

# Collocability as a problem in L2 production

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## ABSTRACT

The topic of collocability has been a common concern among linguists, lexicographers and language pedagogues recently. They find the linguistic aspect of collocation interesting because words do not exist in isolation from other words in a language. They exist with other words. In every language, the vocabulary consists of single words and multi-word expressions. Collocations are among those multi-word expressions. The aim of this study is to examine some EFL learners' knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations in terms of their ability to produce some examples of this particular type of collocation accurately. The other aim of the study is to test the participants' receptive knowledge of the same type of collocation, *verb + noun* collocations. The study used two data collection instruments. The instruments designed and used to collect the data of the present study were a 'blank-filling test of English collocations' (Test 1) and a 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' (Test 2). The results showed that the participants performed better at the receptive level than at the productive level with regard to English *verb + noun* collocations. Also, the study, based on the results, suggested a number of implications with regard to collocations in EFL/ESL learning.

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**KEYWORDS:** *collocability, collocation, second language acquisition, lexical semantics, multi-word units, fixed expressions*

## Introduction

This paper defines a collocation as the tendency for certain words in a language to combine with one another (as against others that do not have this tendency of combining together), and the meaning of which can be deduced from at least one of the components of the collocation. A typical example of a collocation in English is *to cut a deal* (verb + noun). Although the verb *to cut* is used figuratively, the meaning can still be recognized from the other component of the collocation, which is used in its literal, transparent sense. Thus, the meaning of the whole collocation can clearly be understood from at least one of the constituent parts of the combination. Another typical example is *strong tea* (adjective + noun); *\*powerful tea* may be considered an unacceptable word combination in English, although the words *strong* and *powerful* are synonyms. Powerful and tea, in other words, do not collocate with one another.

Linguists, lexicographers, translators/interpreters and even EFL/ESL learners themselves have recognized collocation as problem (Aghbar, 1990; Bahns &

Eldaw, 1993; Baltova, 1994; Hussein, 1990; Palmer, 1979). EFL/ESL learners' knowledge of collocations (*collocational competence*) is an essential requirement for the overall mastery of L2. In order to speak a language the way its native speakers do, students should observe which words co-occur together. Therefore, collocational competence is perhaps one of the highest levels of linguistic proficiency that learners can attain.

### **Rationale and purpose of the study**

A number of researchers have investigated the influence of L1 on the production of L2 collocations (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Hussein, 1990). They examined EFL/ESL learners' knowledge of English collocations. Indeed, these researchers have found that learners make many mistakes in producing L2 collocations. The interest for this research springs from these empirically-drawn L2 problems—the constant problems for EFL/ESL learners to match the appropriate nouns with the appropriate verbs, the appropriate verbs with the appropriate nouns, the appropriate nouns with the appropriate nouns, and so on. And because collocations play an important role in the coherence and cohesion of language which lead to overall mastery of L2, there is a strong need to look deeper into the problem of collocations in EFL/ESL learning.

However, despite their important role in EFL/ESL learning, collocations have not received much attention to date. There has been little research on how collocations are used by EFL/ESL learners (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Hussein, 1990). For this reason, this study attempts to investigate some EFL learners' knowledge of English collocations, more specifically to examine the performance of undergraduate university students majoring in English with regard to the production and reception of *verb + noun* English collocations. The results of the study would have implications for the way collocations are perceived in EFL/ESL learning and teaching, for example in terms of incorporating them into the language curriculum as part of developing collocational competence among the learners.

Collocations were chosen as special objects for scrutiny in this study because of a number of reasons. First, as linguists have shown (e.g. Hill, 2000), collocations are very frequent in the English language. Second, they are probably the most common and most representative of English multi-word expressions (Lewis, 2000). Third, collocations fall between lexis and syntax, which is in line with the current view that language competence is to be described as an interactional process between lexis and syntax. Fourth, collocations occur in languages with varying degrees of restrictedness. And fifth, they are evident in most text types.

### **Theoretical background**

The study of word collocability has remained an important field of language research. The notion of collocation has achieved importance because many linguists have surmised that there are fixed forms of expression in every language that are stored in the minds or memories of native speakers as whole chunks

of language forms and not as single words. These fixed expressions are used in speech and writing as such. Among these fixed expressions are collocations.

