

# Collocation in English and Arabic: A Linguistic and Cultural Analysis

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## Abstract

The present paper examines collocation as being an important lexical relationship between words. It tackles collocational patterns linguistically and culturally in both English and Arabic.

It's worth mentioning here that collocation has often been studied linguistically only ; no due attention has been given to the effect of culture and cultural discrepancies between languages on the translation of collocation. This paper lays the ground for further studies and researches to examine the relation between culture and collocation.

The aim of the present study is to characterize the collocational patterns in English and Arabic and to study the process of translating collocation on two levels: the linguistic level and the cultural one. The linguistic level limits itself to the translation of English collocations into Arabic. The cultural level, on the other hand, highlights the relation between culture and collocation reflected in translation. The examples given are from Arabic into English and vice versa.

## Introduction

There has been a lack in the studies and researches that investigate the phenomenon of collocation in both English and Arabic with reference translation. Collocation represents a significant area of research since the linguistic discrepancies between the characteristics of collocation among languages make this phenomenon a constant problem for the translator. This is due to the difficulty the translator may face in combining certain verbs with certain nouns, certain nouns with other nouns, certain nouns with certain adjectives and so on. Therefore, any false or an unusual collocational pattern may undermine the cohesion and the coherence of a given text; thus making it read unnatural.

The present paper discusses collocations in English and Arabic in its first two parts. The third part of the paper investigates the translation of English collocations into Arabic on the linguistic and cultural levels.

## 1. Collocations in English

### 1.1 The paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations between words

It was De Saussure (Palmer, 1967:67) who first made the distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. The term paradigmatic refers to those relations which accept a linguistic unit to be entered into through contrast or substitution, in a specific environment with other similar units (Ibid). Consider the following example:

The green apple was eaten by the kid.

The red apple was eaten by the kid.

Green and red are in a paradigmatic relation with each other due to the fact that they can be contrasted or substituted.

The term syntagmatic, on the other hand, refers to those relations that a unit contrasts due to its co-occurrence with other similar units (ibid:68). In the above example, both green and red are in a syntagmatic relation with apple.

Collocation is thought of to be of a paradigmatic relation.

### 1.2 The etymology of collocation

Collocation was studied by Greek Stoic philosophers as a linguistic phenomenon in connection with lexical semantics as early as 2,300 years ago (Robins 1967 cited in Brashi, 2005:13). Robins (Ibid) mentions that Greek Stoic philosophers refused the equation of "one word, one meaning" and suggested a significant field of the semantic structure of language. They did believe that "word meanings do not exist according to the collocation in which they are used" (Ibid).

Since that time, there has been a motivation to study the relation of collocation among words as being an important domain of language research (Brashi, 2005:13). But what exactly do we mean by the term 'collocation'? and what are the linguists' views about it? Answers to these questions are presented in the following sections.

### 1.3 The term 'collocation': Definition

Although there is a controversy among linguists about how to exactly define the term collocation (as shall be found out in the following section), collocation can be defined as "the concept of word-co occurrence, where certain words appear predictably next to or within a certain number of words (Sinclair 1991:121).

The above idea concerns both the lexical items (lexical collocations) and grammatical items (colligation) (Ibid). As Carter (1987:60) points out, lexical collocation is "the co-occurrence of nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs, such as strict rules (rather than rigid), and he pricked his finger (rather than pierced or punctured). Colligation, on the other hand, is "the co-occurrence of nouns, verbs or adjectives with prepositions or certain characteristics of grammar, for

instance, a comparative form of an adjective with the word than, or the verb deal with the preposition with" (Ibid).

Despite the above distinction, collocation is merely considered as a lexical relationship between words (Brashi, 2005:13). It is a lexical relationship that is "largely arbitrary and independent of meaning" (Baker, 1992:48).

