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Measuring receptive knowledge of collocayional vocabulary among english majors at the university of burundi : case of verb noun collocations

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

MEASURING RECEPTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF COLLOCATIONAL VOCABULARY AMONG ENGLISH MAJORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI: CASE OF VERB+ NOUN COLLOCATIONS

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree "**Licence en Langue et Littérature Anglaises**"

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Bujumbura, January 2018

DEDICATION

To God, the Almighty,

To my late father, who lived shortly after my birth,

To my mother whom I cherish a lot,

To my brothers and sisters,

To all I love and cherish a lot,

I warmly dedicate this work.

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There are a number of people to whom I owe my sincere gratitude due to their direct or indirect contribution to this step in my life:

First and foremost, I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Dr. Déogratias Nizonkiza thanks to his incomparable support, advice, guidance, and encouragement and without which this work could not have been completed. Equal gratitude goes to Mr. Claude Ndikumazambo for his kind co-supervision, and support all through this work.

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Lastly, no words to express my whole heartfelt thanks towards all my classmates at different levels of my studies and all who cherish me, all my colleagues at Lycée Mère du Sauveur Buhayira. I also never forget to thank all my relatives.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL	: English as Second language
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
L2	: Second Language
FL	: Foreign Language
AWL	: Academic World List
SL	: Second Language
V-N	: Verb plus Noun
VLT	: Vocabulary Levels Test
VST	: Vocabulary Size Test
EVST	: Eurocnetres Vocabulary Size Test
COLLEX	: Collocating Lexis
COLLMATCH	: Collocate Matching
TOEFL	: Test of English as a Foreign Language
API	: Applied Pedagogical Institute
Sig	: Significance

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ABSTRACT

The present work investigates measuring of receptive knowledge of vocabulary. It is dealt with following three aims. It firstly aimed at determining receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the Academic Word List (AWL) among the selected participants. Secondly, it aimed at examining the extent to which receptive collocational knowledge varies across class level, and lastly, identifying the sub-lists of collocations they master and the ones they do not. To be able to measure receptive knowledge of vocabulary among the selected participants, that is, among Bac2 and Bac3 students, a receptive collocation test, which was an adaptation of Nizonkiza's (2014) productive test was developed and administered to them. The results indicate that the academic collocational competence is very low among the participants. Moreover, the same findings show that receptive collocational knowledge does not vary or grow parallel to class level which contradicts Nizonkiza's (2014: 13) reporting other researchers such as (Gitsaki,1999; Bonk,2001; Eyckmans et al.,2004; Boers et al.,2006; Nizonkiza,2011b; 2012a) that vocabulary increases across class level. In the same line of thought, the same results oppose (Nizonkiza2011a, Gyllstad, 2007; 2009) that knowledge of collocations depends upon class proficiency meaning that this knowledge increases from one level of learning to the other. It has also been noticed through the same findings that the participants do not master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency. This supports earlier findings (Nizonkiza 2010:10; Havyarimana 2016) that revealed that most tertiary level learners do not master the academic vocabulary.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background to the Problem

In many ways, to get insight into vocabulary knowledge learners have especially, it requires to measure it. Then vocabulary assessment and the findings thereof enable not only researchers but also readers to know what the learners' knowledge is and how they progress in the field of vocabulary. It is therefore a good thing to measure English as Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign language (EFL) learners' vocabulary because vocabulary is viewed as a great important constituent of language. As it has been reported in (Nizonkiza & Van den Berg,2014:1), Schimitt, Schimitt...Clapham (2001:55) say: "*Vocabulary is an essential building block of a language and as such it makes sense to measure learners' vocabulary knowledge.*"

To measure much more objectively/efficiently learners' vocabulary knowledge; researchers, linguists even teachers need to understand that learners' vocabulary knowledge can be realized through estimating vocabulary size, testing depth of vocabulary knowledge and receptive-productive knowledge and use appropriate instruments /tests that help them get reliable results. This then helps understand under which context learners' vocabulary knowledge has been measured. The three divisions through which learners' vocabulary knowledge is realized are known to the name of dimensions (Nizonkiza & Van den Berg, 2014).In other words; vocabulary knowledge consists of three dimensions. Henrikseen (1999) quoted in Nizonkiza &Van Den Berg (2014:4, 5) puts it in the following terms: "*Vocabulary size refers to the number of words one knows,*" "*Depth knowledge relates to how well these words are known, in words, the quality of those words and*" *receptive-productive constitutes of the continuum where word knowledge progresses from being receptively understood to being productively used*".

Generally, learners' vocabulary knowledge has been measured but the research on vocabulary knowledge has mainly focused on vocabulary size which is mainly measured receptively. Nizonkiza & Van den Berg, 2014 say that "*vocabulary size remains the most widely researched and tested dimension.*" This gives the implication that the two remaining dimensions such as depth of vocabulary knowledge and receptive-productive are researched and tested but to a lesser extent comparatively to vocabulary size.

Most of the time, research on vocabulary focused on testing vocabulary knowledge and its growth across proficiency levels. Then, looking at what has been achieved in the field of vocabulary especially testing vocabulary size knowledge among learners, it is realized that researchers and L2/FL practitioners agree that a growth of this knowledge across proficiency levels exists (Nizonkiza & Van den Berg, 2014).To this end, it is understood that as learners move from one learning stage to the next one they add a certain amount of vocabulary size knowledge. In simple words, ESL/EFL learners' vocabulary size grows parallel to proficiency levels.

Then, this would lead us to see that it is of great value to determine which amounts of words needed at different learning levels.

As vocabulary size knowledge increases across proficiency levels of learners, (Nizonkiza & Van Den Berg 2014), a particular important pedagogical consequence is to determine the number of words needed at each added learning stage (Nizonkiza &Van Den Berg 2014).Determining the amount of words needed at different learning stages is most of the time possible through grouping those words under their frequency bands and the academic word lists Read (2007).

At the University of Burundi, Nzabimana (2015) measured English majors' vocabulary size. He has shown that first year students achieved a vocabulary size of 2,797 while third year, and fourth year students have achieved a vocabulary size of 3,582, and 3,702 respectively. Hence, the results above indicate the vocabulary size of students grow parallel to their linguistic proficiencies/ across class levels. He concluded that except the first year students, the third and fourth year students have achieved what is called the minimum threshold that allows them to follow lecturers. However, vocabulary sizes held by all the first year, the third and the fourth year students do not reach the expected range which moves from 4,000 to 5,000 word families.

What is interesting here is that vocabulary size grows across proficiency level. Similarly, Nizonkiza (2015) has measured one aspect of depth knowledge, i. e collocations among English majors. He found that receptive knowledge of collocations develops as EFL proficiency increases. This means that as EFL learners move from one level of their studies to the next level, they add a certain amount of knowledge of collocations. Simply, one level of proficiency is different from another level of proficiency since learners on different levels of proficiency perform differently in collocational knowledge.

Nizonkiza's (2015) study, however, measured general vocabulary as most of the target words were selected from Nation's (2006) word list. The AWL was developed by Coxhead (2000) in order to help university ESL and EFL students to know which words are frequent in an academic environment. Since then, scholars worldwide have exposed this important list to learners. Even at the University of Burundi Bac3 students have been exposed to this list So far. However, students' understanding of collocations of these words has not yet been assessed. This may be problematic because Dr. Nizonkiza teaches collocations of these words using productive oriented approach i.e with focus to production than understanding.

But given that students understand the words before using them and those students only use a small portion of the vocabulary they understand, it is important to know what students understand before tackling what they can use. The extent to which this is problematic is detailed in the next section.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

As it has been introduced in the above section, we cannot tell from empirical evidence whether English majors at the University of Burundi understand collocations of words from the AWL, which is problematic. First, the AWL consists of words which are very important in academic environments and which students should not only understand, but also use. In a recent study by Havyarimana (2016), it is clear that Bac3 students still do not master the AWL even after having been taught collocations from this list. The question which arises here is then, "isn't this a question of understanding?" In other words, do students at least understand the collocations of words from the AWL? The only way to know it is by testing them. The problem which should thus be tackled is to know how much knowledge students possess in order to build on it to help them for productive use. Secondly, the AWL consists of 10 sub-lists grouped following their frequency and so for , we do not know which are mastered as opposed to which ones are not mastered and the problems posed is again knowing exactly how to help the students.

With the background information above and the problems described in this section, the present study was undertaken in order to help gain insight into mastery of collocations of words from the AWL. The aims pursued, the research questions as well as the hypotheses tested are presented in the next section.

1.3. Aims of the Study, Research Questions, and Hypotheses

The previous section gave an account of what are the problems of the study under investigation. It firstly deals with the aims of the study under investigation. It also deals with the research questions that the researcher wants to be answered through empirical data. It ends with revealing hypotheses or predicted answers to the research questions.