A collocation is mainly a lexical relationship between words. This lexical relationship is said to be subject more to arbitrariness arising from common usage than from rules (Benson et al., 1986). The notion of 'collocation' has been familiar since the pioneering work of Palmer (1938) who was the first to introduce the term collocation in his dictionary, *A Grammar of English Words*. Later, Firth (1957) advanced the word 'collocation' as a technical term so that 'meaning by collocation' became established as one of his 'modes of meaning' (Firth, 1957, p. 194). Thus, the term 'collocation' only became well known as part of the technical terminology of linguistics after the work of Firth. He suggested that 'meaning by collocation' is a lexical meaning "at the syntagmatic level" not at the paradigmatic level (p. 196). The paradigmatic relationship of lexical items, on the one hand, consists of sets of words that belong to the same class and can be substituted for one another in a specific grammatical and lexical context. On the other hand, the syntagmatic relationship of lexical items relates to the ability of a word to combine with other words. Therefore, the attempt made by Firth to explain the meaning of a word on the collocational level was unique because it was concerned with the meaning relationships between lexical items from the level of syntagmatic relationships, not from the traditional view of paradigmatic relationships such as synonymy and antonymy. The syntagmatic relationships between words in a sentence have been extensively discussed in structural linguistics.

Firth gave the example of *dark night* as an adjective + noun collocation and asserts that one of the meanings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*, and one of the meanings of *dark* is its collocability with *night* (1968, p. 182). In other words, any complete description of the meaning of a word would have to include the other word or words that collocate with it. Firth considers a collocate of a word as an order of mutual expectancy. It thus means that it is important to recognize "the company that words keep" (ibid.).

Lyons (1966), on the other hand, seemed critical of Firth's argument that a 'word's collocations are part of its meaning'. Based on a distributional theory of meaning, an alternative view posits that the meaning of a collocation cannot be understood from *all* the components of the expression within which the collocation appears, and that part of the meaning of one word in the collocation does not depend on its collocability/association with the other word(s). However, he later explained that "there is frequently so high a degree of interdependence between lexemes which tend to occur in texts in collocation with one another that their potentiality for collocation is reasonably described as being part of their meaning" (Lyons, 1977, p. 613). This means that Lyons (1977) later rejected his opposite view and acknowledged that Firth's theory of "meaning by collocation" was based on solid grounds.

A number of linguists, known as Neo-Firthians, adapted Firth's theory and expanded it. Halliday (1966) considered lexis as complementary to, but not part of, grammatical theory. He introduced the notion of 'set' as an extra dimension of the collocability of words. A collocation, in his definition, is "a linear co-occurrence relationship among lexical items which co-occur together",

whereas the *set* is “the grouping of members with like privilege of occurrence in collocation” (p. 153). For example, *bright, hot, shine, light, and come out* belong to the same lexical set since they all collocate with the word *sun* (1966, p. 158).

Sinclair also viewed grammar and lexis from “two different, interpenetrating aspects” (1966, p. 411). He stated that language patterns are treated, in grammar, as if they could be described by a system of choices. However, for Sinclair, the key issue is the tendencies of lexical items to collocate with one another. These tendencies “ought to tell us facts about language that cannot be got by grammatical analysis” (p. 411). He then showed that the contrast between lexical items is more flexible than that of grammatical classes because “there are virtually no impossible collocations, but some are much more likely than others” (1966, p. 411). Sinclair (1966) even described the structure of a collocation as follows:

We may use the term **node** to refer to an item whose collocations we are studying, and we may then define a **span** as the number of lexical items on each side of a node that we consider relevant to that node. Items in the environment set by the span we will call **collocates** (p. 415, emphasis in original).

For example, if we want to study the collocational patterns of the word *accident*, then *accident* is the ‘node’. If we decide to have a ‘span’ of four, it means that we study the four lexical items that occur before and the four lexical items that occur after the word *accident*. All the lexical items that are within the ‘span’ of the word *accident* are considered to be its ‘collocates’.

An important feature in Sinclair’s theory is that he distinguished between casual and significant collocations. A significant collocation, he explained, is a collocation that occurs more frequently than would be expected on the basis of the individual items.