The term 'collocation' that stands for this lexical relationship was first introduced to the linguistic technical terminology as a purely technical term by Firth (ibid:15). Firth argues that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (Palmer, 1957:76). His famous example concerns the word ass which can occur in the following instances (Firth, 1957, cited in Al-Rawi, 1994:13):

An ass like Bagso might easily do that.

He is an ass.

You silly ass.

Don't be an ass.

For Firth, this collocability of the word ass with a set of other words, is part of the meaning of the word (Palmer, 1957:76). To further prove this idea, he gives the example of dark night as an adjective+noun collocation, asserting that "one of the meanings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*, and one of the meanings of *dark* is its collocability with *night*" (Brashi, 2005:14).

Firth's argument that the collocations of a word are parts of its meaning was criticized by Lyons who, however, later admits 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, 1977:613).

Some linguists such as Halliday and Sinclair (Brashi, 2005:15) agreed with Firth's theory and adopted it, while others such as Mitchell presented a different approach of that of the 'Neo-Firthians' (ibid:17).

Both Halliday and Sinclair (Al-Rawi, 1994:21) did recognize and emphasize the importance of describing the lexicon of a language in accordance with collocations and sets, without undermining the significance of grammatical constraints on co-occurrence. Moreover, they wanted to introduce meaningful, separate statements about lexis. They also revealed that in lexis there are collocations and sets; in grammar there are structures and systems, respectively (Ibid). Halliday mentions that collocation "can be used to generate lexical sets where a set designates a family of lexical items whose membership is up mainly on formal, statistical bases, without reference to meaning or to notions such as semantic fields" (Halliday 1966, cited in Al-Rawi, 1994:18).

Sinclair, on the other hand, defines collocation as 'the concept of word co-occurrence where words appear predictably next to or within a certain number of words from each other' (Sinclair, 1991:122).

It's also worth mentioning that collocation is discussed by Halliday and Hasan as one of five ways for achieving lexical cohesion (McKeown & Radev, 1994:2). In

their book *Cohesion in English* (1976), they describe collocation or ' collocational cohesion' as "a cover term for the cohesion that results from the co-occurrence of lexical items that are in some way or another typically associated with one another, because they tend to occur in similar environments" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:287). They give examples such as:

candle-flame-flicker

hair- comb-curl-wave (Ibid).

Mitchell's approach (1991 cited in Brashi, 2005:19) differs from that of the Neo-Firthians. Considering lexis and grammar as one entity, Mitchell argues for the "oneness of grammar, lexis and meaning", and mentions that collocations need to be described as "lexico-grammatical" (Ibid). He suggests that they have to be studied within grammatical matrices, for instance, adjective+noun: *heavy drinker*, adjective+gerund: *heavy drinking* and verb+adverb: *to drink heavily* (Ibid).

In the same manner, Newmark (1988:212) gives the following classification of collocation in English:

1. Adjective+noun, e.g. *heavy labour*.
2. Noun + noun, e.g. *nerve cell*.
3. Verb + object (which is normally noun that denotes an action), e.g. *pay a visit*.

Newmark (ibid:214) notes that the above are the most common types of collocation since all the three types are centered on the noun which is the second component of these three collocation types in the English language.

In the present paper, Newmark's classification of English collocations is to be adopted.

### 1.4 Collocation and Linguists: A Controversial Issue

Since collocation is not easily linguistically defined, there has been a kind of controversy over its definition. The main issue concerns the distinction between collocations and idioms on one hand, and free word combinations, on the other hand. While some linguists consider idioms as part of collocations, others draw a line between the two.

Smith, Wallace, Sinclair and Pederson (Brashi, 2005:21) among many other linguists, categorize collocations as idioms and argue that no clear distinction can be made between collocations and idioms. Nevertheless, there are many other linguists who make a clear distinction between collocations and idioms (e.g. Mitchell, Bolinger, Shakir & Farghal, Bahns, Fontenelle) (Ibid).