Up to the moment, vocabulary is seen as an interesting field of English language since it has attracted researcher's attention over the past years. It is made up of three major dimensions of knowledge as reported in Nizonkiza & van Den Berg (2014) from Henrikseen (1999). Researchers in the field of English vocabulary may be interested in examining Vocabulary knowledge that students/learners have in one or the other dimension of their choice.

They may also have interest in treating one aspect of vocabulary knowledge in relation to one of the three major dimensions of vocabulary. In doing so, they want to reach certain aims. So, this study which attempts to measure receptive knowledge in the second/ foreign language context has also some aims that the researcher needs to achieve. Hence, the present study aims at exploring receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL among English majors at the University of Burundi. It also attempts to examine variation of collocational knowledge across class level but also the sub-lists of collocations they master and the ones they do not master. More specifically, this study is aimed at:

1. Determining the state of receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL among English majors at the University of Burundi;
2. Examining the extent to which receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL varies across class level;
3. Investigating the extent to which English Majors at the University of Burundi master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency.

It is also a good thing for any researcher to raise some questions that need to be answered to in order to reach the aims of the study under investigation. Hence, the following research questions are addressed:

1. What is the state of receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL among English majors at the University of Burundi?
2. Does receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL vary across class?
3. To what extent do English majors at the University of Burundi master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency?

In every scientific study, researchers are expected to analyze data. The analysis of data is then possible due to the questions asked but also thanks to hypotheses put forward. Hypotheses are referred to as predicted answers to researcher's questions in order to achieve the aims of the study to be investigated. Hence, this study will be undertaken with the following hypotheses:

1. Receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL is very low among English majors at the University of Burundi across class level.
2. Receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL varies across class level to a relatively slow pace.
3. English majors master the collocations of the academic vocabulary classified under the sub-lists which mostly appear to be frequent to them as opposed to sub-lists which are less frequent to them.

1.4. Motivation of the study

In section 1.1 and 1.2, i.e back ground to the problem and problem statement, it has been revealed that we cannot tell from empirical evidence whether English majors at the university of Burundi understand collocations of words from the AWL.

The present study will then be carried out to examine through empirical data whether the stated population understands or not the collocations of words from the AWL. Then, the fact of not having the empirical evidence that show, whether English majors at the University of Burundi understand or not the collocations of words from the AWL is the main reason that has guided our choice of the study under exploration. If ever the findings to this study prove that students do not understand collocations of words from the AWL, then Solutions to solve the problem will be proposed.

1.5. Scope and Delimitation

In any scientific study, researchers are expected to set limits of their studies beyond which they cannot go. They are also bound to specify in which areas they have conducted the data for their studies. Not only that, they are also required to indicate the nature of topic under investigation. With all the elements indicated a little above in mind, this study will be conducted at the University of Burundi. It will involve English majors specially students from the Department of English Language and Literature Bac2 and Bac3 students will be considered in this study. Regarding the topic which is about measuring receptive knowledge of collocations of words from academic word list, it is restricted to verb-noun combination since there are many combinations of collocations.

1.6. Definitions of key terms and concepts

It is a good thing for any researcher to define some key terms and concepts of the study. This section deals with definitions of some identified terms and concepts that may be confusing to readers. Below are some terms and concepts to be defined;

1. Foreign language: Nzambimana (2015) quoting Richards (1985:108) says that foreign language is "*a language which is not a native language in country*".

However, in online Wikipedia, a foreign language is a language that is learnt in an area where that language is not generally spoken. The definition that will be opted to for this study is the first one used in Nzambimana's (2015) study.

2. Second language: As it has been reported in Nzambimana (2015) quoting stern (1983: 16), second language is defined as "*a non-native language learnt and used within one country to which the term second language has been applied*", Nevertheless, in oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary, 8th Edition, second language is defined as a language that they use for work at school, but that is not the language they learnt first. In this study, we used the first definition.

3. Academic Word List: in online, nation (1997) defines academic word list as a list of words which appear with high frequency in English language.

4. Collocation: "*The way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing*" (Lea, Crowther and Diguen2002: VII) quoted in Nizonkiza (2015: 4).

1.7. Structure of the Work

This section is concerned with the organization of the present work under investigation. This work is divided into five chapters which are the following:

The first chapter is entitled "General Introduction" and it deals with providing the reader with different information which is related to the topic under investigation. The second chapter is "Related Literature" and it helps the researcher review other works related to the topic under investigation. It also deals with some theories advanced by other researchers in relation to the concept of vocabulary knowledge.

The third chapters is named "Methodology" and it intends to indicate the methods and ways considered by the researcher to collect data and analyze the information from the investigate population. In other words, it deals with the procedures that used in collecting data and analyze them.

The fourth chapter namely, "Data presentation, Analysis, and Findings", deals with the analysis and interpretation of the results from the collected data.

The fifth chapter is entitled "Discussion of the Findings, General Conclusion, Recommendations."

CHAPTER TWO: RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter consisted of giving an account of the general representation of the problem of the study which was about Burundi University English majors' understanding of collocations of words from the AWL. In the same chapter we also provided the aims, research questions, and the hypotheses with which this study was pursued. The present chapter however gives an account of different reviewed works and theories related to the topic explored in the study. It also lets us know concepts and issues in relation to the topic o collocations of words from the AWL.

As it appears that the present study focuses on Measuring Receptive Knowledge among English Majors at the University of Burundi, sections in relation to different dimensions of vocabulary, definition of collocations, importance of collocations, problems of collocations, Academic Word List, measuring receptive knowledge of vocabulary and receptive test of collocations were talked about.

2.2. Vocabulary Dimensions

Up to the present, there are three known dimensions of vocabulary knowledge. Those dimensions of vocabulary knowledge are; vocabulary size (number of words a leaner knows irrespective to lower case well they are known); depth knowledge (quality of words); and Receptive-Productive knowledge. However, before discussing the notion of vocabulary knowledge dimensions, it is of great value to mention that vocabulary knowledge is dynamic/ gradual that is not static, this means that knowledge of vocabulary grows across class level, Nzambimana (2015), Nizonkiza (2014).

Nzambimana (2015) quoting Beck&Mckeow (1991) who were quoted by Eychmans (2004:11) said that knowledge of a word is:

> *a kind of process that starts from zero knowledge of the word, and then grows progressively beginning by getting the meaning of that word, the words it can be put together with (collocations), and the different meaning it can have.*

2.2.1. Vocabulary Size or Breadth

Vocabulary size is the most widely researched and tested dimension in the field of vocabulary (Nizonkiza & van Den Berg, 2014). As reported in Nizonkiza & Karein Van Den Berg (2014:4) quoting Henrikseen (1999), vocabulary size also known as Breadth dimension is referred to as the number of words (Henrkseen 1999, Meare 1996) one knows irrespective how well those words are known. This implies that this dimension consists of the number of words that the learner/ one knows partially not totally. To this it can be understood that the learner may know only the form (its transcription), its pronunciation ...Without necessarily knowing its meaning or its many other aspects. This leads us to see that words consist of many aspects that one cannot master fully at the same time and at the same extent. Words of which this dimension is made up are not known entirely. The kind of knowledge held by a learner is referred to as partial in that even the native speaker does not manifest the fully understanding or meaning of the words they know as read (1993) put it. Hence, the meaning of those words is to some extent conceptual or representational. It is better to understand that this dimension is reviewed in this work since it is inclusive, that is, it can be used with reference to the number of words one knows partially, but also when measuring the number (quantity) of words that one knows deeply (thoroughly or quality knowledge) or when measuring the number of words one can receive-produce.

Then, this work is interested in measuring receptive knowledge among English majors at University of Burundi which implies the number or quantity that those students have.

It is worth knowing that Meara (1996: 37) quoted in Nzambimana(2015) observed that, " *All things being equal, learners with big vocabularies are more proficient in a wide range of language skills than those with smaller vocabularies*". This shows that getting/ having a great deal of vocabulary in L2 language enables learners to perform well either in written productions, in speaking(productive knowledge) or listening& reading (receptive knowledge). This is also true in that learners with big vocabularies will use appropriate collocations in academic contexts.

2.2.2. Depth Knowledge

Depth knowledge is referred to as the quality of lexical knowledge. This second dimension of vocabulary is mainly concerned with looking into how a learner's words are particularly well known (Ecykhmans, 2004). Henrikseen considers this dimension word knowledge as how well a particular word is known by a learner, Henrikseen (1999).