## Research in EFL/ESL lexical learning

Collocations are important since they make the spoken and written language stimulating and interesting (Kane, 1983). Nevertheless, the acquisition of collocations is not as simple for EFL/ESL learners as it might be for native speakers of English. Crystal (1992) stated that “collocations...provide a major difficulty in mastering foreign languages... The more fixed a collocation is, the more we think of it as an ‘idiom’—a pattern to be learned as a whole, and not as the ‘sum of its parts’” (p. 105). In that case, idioms do not mean what the individual words in them mean.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) called collocation “the most problematic part of lexical cohesion” (p. 288). Collocations are very often language-specific and, therefore, will cause frequent language (production) mistakes and communication breakdown. That is, they may present a problem to the EFL/ESL learner when the native language meaning equivalent uses different collocations. Palmer (1979) also stressed that collocations and phrases are problematic for both native speakers and learners of English. There is, in fact, evidence that even native speakers have difficulty collocating certain words in increasingly formal written contexts

depending on education and writing experience (Aghbar, 1990; Baltova, 1994; Hussein, 1990; Palmer, 1979).

Given all this information, we can say that it is not single words that are always difficult for EFL/ESL learners, but multi-word units such as collocations. Therefore, common combinations of words should be taught, not just the individual words (Khuwailah, 2000). For example, Faerch et al. (1984) emphasized the importance of learning new words through common collocations. They proposed that when a new word is introduced to EFL/ESL learners, it may be very helpful to also introduce the most common collocates of that word: "Having a word in one's vocabulary includes knowing the most frequent collocations of that word" (Faerch et al., 1984, p. 95).

However, some linguists argue that some language teachers themselves are not aware of the importance of collocations in EFL/ESL learning and, as a result, may not be drawing their students' attention to collocations in their teaching (e.g. Hill, 2000; Howarth, 1996). For example, Howarth (1996) notes that:

Learners are, understandably, generally unaware of the large number of clusters of partially overlapping collocational relationships. It is, of course, not only learners who are unaware of this category; it is an area unrecognized in language pedagogy and little understood in lexicography (p. 162).

It is also reported that some collocations may still be difficult to be produced correctly even by some of the best language learners (Bonk, 2000). That is, even some of the best language learners may make mistakes in producing L2 collocations or sometimes are not sure whether a certain word combination is possible or not. Therefore, it is not uncommon for language teachers to be asked by their students, "Can we say....?" or "Can this word be used with this other word?". McCarthy (1990) pointed out that "Even very advanced learners often make inappropriate or unacceptable collocations" (p. 13). Here, the role of L1 influence could be one of the major causes of errors in the production of L2 collocations (e.g., Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Biskup, 1992; Hussein, 1990). Therefore, EFL/ESL learners with different levels of proficiency may face difficulties with regard to collocations. Failing to produce the correct ones in English may result in a language that does not sound native-like or 'natural'.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research question***

The general question addressed in this study is concerned with the knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations among a group of EFL learners. This study attempts to answer the following research question:

- What is the difference between the EFL learners' productive and receptive knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations?

The aim of the study is to examine some EFL learners' knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations in terms of their capability to produce some examples of this specific type of collocation correctly. The other aim of the study is to

examine the participants' receptive knowledge of the same type of collocation, *verb + noun* collocations. Therefore, the aim of the study is twofold: to examine the EFL learner's ability to understand the meanings of collocations by recognizing them, and to examine their ability to use them accurately. That is because it is equally important for EFL learners to recognize (in reading and listening) and produce (in writing and speaking) collocations accurately.

### *Participants in the study*

This study was conducted at the English Language Department, Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The participants in this study were twenty senior undergraduate students majoring in English. These students were in their fourth year of study (final year). The participation in this study was voluntary.

### *Data collection instruments*

This study used two data collection instruments. The instruments designed and used to collect the data of the present study were a 'blank-filling test of English collocations' (Test 1) and a 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' (Test 2). In designing the 'blank-filling test of English collocations' for the present study, the researcher used examples from the *Collins COBUILD English Collocations on CD-ROM* by Sinclair et al. (1995).

In Test 1, the 'blank-filling test of English collocations', the participants were given twenty items. Each item consisted of an English sentence with a *blank + a noun*. The participants were asked to fill in each blank with the most suitable verb that can possibly collocate with the head noun in the sentence (see Appendix A). The aim of this test was to determine the respondents' production knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations.

The other instrument used in this study was a 'multiple-choice test of English collocations'. Again, the participants were given twenty items. This second test included the same examples of English collocations that were in Test 1 given to the same participants, but this time they were provided with four options to choose from. The participants were asked to choose the most suitable *verb* that can possibly collocate with the head noun in the sentence (see Appendix B). The aim of the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' was to test the participants' receptive knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations.