Fontenelle (1991 cited in Brashi, 2005:22) considers that collocations are neither idiomatic expressions nor free combinations. He gives the examples of *bad\addled\rotten+egg*, and *rancid+butter* and argues that all these adjectives can be combined with nouns denoting food items, but they can never be interchanged. As a result, the collocations '*rancid egg*', '*sour butter*' or '*addled milk*' cannot be accepted in English. Fontenelle also gives an example concerning

the idiomatic expression: *to lick somebody's boot* and argues that idiomatic expressions make a single semantic entity, and one cannot derive their meaning from the meanings of the words of which they are made up. Therefore, no actual licking is taking place in the above example neither it is about boots (Ibid).

The present researcher argues for the fact that collocations are not idioms and clear line must be drawn between the two.

## **2. Collocations in Arabic**

As previously discussed, collocation is a lexical relationship between two or more words that often habitually go together and make a common expression whose meaning can be derived from at least one component of the collocational expression. This lexical phenomenon is found in all languages of the world, yet, in different characteristics.

The Arabic language is one of the richest languages of the world in collocations. But unfortunately, this unique phenomenon has not been widely discussed by Arab researchers. However, there have been some attempts by certain Arab linguists to highlight this significant phenomenon in Arabic; and this is to be investigated in the following sections.

### **2.1 The notion of 'collocation' in Arabic**

In spite of the previously mentioned fact that no much attention has been directed toward presenting a systematic study of Arabic collocations, this phenomenon has been viewed on, even though briefly, since the time of the outstanding traditional Arab grammarians mentioned by Al-Rawi (1994:53) such as Al-Jahith (1948), Ibn-Jinni (1952) and Al-Jurjani (1978) (Al-Rawi, 1994:58). To begin with, Al-Jahith recognizes the significance of collocations and the co-occurrence of lexical items with certain lexical items rather than other ones, however, with no regard to any syntactic considerations (Ibid).

Al-Jahith considers that collocation stands of one of the meanings of a certain lexical item, corresponding in this way to Firth's "meaning by collocation". He gives the example of جوع (*hunger*) and mentions that one of its meanings in the Holy Quran is its collocability with الخوف (*fear*) (ibid:59).

The syntactic relationships which hold between Arabic lexical items have also been considered by Ibn-Jinni who highlights the correlation between form and meaning and recognizes the importance of both the syntactic and semantic restrictions imposed on the co-occurrence of a lexical item in a certain context (Ibid).

Being a prominent theorist on rhetoric and poetics, Al-Jurjani also recognizes the significance of syntagmatic relations among lexical items and that of contextual meaning (ibid:60). According to Al-Jurjani (1978), (cited in Al-Rawi, 1994:60), no lexical item can be meaningful in isolation. It only has meaning when it is used in a certain context and when it is entered into sets of

relationships which are made up according to certain linguistic and non-linguistic criteria.

Having examined the traditional Arab grammarians' views on collocation, several attempts made by some modern Arab linguists to study this phenomenon are to be considered in the following section.

## 2.2 Collocation and modern Arab linguists

Modern Arab linguists deal with the concept of collocation from different perspectives and under various headings.

Hassan (1973, cited in Al-Rawi, 1994:61), a significant modern Arab linguist tackles "collocation" under the label التضام (al-tadaam). By التضام he means :

تطلب احدى الكلمتين للآخرى في الاستعمال على صورة تجعل احدهما تستدعي الاخرى فياء النداء مستقلة... والعلاقة بينهما وبين المنادى علاقة تضام.

(Hassan 1973, cited in A-Rawi, 1994:62).