Meara (2009) defines depth of knowledge as the interaction between individual words and claims that depth is regarded as the organization of words in the mental lexicon. The network building approach assumes that deep knowledge of a word is realized through the links that word has to others / (collocations or words it can be used with) and the strengths those links have among them. Simply put, the more links between one word and another and the stronger the links are, the deeper the word is known as it was put in Eddy Thierry (2012)'s terms reporting (Meara & Wolter,2004). This leads us to understand that words are stored in a human's mind following the sets of connections (Read, 2004). It is my opinion to say that these connections allow one to understand and know well a particular word since these connections call in a combined use of three

components of deep word knowledge Read (1993, 2004). Then, the three components are paradigmatic (super ordinates, synonyms), syntagmatic (collocates), and analytic (words representing a key element of the meaning of the target word) levels.

It is worth noting that though the relationship between SL proficiency and vocabulary exists, vocabulary size alone does not indicate word knowledge as observed in Read (1993, 2004) and Wesche & Paribakht (1996). This shows that learners manifest only a superficial meaning of the words they know. However, regarding deep word knowledge, learners or anyone are to have more than superficial knowledge of a word as Read (2004:155) says:

> *learners need to have more than just a superficial understanding of the meaning; they should or ought to develop a rich and specific representation as well as knowledge of the word; format features, syntactic, functioning, collocational possibilities, register, characteristics, and so on.*

The quotation above indicates that vocabulary size in itself does not provide full understanding/ knowledge of vocabulary. It rather provides partial/ incomplete knowledge of words. To reach full knowledge of words, learners need to know their different aspects (associations with other words, synonyms and so on) as they have been summarized in three components of a language by Read (1993:359).

2.2.3. Receptive-Productive Dimension

This dimension is referred to as control dimension (Henrikseen 1999). It constitutes a continuum where word knowledge progresses from being receptively understood to being productively used. Researchers in the field of vocabulary such as Crow & Quigley (1985:499) distinguish the two components (receptive/productive) of this dimension as passive and active vocabulary.

To this end, receptive (passive) is distinguished from productive (active) by listening and reading skills, speaking and writing skills respectively as has been put by (Palmer, 1921; West, 1953; Crow, 1986). Simply put, receptive vocabulary known as passive is associated with the two of the four language skills (listening and reading) while productive vocabulary known as active is linked to the other two of four language skills namely (speaking and writing). Under receptive knowledge, learners are able to understand the input imported to them and this input understanding is only possible through perceiving the form of the word and being able to know its meaning and the associated meanings and the synonyms or antonyms.

However, under productive knowledge, it is realized that learners can retrieve the accepted spoken form and written one of the meaning they want to express as appears in (Meara, 1990; Nation, 2001).

As it appears, receptive knowledge consists of the knowledge that learners manifest through listening and reading activities contrary to productive knowledge which is all about the knowledge manifested by learners through speaking and writing activities. It is worth noting that passive knowledge helps to have comprehension more than it does use, while active knowledge plays an important role towards use than comprehension. Though, passive knowledge is viewed in Nizonkiza & and Van Den Berg(2014) as the knowledge that helps for comprehension more than it does for use which is concerned with active knowledge, it seems that distinguishing the two aspects of knowledge is a very difficult task. To this, (Schmitt, 1999) considers that to translate into L1 requires the test-translators a certain active knowledge while its meaning needs from the test translators passive knowledge. However, (Takala, 1982) does not see things in the same way as (Schmitt, 1999) does. Takala (1982) believes that while translating, test-takers demonstrate comprehension of the meaning productivity and this leads to understand that test translation requires active

knowledge rather than productive one. It is my opinion to say that while translating from L1 into L2, both knowledge (Receptive-Productive) are needed. This shows that we do not only need comprehension of meaning but its productivity.

It is worth to that the two kinds of knowledge are inter-related but not at the same degree to support Waring's (1997) view who indicated that the proportion between the two is around 50%. As it can be seen, a learner possesses a larger number of receptive knowledge than the number of productive knowledge s/he possesses. However, Milton (2009) noticed that the proportion of productive knowledge is between 50% and 80% of the receptive knowledge. Moreover, Nizonkiza & Van Den Berg (2014:05) who reported Laufer and Goldstein (2004:405) said that there is no consensus among researchers as to whether that distinction is dichotomous or is based on continuum. For conciliatory reason, researchers such as Vein, Melka (1982) suggest that this distinction should be arbitrary (conventional) and propose that passive knowledge and active knowledge should be placed on a continuum.

More importantly, receptive knowledge is reviewed as the one that precedes productive knowledge and it is larger than productive knowledge. This implies that comprehension comes before use/ productivity and this is certainly right in the sense that no one can produce what they do not understand. Moreover, Eddy Thierry (2012), reporting Clark (1993:246) who says that comprehension must precede production in support of the idea suggested by Melka (1982) that receptive knowledge is larger than productive. Ringbom (1985; 165) says that:

> *items pass from the learners receptive vocabulary store to his smaller productive knowledge all the time, sometimes perhaps moving back from, the productive to receptive one, when the learner forgets items he mastered but not met very frequently,*

2.3. Defining Collocations

Collocations have been defined and approached differently by different researchers. Some researchers based their definition on frequency tradition; others on phraseology approach still others who adopted a conciliatory approach that is a combination of the first approaches to better define collocation. This study adopted the approach that is based on frequency tradition but review the two other approaches to see how they are different from the very first one. It is better to understand that this section is concerned with the revelation of how the concept of collocation has been approached differently by different researchers over different periods.

Nizonkiza (2015), the first researcher to consider while reporting Wray (2002) says that she adopts the term "Formulaic language" as a better way to define the concept of collocation. Thus, according to her, formulaic language is defined as follows:

> *a sequence, continuous or discontinuous[slots to be filled……], of words or other elements [punctuation marks……] , which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar* (Wray 2002:9).

In Wray's (2002) definition, it appears that to be able to follow one another in an understandable way, words need to follow the predisposed rules. In other words, creation or generation that may modify the rules by which words are combined is not needed. Words are to be retrieved entirely as have been stored in a learner's memory or in any other person's memory. There is no modification while retrieving the words stored since speakers must comply with the rules that govern the co-occurrence of collocations concerned for instance (Verb-noun, adj-noun).

Another popular researcher who attempted to define collocation in a way different from that of Wray (2002) is Sinclair. According to him, collocation is defined as "*The occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other*" Sinclair (1991:170). Sinclair (1991) means here that though words combine with each other or one another as a result of collocations, the same collocations may sometimes be separated by a short space of other words such (adjectives, articles.....). To clarify what Sinclair (1991) meant by his definition of collocation, we may give the following example of collocations in which we have verb-noun combinations but between them there are other words which make up the short space meant by Sinclair (1991). In the following sentence, villagers get together every year to keep this old tradition alive, we have two adjectives (this and old) separating the combinations verb-noun (keep + tradition). Those adjectives constitute the short space in Sinclair's (1991) terms. The sentential example that has been used to illustrate the notion of short space between co-occurring words has been selected from the sentences selected by Nizonkiza (2015) from the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English (2002).

It is worth noting that, to introduce short space between co-occurring words, Sinclair (1991) wanted to refer to that space as "span". In other words, the distance which is between collocations. The notion of span let us know that collocates and target words do not follow each other or one another directly. Moreover, to the notion of span, Sinclair added the notions of main word and a co-occurring word in a collocation, ones referred to as "node" "collocate". In this very example: villagers get together every year to keep this old tradition alive, the node is "tradition" while the collocate is "keep". Other influential researchers who attempted to define the concept of collocation are Nattinger and De carrico (1992). These authors defined collocations by retaining the notions of node, span, and collocate to which they added three other notions such as direction of the collocation, frequency, and fixedness.

Hence, Nattinger and De Carrico 1992 defined collocation in the following way:

> ..... *Collocational unit which consists of a node that co-occurs with a span on either side. The span consists of particular word classes filled with specific lexical items. [.....] if it is the case that the node word occurs with a span of particular words at a particular frequency greater than chance could predict, then the result is a collocation. The more certain the words in the span are to co-occur with the node, the more the fixed and idiomatic the collocation*,

Nattinger and De carrico (1992; 20) as reported by Nizonkiza (2015).

An another important researcher in the field of collocations is Halliday (1966) who also attempted to define collocations as co-occurring words at a distance from each other and with frequency greater than just mere chance (Havyarimana, 2016).

It is noticeable that to the notion of co-occurrence was added the notion of distance which was referred to as span in terms of Sinclair (1991) while he was defining. Halliday (1966) also introduced the notions of main word referred to as node and co-occurring word referred also to as collocate and these notions were also retained by Sinclair (1991) as noticed by (Nizonkiza,2011a).

It is very important to know that all those researchers above mentioned are called neo-Firthians as they define/defined collocations by focusing on frequency-based tradition a notion introduced by Firth (1957). According to Firth (1957), a word is known through the company it keeps. In his words: "*you shall know a word by the company it keeps*" *(1957:157).* This sentence a little stated contains an idea of frequency.