### *Administrative procedures*

First, the researcher contacted the Chairman of the Department of English Language of Umm Al-Qura University and obtained permission to conduct this study. Later, the researcher visited the class for approximately fifteen minutes and explained to the students the intended study. After explaining to the students the tasks they would be required to perform, the researcher asked them whether they wanted to participate in the study, assuring them that confidentiality would be maintained. Each student was then given an Information Sheet and a Consent Form to sign and bring back to the researcher along with the 'blank-filling test

of English collocations' (Test 1). The researcher administered the test himself. The students were given one hour for Test 1. On the same day of the following week, the students were given the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' (Test 2). Test 2 took only thirty minutes.

## Results and discussion

This section will discuss the participants' response to the 'blank-filling test of English collocations' and the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations'.

As earlier mentioned, the 'blank-filling test of English collocations' aimed to examine the participants' knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations in terms of their ability to produce this particular type of collocation accurately. The analysis was basically based on judging whether the respondents provided an acceptable collocation or not. The data were examined against the following references: the *Collins COBUILD English Collocations on CD-ROM* by Sinclair et al. (1995), the *BBJ Combinatory Dictionary of English* by Benson et al. (1986), the *Dictionary of Selected Collocations* by Hill and Lewis (1997), *A Dictionary of English Collocations Based on the Brown Corpus* by Kjellmer (1994), and *WordPilot 2000 software* by Milton (2000).

When the researcher scored the 'blank-filling test of English collocations', the names of participants and other biodata were then not yet disclosed. Their answers were counted as correct if they provided an English collocation that matched a collocation mentioned in one of the references stated above. Spelling and grammar mistakes were not counted as incorrect responses.

Data from this test (see Table 1) show an overall significant problem in producing acceptable *verb + noun* collocations in English. The results suggest that the participants essentially lack collocational competence at the production level. Sixty-two percent (62%) of their responses are incorrect, while only 38% are correct.

On the other hand, the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' aimed to test the participants' receptive knowledge of English *verb + noun* collocations. Similarly, the researcher scored the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations'. The participants' responses were counted as correct if they chose the correct *verb* that collocates with the head noun in the sentence.

Data from this test (see Table 2) show better results in the participants' ability to recognize (as opposed to produce) accurate *verb + noun* collocations in English. To put it in another way, the data suggest that the participants perform better at the receptive, rather than productive, level. Around 79% of the participants' responses are correct, while only 21% are incorrect.

Taken together, the data tell us that indeed EFL learners with different levels of proficiency face difficulties in combining words together, resulting in a language that does not sound native-like nor 'natural'. This phenomenon is mainly due in part to a lack of knowledge of native-like English collocations and also to differences between the collocational patterns of Arabic (the learners' native language) and English (Brashi, 2005). In addition, L1 influence is also one of the reasons for the unacceptable production of English collocations. L1 influence

**Table 1**

A summary of the results of the 'blank-filling test of English collocations'

Item no.	Acceptable collocation	Unacceptable collocation
1	2/20 (10%)	18/20 (90%)
2	12/20 (60%)	8/20 (40%)
3	12/20 (60%)	8/20 (40%)
4	2/20 (10%)	18/20 (90%)
5	7/20 (35%)	13/20 (65%)
6	3/20 (15%)	17/20 (85%)
7	3/20 (15%)	17/20 (85%)
8	9/20 (45%)	11/20 (55%)
9	5/20 (25%)	15/20 (75%)
10	9/20 (45%)	11/20 (55%)
11	9/20 (45%)	11/20 (55%)
12	16/20 (80%)	4/20 (20%)
13	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
14	3/20 (15%)	17/20 (85%)
15	7/20 (35%)	13/20 (65%)
16	7/20 (35%)	13/20 (65%)
17	6/20 (30%)	14/20 (70%)
18	10/20 (50%)	10/20 (50%)
19	8/20 (40%)	12/20 (60%)
20	8/20 (40%)	12/20 (60%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>152/400 (38%)</b>	<b>248/400 (62%)</b>

**Table 2**

A summary of the results of the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations'