He then classifies التضام (al-tadaam) into two types : التوارد (al-twaarud) and التلازم (al-tlaazum) (Ibid). He gives an example of التوارد (al-tawaarud) when he cites the lexical item صاحب (companion) when collocating with other lexical items to give different meanings as in:

صاحب الدار : its owner

صاحب رسول الله : his companion

صاحب الجلالة : his majesty

صاحب المعالي : the minister

(ibid:62-63)

The term التلازم 'al-talaazum', on the other hand , is exemplified by Hassan according to the following instances (Ibid):

"he wanted it" رغب فيه:طلبه

"he dislikes it" رغب عنه:كرهه

"he requested somebody to do something" رغب اليه:استعانه

The Arab linguist Husamaddin (1985:257) considers collocations which he calls المصاحبة اللغوية (al-musaahabah al-lugawiyah) to be one simple form of idiomatic expressions .He defines collocation as (المصاحبة الاعتيادية لكلمة ما في اللغة بكلمات اخرى (The normal co-occurrence of a given word in a given language with other given words) (Ibid).He classifies Arabic collocations in terms of meaning only (Brashi, 2005:34)and gives many examples such as the following:

ثغاء الغنم : bleating of a sheep

عواء الذئب : howling of a wolf

نعيق الغراب : cawing of a crow

اصطبل الخيل : a horse stable

حظيرة ماشية : a cattle pen

خلية نحل : beehive

عرين اسد : a lion's den

كسرة من الخبز : a piece of bread

فدرة من اللحم : a piece of meat

كتلة من التمر : a piece of a date

The prominent modern Arab linguist Ghazala (1985, cited in Brashi, 2005:38-39) classifies collocations or as he calls 'المتلازمات اللفظية' "al-mutalaazimat al-lafziyyah) into three different categories:

1. التركيب القواعدي للمتلازمات اللفظية (the grammatical patterns of collocations)
2. التركيب اللفظي للمتلازمات اللفظية (the relationship between the constituents of the combination)
3. التركيب الاسلوبي للمتلازمات اللفظية (the stylistic patterns of collocations)

In this paper, only the first category is to be discussed due to the unclearness of the other two categories and due to the fact that some of them are examples of idioms rather than collocations (Brashi, 2005:42).

According to Ghazala (1993a cited in Brashi, 2005:38-39), Arabic collocations fall into twenty different grammatical patterns:

1. noun+adjective , for example, قول سديد ( a right saying)
2. noun+noun (اضافة or annexation), for example شروق الشمس (sun rise)
3. noun+conjunction+noun, for example, الخير والشر (good and evil)
4. adjective+adjective , for example , جائر ظالم ( despotic and oppressive)
5. verb+noun(non-figurative meaning), for example, سمع صوتا (to hear a sound)
6. verb+noun (figurative meaning), for example, لقن درسا ( to teach someone a lesson)
7. verb +verb root (verb echoing), for example, على علوا (to rise high)
8. verb+adverb , for example, بات شبعانا (to sleep with a full stomach)
9. verb+preposition+noun, for example, جهش بالبكاء (to burst into tears or to sob)
- 10.verb+relative pronoun +verb, for example, اعذر من انذر (he who warns is excused)
- 11.verb+conjunction+verb(antonym), for example, اعطى ومنع (to give and prevent)
- 12.time\place adverbial +conjunction+ time\place adverbial, for example, اولاً و اخيراً ( first and last)
- 13.preposition+noun+noun, for example, بمحض الصدفة (by sheer coincidence)
- 14.negative particle+noun+noun+negative particle+noun, for example, لا تقريط ولا افراط (neither excess nor neglect)
- 15.noun+verb , for example , حي يرق (alive and kicking)
- 16.noun+preposition+noun, for example, الكمال لله (God is perfect)
- 17.particle(functioning as a verb)+noun, for example, ليت شعري (would God)
- 18.arbitrary grammatical patterns (oath) , for example, والذي نفسي بيده و (I swear )
- 19.arbitrary grammatical patterns ( swearing\ cursing), for example, عليك اللعنة (curse on you) and,

20. arbitrary grammatical patterns (compliment), for example, سلمت يداك (hank you\ well done).

As Brashi(2005:39-40) suggests, the last three grammatical patterns (18, 19, 20) in Ghazala's grammatical classification of Arabic collocations which he considers as arbitrary grammatical patterns "seem to elide meaning with grammar".