Collocations were dealt following another approach known as phraseological approach. Under this approach, collocations are used to denote the type of word combinations (like, for example, in Cowie, 1994) rather than co-occurrence of words in a certain span (like, for example in, Sinclair 1991) as has been noticed in Nizonkiza (2011a). This approach has been influenced by works carried out firstly in Russia in the 1940s (cowie, 1998b & 1998 c) as has been reported in Havyariman (2016). The treatment of collocations as a combination of words that are syntactically related unites researchers (Nesselhauf, 2005), to this end, word class determines acceptable combinations in English like in other languages. To illustrate this, in English they say "to say a prayer" "not to" tell a "prayer". If it happens that someone says to tell a prayer rather than say a prayer, s/he looks absurd.

Therefore s/he does not sound native like. This shows that words in English are not combined randomly. To this, it is better to understand that the way words are combined in English requires a certain restriction.

More importantly, the way words that can be combined together in English is restricted can be explained by the fact that certain verbs require to be combined with nouns of the results of semantic properties on one hand called free combinations (Cowie 1994) and on the other hand that are the results of a somewhat arbitrary convention of a language (i.e collocations). In addition to this, verbs requiring semantic properties of nouns such liquids do not accept to be combined with other nouns which do not have liquid semantic properties. For example, the collocate (verb) "drink" requires to bc combined with the target word (noun) that has the semantic property of "liquid" such as , water, juice to name but a few. Hence we say he drank water, milk, juice.... And it would sound unnatural to replace those nouns with others which do not possess the quality of semantic properties of "liquid" and combine them with the verb to drink.

If for example someone says he drank banana, telephone, rice.... they would sound unusual because they do not have semantic properties of liquid. It is also absurd to say drink a book and read water. It is here that the restriction in combination of words is realized. Regarding arbitrary restriction, the same collocate is combined with a number of target words that do not require semantic properties of the nouns combined with it. For instance, we can say "deliver speech, a verdict...". The nouns (speech and verdict) combined with deliver do not seem to be a result of semantic properties.

Basing on the above examples, scholars in the field of collocations are seen to be right to talk about acceptable and expected combinations. They are also right when they say that there are restrictions when it comes to substituting the collocates with the others that are relevant. The example, "read a newspaper" is Verb-noun combination in which "read" is a collocate while "newspaper" is a target word. Hence, it would be hard to understand it when the verb "read" is replaced by or substituted with the other verb such as "eat" and say eat a newspaper would not sound like native speaker. As it has been suggested by Nizonkiza (2011 a) that substitution of collocations constituents is possible, it remains restricted because substitution of elements make the combinations result in unusual collocation.

To the above approaches of collocations, the third one is reconciliatory approach. In their thinking, Gyllstad (2007) and Granger & Paquot (2008) referred to this approach as the better of the two Worlds. Here, it could be understood that these researchers want to show that this approach tries to reconcile frequency-based and phraseological approaches. It could also be seen that the initiators of this approach define collocations by factoring in some of the basics drawn from frequency based-tradition and phraseological tradition.

According to Handl (2008), one of the supporters of this approach states that definitions regarding collocations can be sorted into four main categories like text oriented, statistically oriented, associative and semantic type definitions. Hence, to design dictionaries with purposes to help L2 learners, semantic transparency, collocational range, and related frequency should be based on as to assume a new direction to define collocations since due to Handl's (2008) finding, realization in this sense, and one definition can fit into more than one of the four categories to include while attempting to define collocations. As she puts it, the reconciling tradition approach is made up of the following three dimensions: semantic, lexical, and statistical.

Given that collocations have been defined and approached differently by different scholars in the field of vocabulary, the operational definition adopted in this study is the one proposed in the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English (2002) that collocations are "*the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing*".

2.4. Importance of Collocations to EFL and ESL Learners

There is no neglect that collocations are very important for EFL and ESL learners. As it has been realized in the definition of collocations in this study, collocations make EFL and ESL sound native-speakers like. They help them produce utterances that are generally acceptable. Collocations help learners improve English skills like listening, reading, speaking and writing as this has been realized by Brown (1974). Other researchers such as (Benson, 1995, Brown, 1974, Channel, 1987, Cowie, 1981, Robins, 1976) have identified the same significance and value of collocations for the knowledge and competence of communication. For example, in English they say "say a prayer" not "tell a prayer". If someone says "tell a prayer" instead of "say a prayer" they would sound not native speakers.

Regarding the importance of collocations, Hill (2000) says that "*within the lexicon, collocation is one of the biggest definable areas to which all learners need to be introduced for lesson one*" Hill (2000:68). From Hill's (2000) statement, it is revealed that knowing collocations is of great values in that learning words from collocational areas help learners (non-native speakers) become good performants in different fields of a language.

As it appears in Havyarimana (2016), Hill (2000) put forward some reasons why EFL and ESL learners should be introduced to the knowledge of collocations or simply put, why learners should know collocations. The listener or speaker predicts immediately the vocabulary use. This shows that the listener to the speaker's production of a certain word knows immediately which word/s to be put together with the word already uttered by the speaker. The same helps the speaker know what is the right word to be combined with the word she or he has already produced to make the listener understand well the message she or is conveying.

In the same line, the thought processing and effectiveness of communication as the result of thought processing is the second reason of knowing collocations. This is right in the sense that people who know how to organize well their thoughts always communicate well as opposed to those who are unable to process well their thoughts.

From Hill's(2000) discussion, it is important to know that collocations are not of less values to EFL and ESL learners since they help them to predict words to be combined with others to sound native-like, process their thoughts in order to be able to communicate well and have accurate pronunciation while using words in a combinatory way. It is also worth noting that as it has been realized from the very beginning of this work that vocabulary size predicts EFL&ESL learners' proficiency, hence collocation mastery also reveals EFL&ESL learners proficiency.

2.5. Problems of Collocations to ESL Learners

Though collocations were found to be important for L2 students (Barfield and Gyllstad 2009), they also cause the problems to the same students as noticed by researchers among the others (Nessslhauf, 2005; Laufer and Waldman, 2011). Many of the problems of collocations to L2 students spring from different factors such as mother tongue's influence to the target language learner Laufer and Waldman (2011), Granger (1998) and Parquot (2008), the fact that L2 students are not frequently immersed in the environment where the target language is used as has been proven by researchers among others Cowie (1998), Granger (1998), Howarth(1998), Nesselhauf (2005), Paquot (2008) , Laufer and Waldman (2011).

It has also been revealed by researchers (Granger, 1998; paquot, 2008)that overusing collocations can cause problems to L2 learners while underusing the few collocations they know can restrict the mistakes they often commit and help them sound more like native speakers. Although the already mentioned researchers revealed that those mistakes are writing or reading related, it is my opinion to say that they are also speaking listening related ones as we always say what we hear. To the already identified errors, (Nesselhauf, 2005) adds that overextending the use of non-restricted verbs among others "make, deliver ....." may result in not correct collocation combinations. For instance, in English they say "deliver a speech, a child, verdict"but not "deliver a word" which might be a wrong combination.

2.6. Academic Word List

This section is intended to describe what the AWL is. As it has been stated in Nizonkiza (2014), the Academic Word List is a compilation of words that are frequently used in academic environments and these words occur outside the 2000-word band.

As it appears in Nizonkiza (2014), the Academic Word List consists of 570 word families and those words account for about 10.1% of the words that are found in academic texts (Coxhead 2000, 2001). Nizonkiza (2014) makes it clear that the AWL is the most widely academic vocabulary list used or referred to today (cf. Coxhead 2001, Durrant 2009, Nation 2001, Paquot 2007, Schmitt and Schmitt 2005) and students need to master the words of which the academic word list is consisted in order to cope with the academic demands posed in the higher education as noticed by Nizonkiza (2014) from (Nation 1990). As these words cannot be taught implicitly since they are neither part of common vocabulary nor part of subject-specific discourse, teaching them explicitly is suggested by researchers such as Coxhead (2000) and Nation (2001).

2.7. Measuring Receptive Knowledge of Vocabulary

As it appears, receptive knowledge of vocabulary can be measured. Nizonkiza (2014) states that receptive knowledge of vocabulary has been measured mostly through matching, multiple choices which have been adopted in this study, and yes/no format. According to him, the above formats adopt Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT), the Vocabulary Size Test (VST), and the Eurocentres Vocabulary Size Test (EVST) as the tests used to measure receptive vocabulary. As it appears in Nizonkiza (2014), the VLT (Nation 1983, 1990) is a matching test requiring test-takers to match words with their definitions. Designed by Nation and Beglar (2007) and validated by Beglar (2010), the VST adopts a multiple choice format in which learners are presented with target words embedded in a non-defining context. This means that it is not needed to provide definitions to the test-takers rather they are instructed to choose the correct meaning from options in the case of our study, three options- the correct meaning and two distractors. In both the VLT and VST, the selection of target words is guided by frequency, and this is considered as a key factor that indicates that learners know the words.