Item no.	Acceptable collocation	Unacceptable collocation
1	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
2	18/20 (90%)	2/20 (10%)
3	19/20 (95%)	1/20 (5%)
4	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
5	16/20 (80%)	4/20 (20%)
6	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
7	17/20 (85%)	3/20 (15%)
8	20/20 (100%)	0/20 (0%)
9	17/20 (85%)	3/20 (15%)
10	16/20 (80%)	4/20 (20%)
11	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
12	18/20 (90%)	2/20 (10%)
13	16/20 (80%)	4/20 (20%)
14	13/20 (65%)	7/20 (35%)
15	15/20 (75%)	5/20 (25%)
16	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
17	14/20 (70%)	6/20 (30%)
18	15/20 (75%)	5/20 (25%)
19	15/20 (75%)	5/20 (25%)
20	16/20 (80%)	4/20 (20%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>315/400 (79%)</b>	<b>85/400 (21%)</b>



was evident in some instances. This, in fact, reiterates what has been reported in the literature by different researchers (e.g. Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Biskup, 1992; Hussein, 1990). The misunderstanding of the meaning of the collocation could possibly be another reason for not being able to produce acceptable collocations. The administration of the 'blank-filling test of English collocations' took only sixty minutes, and the administration of the 'multiple-choice test of English collocations' took only thirty minutes. Therefore, fatigue was probably not a factor in the participants' scores.

### **Pedagogical implications**

The present study suggests a number of pedagogical implications with regard to collocations. These can be applied as a generic framework or model for teaching collocations to EFL/ESL learners. For example, EFL/ESL teachers could make their students do the following:

1. Identify collocations in L2 texts at the same time as they identify difficult words;
2. Understand that the production of collocations in L2 can be influenced by L1 collocations;
3. Be aware of the limitations of general-purpose dictionaries in terms of dealing with collocations and, therefore, use specialized collocational dictionaries as well;
4. Realize that it is not always the case that there is a word-for-word equivalent between L1 and L2;
5. Understand that when an L2 collocation exists, there might not be much room for creativity. Therefore, creating new collocations can be risky and may result in awkward or unacceptable word associations;
6. Make their own lists of all the collocations they encounter in L2; and,
7. Try to expand their collocational repertoire in L2. One way to achieve this is probably through reading from and listening to a wide variety of L2 texts.

What makes EFL/ESL learners perform appropriately with regard to collocations is their overall collocational competence. A near-perfect knowledge of L2 collocations is a basic requirement for what we may call *collocational performance* in language learning. Collocational competence in L2 is part and parcel of overall language competence. One way to judge language competence is through the learners' collocational performance. Effective collocational performance demands effective collocational competence.

EFL/ESL learners may have a receptive knowledge of a wider range of collocations, which means that they can recognise L2 collocations and recognise their meanings when they listen and read (i.e. the two receptive skills: *listening* and *reading*). However, their productive use of a wide range of collocations could be generally limited (i.e. the two productive skills: *speaking* and *writing*) (Hill, 2000; Lewis, 2000). This is why it is one of the areas that need more attention in research and teaching. The main concern is, therefore, not simply the learners' understanding of the meanings of collocations, but also their ability to use them appropriately in writing and speaking.

## Conclusion

As participation in this study was voluntary, the findings of this piece of research cannot be generalized to all students at the English Language Department, Umm Al-Qura University or all Saudi EFL students. Nevertheless, these observations suggest future directions in research. What specific problems do L2 learners have in producing English *verb + noun* collocations? While some problems could be attributed to the influence of L1, do these problems really lead to misunderstanding? If yes, from whose point-of-view is misunderstanding perceived?

EFL learning requires a whole group of competences. One of these competences is *collocational competence*. It is hoped that this study has raised an interest in collocations for those researchers working in the field of linguistics and language learning. Of special interest to language teaching is how to apply the observations of this particular study in order to improve the teaching of collocation. This study, therefore, recommends trying out the possibility of teaching collocations explicitly to EFL/ESL learners. This possibly could be a useful teaching practice. In addition, and most importantly, more attention should be given to collocations in developing and enhancing language learners' performance in general.

## CORRESPONDENCE

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**Appendix A****Test 1: Blank-filling test of English collocations**

Fill in each blank in the following sentences with the most suitable verb that best collocates with the *noun* (in *italics*).

