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Students' Difficulties in English- Arabic

Translation of Collocations

Case Study: Third Year Students of English

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English (Applied Language Studies)

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Dedication

I offer this work to my parents first, thanks to their encouragement and sustain.

To my brothers and sisters: Abdelghani, Houssef eddine, Karima and Samiha.

To my uncles, aunts and all my cousins especially Fatima, Souad and Massika.

To all my friends and classmates especially Amina, Mina, Chahra and Fatima.

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Thanks for all my teachers.

Abstract

Collocations present specific problems in translation. They are particularly difficult for foreign learners of a language. This may be ascribed to the relative difficulty in predicting the constituent elements of a collocation, the considerable variation in collocability across languages and the lack of adequate resources on collocation. The purpose of this research is to examine whether students' difficulties in translating collocations are the result of their unfamiliarity with English language and culture. In order to conduct this research, two tests are carried out. The first test is a translation task that involves ten English contextualized collocations of different types. The second test is a multiple-choice task. This test was administered to 30 students of English. The results revealed that the participants' performance in the test was considerably low. They show evidence of students' unfamiliarity with English collocations which is a reflection of their inability to master the English language and their ignorance of its culture. This can explain their failure to translate them correctly. The results have also given evidence of the students' extensive transfer from their first language. This transfer is often negative and leads them to errors. In the light of the results, it seems necessary for students to improve their collocational competence. Similarly, teachers should draw the students' attention to the complexity of translating collocations in order to increase their awareness of this phenomenon and therefore to overcome the difficulties they face in translating collocations.

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Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

The translation of collocations is an ever-lasting struggle for learners of English to match the proper noun with the proper verb or adjective. The problem is that language is not made up of a large number of words that can be used together in free variation; words have a certain tolerance of compatibility. Like individual words, collocational patterns carry meaning and can be culture-specific; this in addition to their largely arbitrary nature, gives rise to numerous problems in translation.

As a student at the Department of English, I observed that Algerian learners of English encounter serious problems in translating collocation sequences from English into Arabic. Therefore, it is important to investigate whether these problems in translating English collocations are the result of their unfamiliarity with English language and culture.

2. Aim of the Research

The objective of this research is to shed some light on the most significant areas of difficulty that 3rd year students of English face when translating collocations from English into Arabic. This research aims also at checking students' familiarity or unfamiliarity with English collocations and its influence on these difficulties. This study aims also at attracting the learners' attention to the complexity which implicates the translation of collocations and therefore to help them to overcome these difficulties

3. Research Questions

1. Do students translate collocations as ready-made combinations or as free combinations, i.e. do they translate collocations on phrase basis or on word for word basis?

2. Are students familiar or not with English collocations?
3. Are students' difficulties in translating collocations due to their unfamiliarity with English language and culture?
4. Does interference from the students' first language lead them to make mistakes?

4. Hypothesis

To fulfill the aim of the research the following hypothesis is elaborated:

If students are unfamiliar with English language and culture, then they will face difficulties in translating collocations from English into Arabic.

5. Research Methodology

Because this study investigates problems and their causes, the research is an analytical one. In order to conduct this research, a set of collocations are selected to be translated by subjects of the study in addition to a multiple-choice test. The mistakes made by subjects are identified and analyzed. The subjects of this study are selected randomly from third year students of English at the University of Mentouri, Constantine.

6. Structure of the Study

This work is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is a literature review on translation and collocations. The second chapter is a practical one that includes two tasks given to third year students of English. The first task is a translation task and the second one is a multiple-choice task.

CHAPTER ONE

Collocations and Translation

Introduction

The translation of collocations is difficult for non-native speakers of a language. Differences in the collocational patterning of the source and target languages create potential pitfalls and can pose various problems in translation. The difficulty for the learner is not to recognize a source language collocation but to find an acceptable target language equivalent.

In this chapter, a brief definition of translation and the main problems that make the translator's task difficult is pointed out. Then different definitions of collocations are given, their types, connotative meaning, and their main problems in translation are also presented.

1.1. TRANSLATION

1.1.1. Definition

There is no general agreement on the definition of translation, but basically, to translate is to transfer a SL text into a corresponding TL text. So, in the process of translating, two languages are involved, the SL or the language of departure and the TL which is the language of arrival or the language which is being translated into.