The EVST test however adopts a yes/ no format. The target words of which the test is consisted are selected following their frequency. As it appears in Nizonkiza (2014) this test has been referred to as a checklist test by (Read 2000, Schmitt 1994) and a variation of the multiple choice test as the same procedure is applied to select test items (Schmitt 1994). Since the test is yes or no answer, it is administered electronically unlike the multiple choice test formats. Test-takers are required to demonstrate if they know the word by pressing "yes" or "no" upon reading the word on a computer screen. In this test format, the list of target words contains non-words, i.e. one non-word item for every two real words and this is done to adjust the scores of test-takers who might overrate their knowledge (Nizonkiza 2014).

It is worth noting that Nizonkiza (2014) makes clear that all the tests referred to a little above have been standardized and can now serve as placement indicators. In other words, they can be used to indicate or to establish the relationship between the number of words known and overall proficiency by assigning students or learners to groups of different linguistic proficiency levels. Those tests have been used for research and pedagogical purposes.

2.8. Receptive tests of collocation

Collocations have been tested through receptive or productive tests or both at the same time as the best ways used to understand them. Receptive knowledge of collocations has been tested to investigate what is the relationship between receptive knowledge of collocations and L2 linguistic proficiency. To this end, a strong relationship between the two has been established. Researchers among others (Gyllstad, 2007, 2009; Kesharvarz&Salimi, 2007; Nizonkiza, 2011a) have noticed that learners who master well collocations are more proficient in English. To measure with objective the receptive knowledge of collocations among Swedish learners of English at different proficiency levels, Gyllstad (2007, 2009) has developed two tests such as: COLLEX and COLLMATCH,



respectively collocating lexis and collocate matching. It is important to know that though Gyllstad (2007, 2009) has used those two tests to measure the receptive knowledge of collocations among Swedish learners, the tests themselves are run differently.

Hence, while COLLEX is a multiple choice test; COLLMATCH is a yes/no format. More importantly, the verb-noun combinations were tested using COLLEX and COLLMATCH for the following reasons: (i) They constitute frequent occurrences, (ii) They cause more difficulties for L2 learners, and (iii) They contain the most information for communication (Gyllstad, 2007).As it has been discussed in the description of the administered test, target words were selected from the first to the fourth word frequency count based on the British National Corpus. As it can be also noticed, the*Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (2002) was used to select the collocates (collocations) to the target words. The obvious observation is that participants were asked to circle the most common combinations, that is, the correct ones.

Gyllstad (2009) validated COOLEX and COLLMATH tests after his observation that knowledge of collocations is added as learners move from one learning stage to the next one. To put it differently, collocational knowledge depends upon learning level; and correlates with overall proficiency. According to Gyllstad (2009), the overall proficiency of EFL and L2 learners can be predicted through the use of collocations.

Barfield (2003) is another researcher to be reviewed in this work with regard to testing collocations. His study on Japanese students of English involved 93 undergraduate and postgraduate students. Verb-noun combinations were objects of collocations to be investigated as Gyllstad (2007, 2009) used combinations like those while conducting his study on Swedish English majors. It is important to notice that the lexical verbs that constituted Barfield's (2003) test target words were selected from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) and the

General Service List (West, 1953). Moreover, the collocates to the target words, in this case, three nouns for each verb, were selected from the Bank of English. They were administered to participants in combinations with no real collocates, that is, 20 pseudo collocates and participants were asked to follow the below scale to rate them as frequent combinations.

1) I don't know this combination at all

2) I think this is not a frequent combination

3) I think this is a frequent combination

4) This is definitely a frequent combination

Another researcher to be reviewed in this study is Nizonkiza (2011a). This researcher measured receptive knowledge of collocations among English majors at the University of Burundi. He developed a test of collocations by selecting collocates to the target words from *The Collins COBUILD English Collocations on CD ROM* (1995). The developed collocation test was presented to all English majors studying in first year, second year, third year, and the fourth year during the academic year 2006-2007. Something also to notice is that the recruited participants sat for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with the purpose of comparing the scores participants achieved in both tests. Nizonkiza's (2011a) comparison of the test scores from both tests indicated that students with a better performance on the collocation test were the ones who had a higher score on the TOEFL. Like Gyllstad (2008, 2000), Nizonkiza (2011a) came to the conclusion that knowledge of collocations could be used to predict overall proficiency.

Nizonkiza (2015) has also measured receptive knowledge of collocations among English majors at the University of Burundi. A receptive collocation test composed of target words selected from Nation's (2006) word list was developed. As Nizonkiza (2006) says, Nation's (2006) word list is a database with word families that are run in frequency bands and based on British National

Corpus. His test consisted of words from the 2,000-word, the 3,000-word, and the 5,000-word bands (cf. Nation 1983, 1999, Schmitt, Schmitt and Clapham 2001) and words from Coxhead's (2000) AWL were imbedded in the test. It is very important to know that Coxhead's (2000) AWL is composed of the most frequent words in an academic context and those words do not appear in the first two 1,000 word bands as Nizonkiza (2015) has put it. It is worth noting also that word bands consisting of difficult words were not considered in his test and in this case words from the 10,000-word bands though Nation (1983, 1990) and Schmitt et al (2001) considered them.

It appears also in Nizonkiza (2015) that *Oxford collocations dictionary for students of English* (Lea et al. 2002) was used with the purpose of selecting the collocates (verbs in the verb-noun combinations) to be associated with the target words (nouns). It is important to know that Nizonkiza (2015) says that frequency which was cross- checked in Nation (2006) and the degree of co-occurrence which was calculated using an online sampler arc the two important factors that guided the selection of the collocates.

Nizonkiza (2015) investigated collocations that were restricted to verb-noun combinations as these combinations firstly constitute frequent occurrences, secondly, they are more difficult for L2 learners, and thirdly, they contain the most important information for communicating as Gyllstad (2007) stated it and this is quite true in the sense that most of the communication without verbs and nouns is void o sense. It is also important to notice that Nizonkiza (2015) added a fourth reason to the three reasons advanced by Gyllstad (2007). Nizonkiza (2015) says that when:

> *we express ourselves, we start with an object to or upon which we want to perform an action, which is expressed through the noun, then we think of how to perform the action, which is expressed through the verb.*

A sentential context was provided but the collocate was deleted from the sentential context. This leads us to understand that the verb was not embedded in each sentence of the test, it was rather put among pseudo-collocates as the test was designed in a multiple-choice format and this makes it difficult for the learner when it comes to choosing among the words supplied to him/her.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter described the related literature to the work. This chapter is concerned with describing the population, methods, and procedures that were adopted to collect and analyze the data of the study.

3.2. Population

This section is concerned with the participants in the study. The test-takers were recruited at the University of Burundi especially in the applied pedagogical institute (API) in the department of English language since the test was designed in English. The test-takers were recruited from two different levels, that is, Bac2 and Bac3. Their total number was 167. In Bac2, the selected participants were 81 both girls and boys. The girls were six while the boys were seventy five.

The participants recruited from Bac3 totaled to 86. They were mixed. Girls were twelve whereas boys were seventy four. It is worth mentioning that they were all Burundians and Kirundi is their mother tongue. Some then are able to speak Kiswahili since Kiswahili is the lingua franca of the region in which Burundi is situated.

It is also important to know that since Burundi was colonized by Belgians who spoke French at the time of colonization; French was left as the consequence of that colonization. Then, due to this, French is widely considered as instructional/ educational instrument in Burundi from primary schools to secondary schools and even to universities in general. Though French is mostly used as educational system at the University of Burundi, English considered as a subject in this country is used as a teaching instrument of many courses that are taught in the Department of English Language. Hence, the test-takers followed their courses in English. It is worth noting that nowadays English along with Kiswahili are being used as educational systems from primary schools since Burundi is reforming its educational system as it is a member of East Africa community

where English and Kiswahili are commonly used as tools of communication. Moreover, while Kiswahili is also taught in the Department from which data were collected especially in its first two years (Bac1 and Bac2), it is not the same case in Bac3 where that course that is Kiswahili is no more looked at. It is also worth noting that the participants' ages range between 24 and 26.

3.3. Instrument Used for Data Collection: Collocation Test

The previous section dealt with an account of investigated population. This section is intended to describe how data were collected/ gathered from the participants. The study being interested in measuring receptive knowledge of vocabulary, that is, collocations of words from the Academic Word List (AWL) of the participants; a receptive collocation test was developed and administered to the recruited test-takers. The developed test was an adoption of Nizonkiza's (2014) productive test as described below.

Nizonkiza's (2014) productive vocabulary test was developed focusing on verb-noun combination. In his test, Nizonkiza (2014) selected target words (nouns) from the AWL developed by (Coxhead 2000). He used the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English (Lea,Crowther and Dignen 2002) in order to select collocates.