1. The couple \_\_\_\_\_ *a pact* not to talk about each other.
2. They are \_\_\_\_\_ *the promise* they made before the election.
3. The last time I went anywhere near Peckham Rye, I believe I saw a girl \_\_\_\_\_ *a horse*.
4. Lord John had \_\_\_\_\_ *his sword* and touched his spurs to his horse's flanks.
5. He doesn't like to tell people what to do or \_\_\_\_\_ *orders*.
6. In other words, if a woman asks you to \_\_\_\_\_ *your secrets*, she may really be asking you to tell her that you have no secrets.
7. Hong Kong government is under pressure from liberals who fear that Britain will again \_\_\_\_\_ *a deal* with China.
8. Now, looking back on it, I don't know how we could have \_\_\_\_\_ *a mistake*.
9. In his mind, Robertson had \_\_\_\_\_ *a crime* which was unforgivable.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ *an effort* to keep in touch with your friends, even if it's just a quick phone call.
11. Mr. Bush said the embassy must stay open and stressed that President Saddam was \_\_\_\_\_ *the law* by attempting to force its closure.
12. I can \_\_\_\_\_ *an example*.
13. New Zealand's central bank looks well on track to \_\_\_\_\_ *its goal* of reducing inflation to 0-2% by the end of 1993.
14. She \_\_\_\_\_ *her rage* and humiliation that night, driving him home at the end of the evening.
15. She said she thought she was \_\_\_\_\_ *a favour*.
16. The Kurds cannot \_\_\_\_\_ *a civil war* on the streets of Baghdad.
17. Until then you will have to \_\_\_\_\_ *caution* in all your financial dealings.
18. He wanted to think it out himself, and he didn't want to talk about it until he \_\_\_\_\_ *his decision*.
19. The Supreme Soviet \_\_\_\_\_ *a law* on May 20th.
20. Because if they agree with you, it would be very hard for me to \_\_\_\_\_ *the company*.

**Appendix B****Test 2: The multiple-choice test of English collocations**

Choose the verb that collocates with the *noun* (in *italics*) in the following sentences.

- The couple \_\_\_\_\_ *a pact* not to talk about each other.  
A. performed      B. gave      C. made      D. had
- They are \_\_\_\_\_ *the promise* they made before the election.  
A. ruining      B. breaking      C. demeaning      D. corrupting
- The last time I went anywhere near Peckham Rye, I believe I saw a girl \_\_\_\_\_ *a horse*.  
A. riding      B. driving      C. traveling      D. cruising
- Lord John had \_\_\_\_\_ *his sword* and touched his spurs to his horse's flanks.  
A. hauled      B. dragged      C. towed      D. drawn
- He doesn't like to tell people what to do or \_\_\_\_\_ *orders*.  
A. give      B. make      C. tell      D. say
- In other words, if a woman asks you to \_\_\_\_\_ *your secrets*, she may really be asking you to tell her that you have no secrets.  
A. give      B. say      C. reveal      D. announce
- Hong Kong government is under pressure from liberals who fear that Britain will again \_\_\_\_\_ *a deal* with China.  
A. complete      B. fix      C. have      D. make
- Now, looking back on it, I don't know how we could have \_\_\_\_\_ *a mistake*.  
A. presented      B. made      C. did      D. performed
- In his mind, Robertson had \_\_\_\_\_ *a crime* which was unforgivable.  
A. committed      B. made      C. did      D. performed
- \_\_\_\_\_ *an effort* to keep in touch with your friends, even if it's just a quick phone call.  
A. Use      B. Exercise      C. Employ      D. Make
- Mr. Bush said the embassy must stay open and stressed that President Saddam was \_\_\_\_\_ *the law* by attempting to force its closure.  
A. ignoring      B. violating      C. disregarding      D. disrespecting
- I can \_\_\_\_\_ *an example*.  
A. supply      B. offer      C. give      D. issue
- New Zealand's central bank looks well on track to \_\_\_\_\_ *its goal* of reducing inflation to 0-2% by the end of 1993.  
A. get      B. obtain      C. acquire      D. achieve
- She \_\_\_\_\_ *her rage* and humiliation that night, driving him home at the end of the evening.  
A. suppressed      B. covered      C. prevented      D. ceased
- She said she thought she was \_\_\_\_\_ *a favour*.  
A. presenting      B. giving      C. doing      D. awarding
- The Kurds cannot \_\_\_\_\_ *a civil war* on the streets of Baghdad.  
A. pursue      B. wage      C. make      D. practise
- Until then you will have to \_\_\_\_\_ *caution* in all your financial dealings.  
A. practise      B. exercise      C. perform      D. act

18. He wanted to think it out himself, and he didn't want to talk about it until he \_\_\_\_\_ his *decision*.  
A. made                      B. gave                      C. supplied                      D. provided
19. The Supreme Soviet \_\_\_\_\_ *a law* on May 20th.  
A. launched                      B. formed                      C. created                      D. passed
20. Because if they agree with you, it would be very hard for me to \_\_\_\_\_ *the company*.  
A. control                      B. govern                      C. run                      D. rule