In recent researches that are related to translation, many definitions have been given on what a translation is and what happens in the translating task. Catford, for example defines translation as the "replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" (1965:20). From this definition, it is understood that translation is the attempt to replace a message or statement in one language by the same message or statement in another language (T L)

In his turn, Ghazala defines translation as follows: "Translation is generally used to refer to all the processes and methods used to convey the meaning of the SL into the TL" (1995:1). So, for Ghazala the main aim of translation is to transmit the meaning of the SL into the TL. In addition, meaning is not the result of lexemes, but it is a mixture of language components which are grammar, vocabulary, style and phonology.

1.1.2. Translation Problems

The translator most probably faces serious problems in translating. There could be a loss of meaning due to a number of factors such as social and cultural differences, and lexical and grammatical invarieties of two different languages. These factors make the translation task difficult.

1.1.2.1. Cultural Problems in English – Arabic Translation

According to Rubel and Rosman, "Translation is central to write about culture, that all cultures are different, and that cultural translation is difficult if not impossible task, " (2003: 8). Translation is viewed as a cultural practice. Therefore, we can argue that the translation difficulties inherent in it are due very largely to the linguistic differences between the SL and culture and that of the TL and culture. The more differences between the SL culture and TL culture, the more difficulties in translation. In the case of English and Arabic languages, it should be clear that the problems in the English Arabic translation stem from the fact that they have different cultures; English culture is strictly different from the Arabic one because they are coming from different origins. While English belongs to the Indio European language family group, Arabic pertains to a group of Semitic language family.

Each language contains elements which are derived from its culture (such as greeting, fixed expressions...). Those cultural elements are considered the most difficult items in translation.

According to Shuttelmortls and Cowie (1997:34), "It is well known that translating words denoting elements of the source culture present particularly several problems for the translator since their cultural significance in SL can never be fully reproduced in TL ". For example, the Arabic word "دقلة" (a kind of dates) has no total equivalent in English, because it is a part of the Arab culture but not the English one. English people do not distinguish between different kinds of dates, thus they refer to any kind as only "date". Another example is the expression "fine" which is translated as "الحمد لله" in Arabic and which literally means "praise to God". They are not totally equivalent because the first one contains a religious implication, while the last one does not. Therefore, an awareness of such issues can at times make it more appropriate to think of translation as a process which occurs between cultures rather than simply between languages.

1.1.2.2. Lexical Problems of English Arabic Translation

According to Ghazala, "the greatest numbers of problems posed to the students of translation are the lexical problems" (1995:80). Students generally give the prime importance to words in translation; more dangerously, they understand translation as translation of individual words, and thus, they make mistakes.

1.1.2.2.1 Literal Translation

There are different kinds of literal translation, but Catford argues that literal translation takes word for word translation as its starting point (1955: 25).

A. Word for Word Literal Translation

Each individual word is translated into an equivalent word in Arabic and the word order is the same as in English. For example, "Stop beating around the bush" would be translated into

"أوقف الضرب حول الشجيرة". Ghazala (1995:85) criticizes this kind of translation to the point that he thinks that literal translation is dangerous and destroys the meaning. He says: "The problem for students is that they think that literal translation is applicable to everything in language, this makes them commit many mistakes" (ibid.).

B. One to One Literal Translation

Each SL word or phrase is translated into an identical word or phrase in the TL. That is, an idiom would be translated into an idiom, an adjective into an adjective, a collocation into a collocation. For example, "He is a young man. He is a kind hearted" would be translated "هو" "يكون شابا. هو يكون طيب القلب". This method is similar to the first one, in that it insists on having the same word order and having the same type and number of words. However, it is more acceptable and better than the first one since it takes context into consideration and translates special and metaphorical SL words and phrases into special words and phrases.

C. Literal Translation of Meaning (Direct Translation)

It is the translation of meaning in context. It takes into consideration the grammar and the word order of the TL. Metaphorical and special uses of language are also accounted for in the TL. For example, "to beat around the bush" would be translated into 'يلف و يدور' (ibid.). Ghazala considers the literal translation of meaning the best method of literal translation and the most acceptable one. Hence, it is recommended for students.

1.1.2.2.2. Synonymy

Two or more words which have very closely related meaning are called synonyms. It can however be maintained that there are no "total synonyms" (Palmer, 1976:59). Thus, two words can often substitute for each other in sentences. However, sometimes one word is

appropriate in a sentence, but its synonym would be odd. For example, *hot* may be translated into $\dot{U}\ddot{K}$, $h\dot{U}$ but *hot welcome* can be translated only into $\dot{U}\ddot{K}$ $\ddot{U}K\ddot{u}$ and $h\dot{U}$ $\ddot{U}K\ddot{u}$ is odd. Thus, synonymy may create many problems for students in translation because they think that any two synonyms can be substituted interchangeably in all environments.