As it can be noticed in Nizonkiza (2014) the nouns were selected through systematic random sampling (Babbie 1990). Nizonkiza (2014) goes on saying that the AWL consists of 10 sub lists each counting 60 words except the 10^{th} which consists of only 30 words. As it can be noticed in Nizonkiza (2016), the technique used during selection was to select six words per sub-list for a more balanced distribution of the words covered in in the list in terms of their frequency. The sampling ratio was 10 (60÷6=10) and the procedure was to select every 10^{th} word from a random starting point. Whenever, the 10^{th} word was not a noun, the next one was selected and retained.

Nizonkiza (2014) makes it clear that, after target words selection, the followed stage was to use the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English (2002), which presents collocations in accordance with their meanings and syntactic categories to select both collocations and the sentential contexts in which the words were embedded (Nizonkiza 2014: 6). It is worth noting that after selecting target words, Nizonkiza looked them in the Collocation Dictionary under the verb- noun entry retaining at the same time the examples of sentences that were supplied in that dictionary.

My work which is Nizonkiza' (2016) follow-up presented to the test-takers a receptive collocation test modeled to Nizonkiza's (2016) productive vocabulary test. To this, a receptive variant test was developed. The test was designed in multiple choice formats where participants were invited to choose the correct answer from the three options that were presented to them. The Academic Word List was focused on and this study retained Nizonkiza's(2016) thirty first items the ones from the first six sub-lists, the receptive variant of which had been designed.

In order to adapt this test, the following procedures were observed. First of all, the same sentential contexts selected by Nizonkiza (2016) were retained. Secondly, the same target words that is, nouns that were to be combined with the collocates (verbs) were imbedded in the same sentential contexts as they have been selected by Nizonkiza (2016).

On my supervisor's academic request, Havyarimana sent me the same sentences as selected by Nizonkiza (2016). However, both the target words and the collocates were in the sentences sent to me by Havyarimana. As the test was to be run in multiple choice, I deleted all collocates (key answer in this context) from the same sentential contexts but the target words remained embedded in the same sentential contexts selected by Nizonkiza (2016). After the collocates deletion step from the sentential contexts, the researcher checked target word

after target word , that is I entered target word after another in an online oxford collocations dictionary for students of English to find all other possible collocates that may be combined with the concerned target word. However, it could be understood well that I did this to avoid having two or three collocates that were all possible/ true answers to the same target word on the same test item. Every moment I got all the collocates of the concerned target word, I wrote them all on a sheet of paper considered as a draft of developing the receptive collocation test and I circled the key word (collocate) as it had been used in Havyarimana's (2016) productive test.

It is also important to know that the same Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English could not provide at the same time, both the distractors or synonyms and the key collocate to help design well the collocation test. Then the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the 8th edition and the Oxford Mini Dictionary, Thesaurus, and Word Power were consulted for the distractors or synonyms to the key word or collocate. Moreover, it could happen that I found in the synonymous list from the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary or the Oxford Mini Dictionary Thesaurus, and Word Power one or two collocates even more of the concerned target word as it/ they had been found in online Oxford collocations Dictionary for students of English, I ignored it or them and consider the rest of the synonyms/ distractor words in the list and wrote them on a draft.

It is worth mentioning that afterwards, only two words all of which did not appear on the list of the possible collocates of the concerned item/ target word were retained to help the researcher run well the multiple choice test. In addition to this, it is important to let you know it was impossible for the researcher to get the synonyms of the item four (address in this case) from in any of the dictionaries used to get the distractor words except only when the researcher sought for its synonyms in Google. Briefly speaking, the first dictionary that is *Oxford Collocations dictionary for Students of English* was consulted to help the

researcher get all possible collocates of the same concerned target word whereas the last two ones helped the researcher get the distractor words as they had been referred to by Nizonkiza (2015).

As it can be realized, the collocations investigated in this study consisted of Verb-noun combinations pertaining to the AWL as Nizonkiza's (2015) collocations study was. The adoption of these combinations to our study was guided by three underlying reasons as they have been outlined in Nizonkiza's (2015) study which reported Gyllistad (2004). First and foremost, the combinations V-N constitute the frequent occurrences, secondly, these collocations are very difficult for L2 learners and thirdly, they are said to contain the most important information for communication. It is important to know that Nizonkiza (2015) added a further thought to the mentioned three reasons saying that people express themselves starting with the actions they want to do which is expressed through a noun and afterwards they think of the verb that goes together with that action they want to do. The latter argument advocated by Nizonkiza (2015) is right in the sense that talking about things goes with naming them and verbs are only needed while talking about what people can do with the things named.

As it can be noticed, the receptive collocation test consisted of a total of thirty sentences. Each sentence contained one target word while collocate to the target word was deleted from the sentence. The blank in each sentence is found to the left hand of the target word. Moreover, the deleted collocate in each sentence was arranged along with pseudo-collocates to help develop a multiple-choice format test that was administered to the participants. The pseudo-collocates were considered in this test as they were synonyms of the right collocates but they did not in fact collocate with the considered target words. They only prayed the role of distracting the participants.

For each sentence, three options were provided to the participants and they were invited to choose only one correct word from those three possible options.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

To test the hypotheses with which the study was undertaken, participants' copies were marked. However, not all participants' copies were marked due to the fact that some of the participants did not write their names on them.

The participant was to get one mark per correct answer or collocate and zero point for a wrong answer. Whenever no answer was provided, the item was left unmarked, that is, the participant got neither one mark nor zero. After correcting, the scores were entered item per item in an excel file and blank space was left to indicate a no choice a response. The excel file was imported in software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) before computing the data. I started presenting results in the table forms and interpreting them following the order in which questions have been raised.

The first step of the analysis was reached by calculating the mean scores participants achieved following their classes to account for the state of their receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL and this helped answer the first question investigated in this study. The second step was completed by calculating the means and drawing a comparison between mean scores the two groups of participants achieved in order to test the second hypothesis that postulates that receptive collocational competence varies across class level. The third step was reached by calculating and analyzing mean scores achieved by participants, firstly all of them together and secondly, each class apart. Then, the mean scores were weighed against the cut-off point suggested by Schmitt et al(2001), which is 80% (see Nizonkiza, 2014) to account for the mastery vocabulary and this helped answer the third question about the extent to which English Majors at the University of Burundi master the academic vocabulary of collocations in relation to frequency.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter described the ways and where the data were collected. It also attempted to give insight into the nature of the instrument used to collect data and to which extent it is limited. The present chapter presents, analyzes and interprets the collected data to answer the research questions investigated in this study and thereby confirm or infirm the hypotheses formulated at the very beginning of the study. Before answering the research questions, it is very important to remind the readers what they were. Below are the research questions of the study:

1. What is the state of receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL among English Majors at the University of Burundi?
2. Does receptive knowledge of collocations of words from the AWL vary across class level?
3. To what extent do English majors at the University of Burundi master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency?

I start with presenting the results in table forms and, thus, interpreting them following the order in which the research questions have been raised.

4.2. Receptive Academic Collocational Competence among English Majors at the University of Burundi

The first research question examined in this study is about measuring receptive academic collocational competence among English majors at the University of Burundi. This research question was answered by calculating the means the considered participants achieved following their classes from which they were recruited.

Table 1: Means of scores achieved in each class

Class	N	Mean out of 30
Bac2	81	14.69
Bac3	86	15.43

In the above table, the first column is concerned with class while the second with the total number of participants in the test conventionally represented as N in each class. The third one presents the mean scores achieved in each class. As it can be seen, the results presented in the above table show that Bac2 and Bac3 students achieved the overall scores of 14.69 and 15.43, respectively as found in the third column entitled "mean". These means scores were weighed against the cut-off point suggested by Schmitt et al. (2001) for mastery of vocabulary, which is 80%. This would entail a mean score of 24 out of 30, but none of the classes achieved such a score. The findings show that the academic collocational competence among English majors at the University of Burundi is very low in both classes that participated in this study, which confirms the first assumption.

4.3. Variation of Receptive Academic Collocational Knowledge across Class Level

The second research question examined in this study is about the extent to which receptive academic collocational knowledge varies across class level. In other words, the question is whether knowledge of collocations changes with class level. This question was answered by comparing the means achieved in the different classes that participated in this study. As presented in the table below, the mean achieved by Bac2 students is 14.69 while that achieved by Bac3 students is 15.43. Looking at the figures presented in Table 1 above, at each class level, it is noticed that classes performed differently.

Analysing well those figures may give the impression that knowledge of collocations from the academic word list increases from lower class to the upper class, that is, from Bac2 to Bac3.

We may then be tempted to conclude that receptive collocational knowledge of collocations from the academic word list varies parallel to class level since the considered classes performed differently in terms of the means they achieved with Bac3 students achieving a mean superior to that achieved by Bac2 students.