Moreover, some of his grammatical patterns (15, 16) are idioms rather than collocations.

In a book entitled *Collocation in Modern Standard Arabic* (1991), Emery (cited in Devenyi) classifies word combinations into the following four types:

1. Open collocations: combinations of two or more words that co-occur with each other, with no specific relation between them. In other words, the lexical items here are freely recombining. Each lexical item is used in a common literal sense. Examples given by Emery (Devenyi et al.) : انتهت الحرب : war ended , and بدأت الحرب : war begun
2. Restricted collocations:  
Aisenstadt (1979, cited in Brashi, 2005:43) defines this type as " combinations of two or more words used in one of their regular , non-idiomatic meanings, following certain structural patterns , and restricted in their commutability not only by grammatical and semantic valency... but also by usage". Emery (Devenyi et al.) gives the following examples:  
أحرز تقدماً : to make progress  
معركة طاحنة : a damaging battle
3. Bound collocations: these collocations serve as " a bridge category between collocations and idioms " (Cowie, 1981: 228). In this type , one of the lexical items is uniquely selective of the other (Ibid). Examples given by Emery ( 1991, cited in Devenyi et al.) are: أطرق الرأس : to bow head , حرب ضروس : viscous war.
4. Idioms: As Brashi (2005:43) points out , " in contrast to the previous three types , the constituent elements of idioms are opaque , that is, they are used in ' specialized' sense, together forming one single semantic unit"(Emery 1991, cited in Brashi, 2005: 43). Examples (Ibid) are calques like:  
الحرب الباردة : cold war  
حرب النجوم : star war

Of all the three four types, what would be of a special interest to our present study is Emery's second classification , that is, restricted collocations, since it corresponds to Newmark's classification of English collocations and these collocations are the most problematic in translation.

In an attempt to compile a dictionary of collocations in the Arabic language , Hafiz (2002, cited in Brashi, 2005: 44-45) mentions that collocations play a very



significant role in language. He classifies Arabic collocations into twelve different types based on grammatical patterns (Ibid). Hafiz's twelve types (cited in Brashi, 2005:44-45) are as follows:

1. verb + noun, whether the noun is subject , object, or state ( حال ) .  
Examples are : هداً الموج ( the waves subsided ) , ضرب الخيمة ( he pitched the tent ) , استشاط غضبا ( he was inflamed with rage ) respectively.
2. verb + prepositional noun phrase, e.g., استقال من العمل ( he resigned from work )
3. verb + prepositional noun phrase , where the phrase acts as an adverb ,  
e.g., نفذ بشدة ( he precisely implemented )
4. verb + noun phrase, where the noun is in the form of an adverbial-  
condition, e.g. , اتصل هاتفيا ( he made a phone call )
5. verb + conjunction + verb, e.g., طار وحلق ( he flew and soared )
6. noun + noun ( إضافة ) , e.g. , مسرح الاحداث ( scene of events )
7. noun + conjunction + noun , e.g. , عزم واصرار ( intention and insistence )
8. noun + adjective , e.g. , قوة عظمى ( a supreme, mighty or ultimate power )
9. noun + prepositional noun phrase , e.g., في غاية الادب ( extremely polite )
10. noun + preposition, e.g. , مقارنة ب ( in comparison with )
11. adjective + noun , e.g. , حسن الاخلاق ( having high morals )
12. adjective + adverbial phrase , e.g. , مستنكر بشدة ( strongly condemns )

As Brashi ( 2005: 46) suggests, foreign language learners of Arabic and translators would benefit from Hafiz's wide variety of Arabic lexical and grammatical combinations since they make the structure and word combinations of that language more apparent.

### **3. Collocations and Translation**

As previously mentioned in this paper, collocation is a lexical relationship between words, it is a language-specific phenomenon which has certain characteristics that differ from language to another. Moreover, this phenomenon is also affected by the cultural differences between languages. All this eventually casts its shadow over the process of translating collocations; making them a problematic area in translation. The following sections would thus examine the process of translating collocations from English into Arabic in the light of Newmark's classification of English collocations on both the linguistic and the cultural levels.