1.1.2.2.3. Polysemy

Polysemy is the case where the same word may have a set of different meanings; such a word is polysemic. A polysemic word may create many problems in translation, because it is only the surrounding words or the context that determines the intended meaning. For example, the polysemic word *run* may be translated in many different words in Arabic as \dot{Y} , $\Theta\alpha$, each meaning depends on the context.

1.1.2.2.4. Idioms

An idiom is a combination of words in which the meaning is opaque, i.e., it is not related to the meaning of the individual words. Idioms pose many difficulties in translation because they are culture-specific and differ from language to language and from culture to culture. For example to *kick the bucket* equals $\varepsilon\dot{U}$.

1.1.2.2.5. Collocations

Collocations are two or more words that often co-occur in different environments. Collocations create many difficulties in translation because the meaning of the word changes when it combines with other words. Thus, they cannot be translated on word for word basis.

So, lexical problems of translation are therefore critical to any SL and TL text. Without solving them, we cannot translate effectively. However, they are not enough to cover all the important problems of translation.

1.2. COLLOCATIONS

1.2.1. Definition

There are actually different definitions of the notion of collocation, however all linguists agree that a collocation is an expression consisting of two or more words that usually occur together in an arbitrary way. The British linguist Firth is often quoted as one of the earliest who dealt with the collocational phenomenon. According to Palmer (1976: 94), Firth argued, "You shall know a word by the company it keeps". Firth gives an illustrative example of the word 'night' where one of its meanings allows its collocability with 'dark'. In an article of modes of meaning published back in 1951, Firth introduces his classical definition of collocation as "the company words keep together". (cited in Zughoul, 2001:02). However, for Firth, this keeping company, which he called collocations, was merely a part of the meaning of the word. In his turn, Ghazala (1995:108) defines collocation as "a combination of two or more words that always occur together consistently in different contexts in language". So, Firth and Ghazala emphasize the importance of context of surrounding words for the collocation to be understood. To illustrate this point, Manning and Schutz (1999:142) use Halliday's example of "strong tea" vs. "powerful tea". The words "powerful" and "strong" are merely synonyms, but it is a convention in English to speak about "strong tea" not "powerful tea", although any speaker of English would also understand the latter unconventional expression.

A collocation occurs more often by chance, its components co-occur naturally. According to Baker (1992: 47), "a collocation is a systematically arbitrary restriction which does not follow logically from the prepositional meaning of a word". For example, one must learn that English people "toast bread" and not "grill it" even if there is no big difference in their ways of exposure to fierce heat (Armstrong, 2005:34).

Using a word naturally conditions learning its collocates or other words that often co-occur with it (McCarthy, 2005: 12). For example, if someone wants to learn the word "heavy" he needs to know that some of its collocates are "smoker", "drinker", "traffic",etc, and that these collocates can be used with adjectives like "strong" or "big". Moreover, the meaning of the word changes when it combines with other words. The word 'heavy' means "weighing a lot", but when it is combined with "smoker" it means 'a person who smokes a lot'.

Furthermore, collocational patterning is different from one language to another. For example, the word "strong" in English and "قوي" in Arabic collocate with the same equivalent in some combinations as in "strong man" "رجل قوي", "strong influence" "تأثير قوي". However, they differ in other combinations as "strong tea"; one cannot say "شاي قوي" in Arabic but "شاي مركز" (Mehdi Ali, 2008:30).

Finally, it is very important to mention that not all combinations are collocations. According to Maning and Schutz (1999:173), the best way to distinguish between a collocation and a free combination is to translate it into another language; if the literal translation or word for word translation does not work, then this is evidence that this is a collocation. For example "to pay a visit" is a collocation because one cannot say in Arabic "يدفع بزيارة" but "يقوم بزيارة" or simply "يزور", so 'to pay a visit' is a collocation in English.