These scores were analysed further and an Independent Samples T-test—a test which measures whether the difference between two scores are really different—was carried out. Results are presented in table 2.

Table 2 : Results from Independent Samples T–test

Class	Mean	Mean difference	Significance (Sig.)
Bac3	15.43	0.74	.110
Bac2	14.69		

As Table 2 shows, the mean difference between Bac3 and Bac2 is 0.74 (third column), which could be rounded up to 1 point. The question which follows is the extent to which this is significant. It simply asks about whether Bac3 could be considered as performing better than Bac2 with just a mean difference of about 1 point. This is answered by considering the Significance coefficient as reported in the last column. Statisticians suggest that the Sig. should be lower than .05 for the difference to be statistically significant. Sig. in this case is .110, which is higher than .05. This implies that the difference of about 1 point would indicate variation between the two classes is not statistically significant. These findings answer the second research question enquiring about the extent to which receptive academic collocational knowledge varies across class level by indicating that there is no variation. This entails that Bac3 and Bac2students may be equally competent regarding their academic vocabulary collocations.

4.4. Mastery of Academic Vocabulary in Relation to Frequency

The third research question investigated in this study is to know the extent to which participants in this study master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency. It is worth reminding the readers that the target words were selected from the AWL which is organized in sub-lists following frequency. For example, sub-list one consists of the 60 most frequent words of the AWL. Sub-list two is composed of the next most frequent 60 words etc.

This question was answered by analyzing the mean scores achieved by participants in this study, all of them together and each class apart. After the scores are averaged, they must be weighed against Schmitt's cut-off point, which should be 80 %(see Nizonkiza, 2014). This entails that students should achieve a mean score of 4.8 out of 6 at each of the sub-lists in order to be considered as mastering them. The results for all the participants together (API Bac2 and Bac3 students) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean scores at Sub–Lists All Students Together

	Sub-list-1	Sub-list-2	Sub-list-3	Sub-list-4	Sub-list-5
Mean	2.22	2.80	2.41	3.92	3.72
Minimum	0	0	0	1	0
Maximum	4	6	6	6	6

As it can be seen from Table3, the mean scores achieved by participants, all the classes together (classes Bac2 and Bac3) vary from sub-list to another. Participants scored more in sub list four in which they got the mean score of 3.92. The fourth sub–list was followed by the fifth sub–list where the test-takers scored a mean of 3.72. The fifth sub-list is followed by the second sub–list with a mean which amounts to 2.80 and this means that the second sub–list comes at the third position in terms of academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency. The third sub–list with a mean of 2.41 comes at the fourth position of the academic vocabulary mastery among English majors.

The first sub-list in which the participants have a mean score of 2.22 comes at the final position, that is, fifth order.

As appears in the above description, the order in which participants performed in relation to frequency is sub-list 4, sub-list 5, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, and sub-list 1. Weighing the scores achieved in each of the sub-lists against the cut-off point, which is 80% or 4.8 out 6, indicates that in none of them this score was achieved. These results answer the third question examining mastery of collocations from the AWL in relation to frequency. They show that none of the sub-lists is mastered and especially the variation according to frequency follows no order. The expected order should have been sub-list 1, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, sub-list 4, and sub-list 5.

These results were analyzed further in order to see what this mastery looks like in each of the classes that participated in this study. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Means Achieved at Sub-Lists, Classes Separately

Class		Sub-list-1	Sublist-2	Sublist-3	Sublist-4	Sublist-5
Bac 2	Mean	2.09	2.69	2.40	3.75	3.77
Bac 3	Mean	2.34	2.91	2.43	4.07	3.69

As it can be noticed from Table 4, mean scores achieved by participants, each class performing alone, that is Bac2 on its own and Bac3 on its own, change from one sub-list to another. In Bac2, participants scored more in sub-list5 where they achieved a mean of 3.77 in terms of the academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency. The fifth sub-list is followed by the fourth sub-list in which participants got a mean of 3. 75 of the academic vocabulary master in relation to frequency. The fourth sub-list is followed by the second one where test takers reached a mean of 2.69. The third sub-list comes at fourth position and participants achieved a mean of 2.40.The first sub-list where test takers have a mean of 2.09 comes at the final position.

Similarly, in Bac3 participants scored more in sub-list four in which they achieved a mean of 4.07 of the academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency. The fourth sub-list is followed by the fifth sub-list in which test takers scored a mean of 3.69 in terms of the academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency. After the fifth sub-list, the second sub-list comes with participants achieving a mean of 2.91. The second sub-list is followed by the third sub-list with a mean which amounts to 2.43. The first sub-list comes at the fifth position in terms academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency.

As it can be noticed in the above description of the academic vocabulary mastery in relation to frequency, the order in which Bac2 students performed is sub-list 5, sub-list 4, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, and sub-list 1. In Bac3, the order followed by participants in terms of performance is sub-list 4, sub-list 5, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, and sub-list 1. For both classes the expected order for mastery should have been sub-list 1, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, sub-list 4, and sub-list 5. Weighing the scores achieved in each of the sub-lists against Schmitt's cut-off point, which is 80% or 4.8 out 6, it reveals that neither Bac2 students nor Bac3 students achieved this score in one or the other the sub-lists. These results answer the third question examining mastery of collocations from the AWL in relation to frequency by indicating that the sub-lists investigated are not mastered.

4.5. Summary of the Findings

The first question in the present study was to know the state of receptive knowledge of words from the AWL among English majors at the University of Burundi- Bac2 and Bac3 students. After data presentation and analysis, the results showed that receptive knowledge of words from the AWL is very low in both classes with the averages of 14.69 and 15.43out of 30 in Bac2 and Bac3 respectively.

The second question was asked to know the extent to which receptive knowledge of words from the AWL vary across class level. After the analysis of the data, the results indicated that receptive knowledge of words from the AWL does not vary across class level as mean difference between the means achieved in the two classes was not significant. In this case, significance coefficient is 0.74 as it has been observed in table 2 and this is higher than the minimum coefficient expected to grant the variation of this knowledge across class level. However, the minimum should have been lower than .05

The third question addressed was to know the extent to which English majors at the University of Burundi master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency. After the analysis, it was clear that English majors at the University of Burundi do not mater collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency as it has been observed in table 3 and table 4 where results are analysed respectively, all classes performing together and each class performing separately from the other. In table 3, participations did not achieve at least 4.8 out 6 marks to account for their mastery of collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency. The same case has been observed in table 4.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, GENERAL CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Discussion of Findings

The present study attempted to investigate receptive knowledge of collocations among English majors at the University of Burundi. The study was conducted following three aims giving a way to formulate three research questions. In order to achieve the three aims of the study, a developed receptive collocation test-Nizonkiza's (2014) productive test replicate was administered to the participants recruited at the University of Burundi from two different levels, that is, Bac2 and Bac3 students.

Measuring receptive collocational competence of academic vocabulary among English majors at the University of Burundi was the first aim investigated in this study. Receptive collocational competence of academic vocabulary was indicated by the mean scores achieved by participants recruited from two different levels (Bac2 and Bac3). The mean scores achieved are 14.69 and 15.43 in Bac2 and Bac3 respectively and they are much lower than the minimum expected for the students to granted mastery of collocations of the words presented to them. This is an indication that receptive collocational competence of academic vocabulary among English majors at the University of Burundi is low. These results support previous findings that collocations cause problems to students of English even at an advanced level for general vocabulary (Irankeje, 2015; Laufer & Waldman, 2011; Nesselhauf, 2005 among others).

These previous findings are extended here to collocations of academic vocabulary. Since participants in this study were in their second and third years at the university, they could be expected to at least understand collocations of words from the AWL. This is not good news since this list is supposed to be mastered by first year university students (Coxhead, 2000; Nation, 2001; Nizonkiza, 2014).

The second aim addressed in this study is corollary to the first one and investigates the extent to which receptive collocational knowledge of academic vocabulary varies across class level. This aim was reached by drawing a comparison between the mean scores achieved by the participants (Bac2 and Bac3). The findings indicate that participants did perform differently. Even though Bac3achieved a mean score which is slightly higher than that of Bac2, the difference between the means achieved by the two classes is not statistically significant. This entails that both classes have the same competence when it comes to their collocational knowledge of academic words. These results confirm Gitsaki (1999) and Laufer and Waldman's (2011) observation that collocational competence difference only starts to emerge at intermediate and advanced levels. They, however, contradict Gyllstad (2007), Nizonkiza (2011a, 2014, 2015) and Nizonkiza and Van de Poel(2014) who established a relationship between collocational competence and overall proficiency.

