typical errorsthat occur frequently in learners' production. In addition, finding is constant with Kuo's (2009) as his research compared the uses of VN and AdjN. VN was found to have the highest number of incorrect uses or he formulized it as more mistakes made by the students. He assumed it was because VN type of LC was more difficult than other types. Similar result of Wang's (2011, 114-117 cited in Shammas: 2013) revealed students' errors of VN type of LC when they were required to use VN.

The causes of collocation problems or incorrect uses of LC were limited knowledge of LC, ignorance of the use of LC, and direct translation from L1 to L2. Because of limited knowledge of lexical collocations students tent to use synonym of words they did not know. Therefore, problems with verbs *use* and *wear* occured in *use clothing* which should be *wear clothing*. Hamdi (2013) found in students' writing that the students used *repair* to collocate with *problem* instead of *fix.*

In this research the students admitted not to have much knowledge of LC. Each of them agreed that they did not know very well words that can collocate to one and another. In addition, they did not know the correct uses of lexical collocations which cause the inability to use the LC itself. Wang (2003) comments that EFL students are aware that LC is co-occuring words, but they cannot correctly use the LC, and it causes miscollocations. They have the ideas that there are lexical collocations but they do not know which words to use. The lack of knowledge caused collocation problems or incorrect uses of LC. It also caused the ignorance of the uses of LC. Zughoul (1991, cited in Hammas (2013) finds that "wrong collocations are mostly the result of the learners' lack of reading in English and heavily relying on bilingual dictionaries in translating into English.

The students were found to be ignorant with LC used in their speaking performances. They admitted not to pay attention to correct uses of LC. Consequently, they just used vocabulary they remembered. They assumed that speaking was a succes if their ideas were shared. They also admitted not to consult a dictionary to correct uses of LC. This tendency allowed them to find the synonym of the words (Zughoul:1999) .

The last cause was the use of direct translation. Some students addmitted to translate each word in Bahasa Indonesia (L1) to English (L2) while speaking in English. This affected to the heavy use of synonyms. Translating allowed the students to find words in English with they tought to have the same meaning as their mother tongue. Syarif (2014) found that students tended to use the words they have known in formulating sentences with different contexts. Then this leads to a problem that allowed the students to use words in Bahasa Indonesia as L1 in English L2.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
1. Conclusion
Based on the findings and discussions, it can be said that the English students of language teaching program had insufficient collocation knowledge despite the exposure to English in more than four years as they were expected to use LC correctly without any problems. As a consequence, they ignored the uses of LC and used direct translation which also caused collocation problems. It can also be assumed that their ability in using LC of VN and AdjN types helped them to speak more naturally with only those types. However, they also used those types incorrectly in speaking performances. It can be concluded that the more types of LC used in order to make English sound more natural in spaeking performances, the more possible the collocation problems occur.

2. Suggestion
From the fidings and the conclusion some suggestions are hoped to be taken by both lecturers and students. For the lecturers of any class of English major, they should make the students aware of LC and how LC can make English sound natural. They can expose the students to the use of LC by inserting the teaching of lexical collocations into syllabus of teaching all skils. In addition they can ask the students to read as many English texts as possible or watch as many English movies as possible. The texts can be both written or spoken texts for both writing and speaking as productive skills. Lastly, they can give feedback after students' both speaking performances and writing products by correcting the use of LC beside grammar and pronouncition in speaking or technique in writing. Furthermore, for the students they should regularly use the knowledge of LC they gain from reading texts and watching movies. Therefore, they can sound more natural in speaking English.

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