1.2.2. Collocational Meaning

According to (Leech, 1974:20), collocation meaning "consists of the associations of a word acquired on an account of the meaning of words which tend to occur in its environment". Leech illustrates this point by the words 'pretty' and 'handsome' and the collocates of each. These words share the common grounds of 'good looking' but they are differentiated by the range of nouns with which they are likely to co-occur. Usually, words do not exist in isolation but in combinations. A word gains different meanings when it collocates with other words. As Baker states, "what we do when we are asked to give account of the meaning of a word in

isolation is to contextualize it in its most typical collocations rather than the rarer ones" (1992: 53). This means that the word's meaning changes as its collocates change. Baker illustrated this point by the adjective "dry" which means in isolation "free from water" and it keeps this meaning when it collocates with things such as "clothes, river, weather.."; however, in many other combinations, dry does not mean "free from water" as in:

- 1- Dry cow: a cow that does not yield milk.
- 2- Dry bread: bread served alone without butter or jam.
- 3- Dry book: a book that is boring or uninteresting.
- 4- Dry voice: cold voice, in the sense it does not express emotion.
- 5- Dry wine: wine without sugar.
- 6- Dry humour: pretending to be serious, ironic

From this example, it is noticed that the meaning of "dry" depends largely on its pattern of collocation. Moreover, each example has a unique meaning which is totally different from the core meaning of 'dry', and which is different from other meanings. According to Armstrong (2005:98), "In many cases, success in finding the right collocation seems simply to depend on an adequate range of reading". That is to say, students need to know as many collocational meanings as possible, because knowing the core meaning of the lexical item is not sufficient and may lead them to mistranslate the collocation in TL since not all their meanings are given in the dictionary.

Moreover, words may have more specific meanings in particular collocations. Thus, one can speak of 'abnormal' or 'exceptional weather' if there is snow in summer, but an 'exceptional child' is not an 'abnormal child'. An 'exceptional child' is a very good child who has more capacities than usual, whereas an 'abnormal child' refers to a child who has a defect or less capacities than usual (Palmer, 1976: 96).

Furthermore, the meaning of a collocation cannot be predicted from the meaning of its constituents. According to Manning and Schutz (1999:141), “collocations are not fully compositional because their meanings cannot be predicted from the meaning of their parts; there is always a meaning added to the combination”. This can be illustrated in the following example:

Strong (adj.): means not easily broken or injured.

Tea (n): A drink made by powering boiling water on the tealeaves.

Strong tea: it is a kind of tea having a lot of tea in it.

So in the collocation "strong tea", the adjective "strong" has acquired the meaning which is closely related, but slightly different from the core meaning (not easily broken or injure). This example illustrates the fact that words having different meanings combine together and form words having totally different meanings.

1.2.3. Collocational Range

The collocation range is the set of all possible words that may collocate with a given lexical item. As Baker states it, " range refers to the set of collocates which are typically associated with the word in question "(1992; 49). Some words have a much broader collocational range than others. The word "run" for example has a wide collocational range. It may collocate with company, business, river, water, car, stockings, tights, nose, wild, debt, bill and colour, while other words have a rather limited collocational range. The English word "shrug" for example occurs only with" shoulders" and does not occur with other words (Baker, 1992; 50).

In translation, translators must be aware of the collocational range of the word concerned both in SL and TL because a lexical item and its equivalent in TL may have different collocates and therefore different meanings. For example, in English it may be denoted to "ثقب الإبرة" as "the eye of needle", whereas Arabic uses another word "سم" for the same goal. On the other hand, the collocational range of the word "عين" in Arabic is wide and has different meanings,

which do not exist in English. It can be said in Arabic "هو بعينه", "It is none other than he", "السبب عينه" "for the same reason", "فرض عين", "individual duty", "عيون الشعر", "gems of poetry", "مجلس الأعيان", "senate or house of lords"...etc (Mehdi Ali, 2008:32). So, translators must avoid literal translation in such cases because they may end in something unnatural and meaningless as if they translate "هو بعينه" into "he is by his eye" which makes no sense for native speakers of English. This is due to the fact that "different languages have different collocational ranges, what collocates in one language does not necessarily collocate in another" (Zughoul, 1991:12).

The collocational range may be influenced by two main factors. The first is its degree of specificity; the more general the word, the broader is the collocational range, the more specific, the more limited is the collocational range (Baker, 1992: 50). For example, the verb "cook" has much broader collocational range than any of its hyponyms as "boil, simmer, fry, toast, bake, and grill". People cook eggs, potatoes, vegetables, and meat, but they can only bake bread. So, "cook" has a broader collocational range than "bake" because "cook" is more general than "bake".

The second factor that determines the collocational range is the number of senses the word has. Most words have more than one sense (polysemous words), and each sense collocates with different words. For example the verb "break" in its sense of "causing something to be damaged and separated" collocates with concrete objects such as glass, plate, window... etc. In its sense of interrupting something, it collocates with abstract ones as silence, journey, and it collocates with other words such as "law", in its sense of doing something against the rules. So the more senses the word has, the more its collocational range is wider.