The third aim investigated in this study is about mastery of collocations of academic vocabulary in relation to frequency. In other words, mastery of collocations of academic vocabulary in relation to the sub-lists from which items of the test administered to the participants were selected.

To reach this aim, the mean scores from the test on all sub-lists were weighed against Schmitt's cut-off point which suggests having the mean scores of 80% in the test to claim that learners master the vocabulary. The findings indicated that mean scores on the test do not reach the Schmitt suggested cut-off point in any of the five sub-lists either all classes (all participants, Bac2 and Bac3 students) performing together at each sub-list on one hand or classes (participants, Bac2 and Bac3 students) performing separately on the other hand which implies that English majors at the university of Burundi do not master any of the sub-lists the AWL consists of. In addition, the sub-lists were mastered in an unpredictable order, which is sub-list 4, sub-list 5, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, and sub-list 1.

The expected order would be sub-list 1, sub-list 2, sub-list 3, sub-list 4, and sub-list 5 if we base on the findings available for general vocabulary for which more frequent words are mastered first (Nizonkiza, 2011b, 2015; Waring, 1997). Since this has not been subject for investigation in any study as far as I can tell, more studies may help us understand the extent to which frequency of academic vocabulary contributes to their mastery.

All in all, answers to the initial questions indicate that: 1) the state of receptive knowledge of the collocations of the words from the AWL among English majors at the University of Burundi is very low, 2) receptive academic collocational knowledge does not vary across class level, and 3) English majors at the University of Burundi do not master collocations of the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency.

5.2. General Conclusion

In this work, I was interested in assessing the measuring of receptive knowledge of collocations among English majors at the University of Burundi. As at the University of Burundi there are two departments of English, that is, Applied Pedagogical Institute of English Department and the Department of English Language and Literature, respectively abbreviated as follows :(API) and(DELL), this research targeted Bac2 and Bac3 students majoring in the former English department (API).

The work is completed through five chapters which are named mainly: the general introduction, the related literature, the methodology, data presentation, analysis and findings, and discussion of findings, general conclusion, and recommendations.

An introduction which is the first and foremost chapter in this work gives a general overview which provides some background information on the topic investigated by focusing on what the problem is and how should this problem be Solved.

The same chapter emphasizes on the aims to be reached and the research questions to be answered to complete the work. Moreover, anticipated answers (hypotheses-assumptions) to the research questions to be examined, the motivation to conduct the work, the structure of the work, its scope and delimitation as well as the definition of key items are also described in this chapter.

The second chapter of this work which is related literature gives an overview of other existing works in relation to the topic. This was fulfilled through evaluating critically what other researchers in the area of collocations came up with in relation to the investigated topic. To achieve the critical evaluation of others related works to the topic, many books and articles were read to help researcher run the whole chapter.

Concerning the third chapter, that is, the methodology, an explanation on how the study was conducted was provided. This chapter is composed mainly of the population investigated, the instrument used, that is, receptive collocation test and the procedures adopted to collect and analyze the collected data i.e. data analysis procedures. Moreover, it is concerned with the way the test was administered as well as the procedure to be taken to score the test, analyze and interpret the findings to answer the pursued questions.

The fourth and foremost chapter named" Data presentation, Analysis and Findings" presents and interprets the findings of the present study in relation to its aims. Results indicate that (1) we can measure receptive collocational competence among English majors at the University of Burundi though the kind of receptive knowledge of collocations is very low. The results also show that (2) receptive academic collocational knowledge does not vary across class level, which does not confirm the second hypothesis. Results also let us (3) know that English majors at the University of Burundi do not master academic vocabulary in relation to frequency since the participants did not achieve a mean score of 24

out of 30 in the whole test and a mean score of 4.8 out of 6 in each of the five sub-lists of which the test was made up with and this rejects the third hypothesis.

The last chapter of this work is entitled "Discussion of the findings, General conclusion, and Recommendations".

5.3. Recommendations

Basing on the findings as discussed in the above section, I would like to formulate the recommendations as follows: as the present study was an attempt to measure receptive knowledge of collocations among English majors at the University of Burundi mainly operationalized through verb-noun combinations, I would like firstly to invite other researchers by recommending them to complement my work investigating for example why Burundi University English majors' receptive collocational knowledge does not vary across class level as the findings in this study contradict Gyllstad (2007), Nizonkiza (2011a, 2014, 2015, Nizonkiza and Van de Poel (2014). Secondly, I would like to recommend further researchers to complement this study by examining why Burundi University English majors do not master these combinations, that is, verb-noun combinations pertaining to the academic vocabulary in relation to frequency as the findings have proven that participants do not master those words and this may help us understand the extend to which frequency of the academic vocabulary contribute to their master.

Thirdly, I would like to recommend the government to invite curriculum designers to factor in collocations in the programs elaborated for all learners at different levels of learning. To put it differently, through the government, courses designers should include collocations in all programs of courses that are taught in English from high schools to the University. They could achieve this by developing a collocation syllabus and listening materials and I think that this will help pupils and students.

For pedagogy, once the government and programme designers agree on including collocations in the subjects that are taught in English, I would like to recommend secondary teachers and lecturers to give more attention to teaching collocations as they are important to EFL/L2 learners. To help learners understand collocations of words from the AWL, I would like also to suggest teaching collocations of words from the AWL from high schools by focusing on verb-noun combinations due to the three reasons explained by Gyllstad (2007) reported in Nizonkiza (2011b) that they 1) constitute frequent occurrences, 2) they are very difficult for L2 learners, and 3) they consist of the most important information for communication.

As the results indicate that receptive knowledge of collocations among English Majors is very low, I would like to recommend them being fully interested in learning English in general and in a particular way practicing their reading and listening (receptive skills). They should have interest in reading novels, grammar books, and journals. They should also be interested in listening to British Broadcasting Radio (BBC), interact among themselves in English, and talk to other speaking English people. More importantly, they should participate in English clubs or English teaching centers.

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APPENDIX

RECEPTIVE COLLOCATION TEST

Name **Date:**

Level **Start hour:**

University **End hour:**

Instruction: one word has been deleted in each of the sentences below. Among the three words given, only one is appropriate, underline it.

Example: Students demonstrated that they should..... big allocations for books.

a) accept b) receive c) catch

1. Villagers get together every year to..... this tradition alive.

a) Support b) keep c) retain

2. Institutionshave to..... appropriate contexts in which to present examples of language in use for the children.

a) examine b) investigate c) restrict

3. In order to fight against terrorism, the UN agreed on plans to..... the export of arms of certain countries.

a) regulate b) control c) restrict

4. This evening we need to.....the issue of legalization of soft drugs.

a) address b) treat c) direct

5. She went on to.....the principles behind what she was doing.

a) Justify b) explain c) clarify.

6. We have to..... many aspects of pollution in order to better tackle it.

a) regard b) contemplate c) consider

7. If you do not have regular income, you may not be able to..... credit.

a) acquire b) gain c) obtain

8. It is difficult to.....the impact of the changes on employment patterns.

a) adjudge b) judge c) appraise

9. The latest development hardly..... The reception of the crisis by the public.

a) affect b) influence c) modify

10. The family will..... the temporary residence in manor house.

a) institute b) establish c) inaugurate.

11. They had to..... an in-depth analysis of the results.

a) work b) act c) perform

12. Investigators are likely to.....a set of theories about the princess's death.

a) advance b) proceed c) accelerate

13. The school planned to ..... comments from parents about the new curriculum.

a) solicit b) invite c) seek

14. We must make a real effort to..... cooperation between universities and industry.

a) further b) push c) promote

15. They have to..... a basic framework of ground rules for discussion.

a) offer b) submit c) recommend

16. Use enough gravel to.....a layer about 50 mm thick.

a) form b) construct b) build

17. The food shortage is likely to..... crisis proportion.

a) extend b) reach c) contact

18. She failed to..... the task she had been set.

a) finish b) end c) complete

19. The new computer can..... access to all files.

a) allow b) permit c) let

20. Such a game may..... great concentration.

a) need b) require c) necessitate

21. Many developing countries hope to..... their goals to providing free primary education to everyone.

a) accomplish b) fulfill c) achieve

22. It is hoped that the new scheme will.....jobs in the region.

a) produce b) invent c) create

23. Society evolved ton.....a technological phase.

a) penetrate b) enter c) commence

24. The government will.....new statistics on the cost of living.

a) release b) liberate c) untie

25. He was advised to.....the police academy.

A) provide b) attend c) frequent

26. We need to.....contact with the organization although it may be difficult after many year.

a) form b) compose c) make

27. Banks will seek to.....their exposure to risks.

a) reduce b) lower c) lessen

28. Higher productivity has enabled them to.....their profit margin.

a) Ameliorate b) improve c) reform

29. Any surgery may..... great precision.

a) request b) need c) demand

30. Hotels that..... This symbol offer activities for children.

a) Display b) manifest c) exhibit