#### **3.1 Translating English Collocations : The Linguistic Level**

Due to the discrepancies in the linguistic and cultural structures between the SL and the TL involving their different systems, convention and life style, collocation imposes certain problems when rendered from language to another (Al-Rawi, 1994:186).

Translating collocation is centered on the idea of finding the exact TL equivalence. As Catford (1965:50) points out, "translation equivalence occurs when an SL and TL text or item are relatable (or at least some of) the same features of substance. In other words, the problems of translating collocations result from the translator's failure to select the equivalent TL lexical item which is supposed to co-occur with other lexical items, resulting ultimately in producing unnatural expression (Al-Rawi, 1994:192). That is why, the translator's knowledge of collocations is an important requirement for 'the overall mastery of the target language' (Brashi, 2005:3). To illustrate this point, Al-Brash (ibid: 3-4) gives an example from Bronte's (1847) novel *Jane Eyre* of translating an English adjective + noun collocation into Arabic:

There was a **large public** eager to read good novels.

The English underlined collocation was translated into Arabic by Abdulkhalik (1994) as follows:

جمهور واسع

Although **جمهور واسع** is not completely rejected in Arabic, it is better to choose an exact Arabic equivalence that collocates with public.

As Brashi (Ibid) suggests, the Arabic noun **جمهور** (public) usually collocates with the adjective **عريض** (wide).

From the above example, we can see that the biggest problem for translators is to be aware of the proper equivalent in the target language, which is sometimes not available in general-purpose bilingual dictionaries (ibid:65).

As Newmark (1988:213) mentions:

Translation is sometimes a continual struggle to find appropriate collocations, a process of connecting up appropriate nouns with verbs and verbs with nouns, and, in the second instance, collocating appropriate adjectives to the nouns, and adverbs or adverbial groups to the verbs; in the third instance, collocating appropriate connectives or conjunctions.

He goes on to stress the significance of collocations by describing them as "nerves" of a text: "if grammar is the bones of a text, collocations are the nerves, more subtle and multiple and specific in denoting meaning; and lexis is the flesh" (Ibid).

As Al-Rawi (1994:187) argues, to establish collocational equivalence across two different languages is often 'far-fetched and not feasible'. However, he suggests that one of the plausible ways to approach collocations in translation is to examine the collocational ranges of any lexical item in the TL that are acceptable and potential since "each item in a language has its peculiar ranges and its sets of collocates which usually limit its meaningful usages" (Ibid).

Consider the following examples given by Husamaddin (1985:258)

To cut hair - قص الشعر

To cut one's nose - جدد أنفه

To cut one's ear	-	حلم اذنه
To cut one's lip	-	شرم شفته
To cut one's eyelid	-	شتر جفنه
To cut one's hand	-	جذم يده

In these examples, the English verb that collocates with the process of cutting different parts of the body is simply the verb 'cut'. However, the case is completely different in Arabic where there is a range of different verbs that collocate with each part of the body : حلم + اذن ، جذم + يد ، etc.

The following sections will further investigate the methods for translating English collocations into Arabic. As previously mentioned, this would be done according to Newmark's classifications of English collocations. However, the study will concentrate on Newmark's second and third categories, i.e, verb+object and adjective+noun categories. The first category, i.e, noun +noun ,shall be excluded due to the fact that this category has its equivalent in Arabic; all that differs is the grammatical structure. (Ghazala 1995 cited in Brashi, 2005:66). Consider the following examples (Ibid):

State university : جامعة حكومية

n. n. adj. n.

gas cylinder : اسطوانة غاز

n. n. n. n.