The collocational ranges are not fixed since people create new collocations all the time. That is to say, there is no impossible collocation. As Baker maintains: "New and unusual

combinations of words occur frequently and we do not necessarily dismiss them as unacceptable" (1992:51).

1.2.4 .Collocational Patterning across Languages

Word patterns differ from one language to another. Thus, the SL may express an idea in one lexical item, while the TL may express the same idea in two or three lexical items. Therefore, total equivalence in the number of words that form a collocation between the SL and TL does not exist. As Baker states (1992: 68), "A language may express a given meaning by means of a single word, another may express it by means of transparent fixed expression and the third may express it by means of idiom". Therefore, the same lexical item may be expressed differently from one language to another because of difference of their collocational patterning. For example, the English collocation "common law marriage" consists of three words, while its equivalent in Arabic "الزواج العرفي" consists of only two lexical items. Similarly, the collocation "to shake hands" consists of two words, while its equivalent in Arabic "يصافح" is only one word. Arabs do not usually say "يصافح بالأيدي" but only "يصافح" since this word already expresses the use of hands and people have a hand-shake "مصافحة" only by hands (Ghazala, 1995:08). This example illustrates quite clearly the difference in combinations patterns across the two languages.

Furthermore, not only a concept may be expressed differently in TL, it may not exist at all in TL as well. Thus, not all SL collocations can be rendered as TL collocations. For example, the collocation "it rains cats and dogs"; its equivalent in Arabic is "تمطر السماء بغزارة" but not "تمطر السماء كلابا و قططا" because it does not exist at all in Arabic (Ghazala,1993:28). Therefore, students should not insist on translating any SL collocation into TL collocation as well as not insisting on having the same number of words of the SL collocation because they may end in something wrong or unnatural in TL.

1.2.5. The Importance of Collocations in Language

Collocations play a vital role in language. They are its beautiful part, in addition to their role in the coherence of the structure of language (Ghazala, 1995:130). According to Manning and Schutz(1999:142), collocations are important for a number of expressions, but the most important role of collocations is the generation of natural language. Thus, people make sure that their output sound natural and try to avoid mistakes such as "powerful tea" or "take a decision" because they sound unnatural for native speakers of English. Oxford Collocations Dictionary maintains: "Collocations is the way words combine in a language to produce natural sounding speech and writing" (2002:7). For example, "Smoking is strictly forbidden" is more natural than "Smoking is strongly forbidden". So, collocations give the most natural way of saying something. Furthermore, collocations give an alternative of saying something that may be more expressive or precise. For example, instead of repeating, "it was very cold and very dark " one can say, "It was bitterly cold and pitch dark" (McCarthy, 2005:6).

Collocations have many functions. One function is noted in Oxford Collocations Dictionary as follows: "Language that is collocational rich is more precise. The precise meaning in any context is determined by the context, by the words that surround and combine with the core word, by collocations" (2002:9). So, collocations make language more precise, rich and appealing.

Another function of collocations is that with them people are able to talk about any subject and communicate effectively. Also knowing which nouns are used with which verbs, which adjectives are used with which nouns improves one's linguistic competence (Saricas, 2006:36). For example, instead of saying "big meal", it is better to say "substantial meal", and instead of saying "poverty causes crime" one should say, "poverty breeds crime" (McCarthy 2005:03).

In the case of word sense disambiguation, collocations help to distinguish between different senses of polysemous words. This is because a polysemous word has many senses, but it has only one sense in a given collocation (Seratan, 2009:1). For example, the polysemous word "run", which has many senses, has only one sense in the collocation to "run a company" which is "to manage it". According to Seratan, " Collocational knowledge is crucial for ensuring native like selection, i.e., the choice of appropriate or preferred way to convey a given meaning" (2009:1). That is to say, knowing the language vocabulary is important, but it is not sufficient to speak a native like language.

1.2.6. Types of Collocations

Collocations fall into two major categories: grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. Bahn (1933:57).

1.2.6.1. Grammatical Collocations

According to (Bahn, 1993:57), "(usually) consist of a noun, an adjective or a verb, plus a preposition or a grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause".