### 3.1.1 Translating English verb plus object collocations into Arabic

The English –Arabic translation of verb plus object collocations would be an easy and less problematic task when they have identical equivalents in Arabic (Ghazala 1995, cited in Brashi, 2005:67). These collocations have an equivalent Arabic structure, i.e., verb plus object. The following examples are less problematic in translation because they have identical translation equivalents in Arabic:

To solve an equation: يحل معادلة

To write a message: يكتب رسالة

To attend a lecture: يحضر محاضرة

However, to translate English verb plus object collocations can be problematic when identical equivalents do not exist in both languages (Ibid). Consider the following examples mentioned by Ghazala (Ibid):

To tell the truth: يقول الحقيقة (lit. to say the truth)

To teach a lesson: لقن درسا (lit. to dictate a lesson)

The same can be said to be true of the following examples:

To break the law: يخترق القانون (lit. to penetrate law)

To work miracles: يجترح المعجزات (lit. to achieve miracles)

As can be found out from these examples, the translator should strive to find the correct Arabic equivalent for each English collocation since any literal translation would result in unusual false collocation that would eventually undermine the cohesion of the translated text and "strike the reader as unnatural" (Hatim & Mason, 1990:204).

It's worth mentioning that it is not necessarily a rule that a collocation in the source language must be translated into a collocation in the target language. The SL collocation can be translated into either verb plus object collocation or merely into a single verb (Brashi, 2005:70):

To tell a lie	:	كذب
To pay a visit	:	قام بزيارة او زار
To take an initiative:		بادر

### **3.1.2 Translating English adjective plus noun Collocations into Arabic**

According to Al-Rajihi (1988, cited in Brashi, 2005:71), "an adjective that follows a noun in Arabic is called *نعت حقيقي* (a real adjective). Although its grammatical structure differs from that of the English adjective+noun collocation, some of English collocations of this type may be translated into identical Arabic collocations (Ghazala, cited in Brashi, 2005:72). The following examples given by Ghazala (Ibid) illustrate this point:

A smashing victory: انتصار ساحق (lit. a smashing victory)

Straying sheep : غنم قاصية (lit. straying sheep)

Black market : سوق سوداء (lit. black market)

All these examples contain English adjective+noun collocations that have identical Arabic equivalents. That's why, they do not cause problems in translation. However, those which do not have identical Arabic equivalents are said to be problematic (Ibid). Consider the following examples:

Bad need: حاجة ماسة (lit. necessary need)

Busy day: يوم حافل (lit. celebrating day)

In the above examples, the English adjective+noun collocations do not have identical Arabic equivalents and thus, cannot be translated literally.

Brashi (2005:73) suggests that there is another way to translate English adjective+noun collocations into Arabic by using "an equivalent collocation with a quite similar grammatical structure, i.e., an adjective +noun structure in Arabic". He further argues that Arabic adjectives usually follow the nouns they modify. As Al-Rajihi (cited in Brashi, 2005:74) points out, the adjective that comes before the noun it modifies is called "نعت سببي" a causative adjective". Brashi (Ibid) gives the example of the English collocation *rich imagination* (adjective+noun.) which can be translated into Arabic by either : خيال واسع (noun.+adjective) or by واسع الخيال (adjective+noun). English adjective plus noun collocations that have identical Arabic equivalents are not problematic in translation.

### 3.2 Translating Collocations in English and Arabic: The Cultural Level

Culture is defined by Fargal and Shunnaq (1999:122) as " a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals , laws, customs, ecology and habits, among other things acquired by a member of a society."

They further argue (Ibid) that word collocations in any language of the world usually associate with its culture. The collocational ranges of many Arabic words may not have English equivalents due to the discrepancies in the cultural system of both languages. Fargal and Shunnaq (1999:122-123) cite some examples of collocations that are translated into one Arabic lexical item due to the cultural discrepancies in the two languages. Two examples are cited here:

قضاء وقدر : fate

قسمة ونصيب : destiny

Al-Rawi (1994: 3), on the other hand, argues that some difficulties could arise from the socio-cultural differences between the two languages under translation. According to Al-Rawi (Ibid) both source Arabic and source English have collocations that may be used to make the cultural, social political or economic life peculiar to a speech community. He considers the religious field and mentions that in Arabic ,we have the collocations صلاة الجمعة (lit.Friday prayer), while in English there is the collocation of *Sunday Mass* \Service(Ibid). He argues that these collocations are completely different and this difference is " due to the differences in the beliefs and religious background of both Muslims and Christians"(Ibid).

Baker (1992: 49) gives an interesting English example of verb plus object collocation and its equivalent in Arabic collocation:

To deliver a baby: يولد امرأة (lit. to deliver a woman)

Baker mentions that English prefers to focus on the baby in the process of childbirth; whereas Arabic focuses on the woman. She goes on to explain that to speak of delivering a woman would be unacceptable in modern English (Ibid). Baker argues that this example suggests that differences in collocational patterns among languages "are not just a matter of using a different verb that collocates with a given noun. The differences are rather involved in the different ways of describing an event".

This proves how culture affects the way a certain lexical item collocates with another across languages.

As Haliel (1990:35) argues, translating collocational patterns can really be problematic and further suggests that the biggest problem for any translator is "to know the proper equivalent in the target language, which may not always be available in general-purpose bilingual dictionaries" (Ibid).

### Conclusions

Throughout the process of writing this paper, a number of findings can be concluded. The most important of which can be summed up in the following points:

1. Collocation is a habitual lexical relationship between words that dictate the co-occurrence of certain lexical items with each others.
2. Although collocation is a universal phenomenon, its features, structure, patterns and meanings differ from one language to another.
3. Some linguists consider idioms as part of collocations, others do not. Collocations differ from idioms. A collocation is the co-occurrence of lexical items whose meanings can be deduced from the meaning of their constituents. An idiom, on the other hand, is a word combination whose meaning cannot be determined from the meaning of its part. Thus, *heavy smoker* (مدخن مفرط) is an example of collocation; whereas *alive and kicking* (حي يرزق) is an example of an idiom.
4. Collocation as a linguistic phenomenon has been recognized by traditional and modern Arab linguists and grammarians; however, they did not put a systematic methodology for studying collocation.
5. Because of the discrepancies between the characteristics of collocation among languages, some SL collocational sets do not have equivalent translation sets in the TL. Therefore; they become problematic and difficult for the translator to translate.
6. The translator should strive to identify the collocative words in the ST and to know their ranges in the TT so that he can render them into acceptable and natural TL collocations.
7. Although collocation is a language-specific phenomenon, it is subject to the influence of cultural differences between any two languages.

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### الخلاصة

يلقي البحث الحالي الضوء على الترادف اللفظي كونه علاقة معجمية مهمة تربط بين الكلمات. ويتناول البحث أنماط المترادفات اللفظية لغويا وثقافيا في اللغتين الانجليزية والعربية. وتجدر الإشارة هنا الى ان الترادف اللفظي لم يدرس الا لغويا ، اذ لم يحظ التأثير الذي تلقية الثقافة والاختلافات الثقافية بين اللغات على ترجمة الترادف اللفظي باهتمام كبير. لذا يمهّد هذا البحث الطريق امام مزيد من الدراسات والابحاث التي تفحص العلاقة بين الثقافة والترادف اللفظي.

ويهدف البحث الحالي الى تشخيص انماط المترادفات اللفظية في الانجليزية والعربية ودراسة عملية ترجمة الترادف اللفظي على مستويين: المستوى اللغوي والمستوى الثقافي. ويقتصر المستوى اللغوي على ترجمة المترادفات اللفظية من اللغة الانجليزية الى اللغة العربية. في حين يسلط المستوى الثقافي الضوء على العلاقة بين الثقافة والترادف اللفظي في عملية الترجمة ضمن امثلة متنوعة من العربية الى الانجليزية وبالعكس.