- 1- Noun + preposition: a play on (words): (الألفاظ) ب (التلاعب)
- 2- Preposition + noun: by surprise (على حين غرة), at the example (of) على حساب
- 3- Adjective + preposition: afraid of (خائف من), contrary to على عكس
- 4- Verb + preposition: wait for (somebody) (ينتظر), call at (على) ينادي

1.2.6.2. Lexical Collocations

According to Benson (1985:62) "lexical collocations contain no subordinate element, they consist of two lexical components". Unlike grammatical collocations, lexical collocations do

not consist of a preposition, an infinitive or a clause; they are combinations of two lexical items (noun + adjective, adjective + noun, verb + adverb... etc) Bahn (1993; 57).

- 1- Verb + noun: withdraw an offer, pass a law
- 2- Adjective + noun: black market, idle talk
- 3- Noun + verb: wolves howl , bell ring:
- 4- Adjective + adjective: closely acquainted.
- 5- Verb + adverb: apologize humbly
- 6- Adverb + adjective: deeply absorbed

The main characteristics of lexical collocations are that their meanings generally reflect the meaning of their lexical components. Also, the sequences of lexical items often co occur in an arbitrary way, i.e., native speakers are not aware of them, for example when native speakers say a "murder" , the word "commit" will come to their mind readily (Wu,1996:464)

1.2.7. Collocations and Register

According to Amstrong (2005:73), "Register refers to the dimension of linguistic variation that responds to subject matter, in other words, the technical vocabulary or jargon". That is to say, register is the language appropriate to a field of activity. The more register is specific, the more it seems unfamiliar for a non-specialist.

Register specific collocations, according to Baker (1992:52), "are not simply the set of terms that go with a discipline, they extend far beyond the list of terms that one normally finds in specialized dictionaries and glossaries". Baker illustrated this point by the collocations "biased errors" and "tolerable errors" which seem untypical to someone who is not familiar with the statistics, though they are very common in the statistics register. McCarthy (2005:11) agrees with Baker and says: "often, collocations rather than individual words suggest a

particular register". That is to say, there are collocations that are specific to each domain of science and technology, for example:

1. Medicine: general anesthetic "التخدير العام", forensic medicine "الطب الشرعي".
2. Economy: hard currency "عملة صعبة", black market "سوق سوداء"
3. Computer: essay bank "بنك المعلومات", data processing "معالجة المعلومات"
4. Physics and chemistry: specific gravity "الوزن النوعي", organic chemistry: "كيمياء عضوية"
5. Law: death sentence "حكم بالإعدام", attorney general "قاضي القضاة".

Some of them can be translated literally as "black market" "سوق سوداء" but most of them cannot. Therefore, the translator must preserve them in order not to get an ironic output of translation such as if he translates "hard currency" into "عملة قاسية". Ghazala (1993:39).

1.2.8. Collocations and Culture

1.2.8.1. Culture Specific Collocations

Baker (1992:59) defines culture - specific collocations as "collocations that reflect the cultural setting in which they occur". Culture-specific collocations may denote a concrete concept that bears some cultural specificity which may carry a connotative meaning. "ارتدت الحجاب" is a culture - specific collocation which denotes a kind of clothes worn by Muslim women; it has a cultural and religious background. So, it has no total equivalent in English; although it can be referred to 'الحجاب' as 'veil' or 'scarf', it does not convey the same meaning, because "الحجاب" in Arabic does not mean "scarf" that covers the head only but it covers the whole body and it has specific characteristics. Similarly, the English culture specific collocation "Easter egg", which denotes some kind of food used on a special occasion, has no equivalent in Arabic because it is not a part of the Arabic culture, thus it is unfamiliar to Arabs.

Culture-specific collocations may also denote abstract concepts such as good, evil, courage, wisdom, optimism and pessimism. For example, the English word "owl" and the Arabic word "يوم" are linguistically equivalents but culturally not. In the English culture "owl" refers to wisdom while in the Arabic society it refers to pessimism. So, if someone translates the combination "هو كالبيوم" into "he is like an owl" he may confuse the target reader because "هو كالبيوم" means a pessimistic person while "he is like an owl" means a wise person. Therefore, if translators want to translate it into English they should look for another word that suggests pessimism in order to preserve the same meaning.

1.2.8.2. Collocation and Connotation

Culture-specific collocations are difficult to translate not just because they denote concepts, which are specific to a given culture, but also because they carry connotations. According to Armstrong (2005:70), "connotation is the secondary meaning attaching to words beyond their central denotation". The denotative meaning, which is also called the prepositional, "the conceptual meaning" or the "core meaning" is the meaning of the word as it is found in the dictionary. It is objective because the sense is always the same and all people agree about it. The connotative meaning, on the other hand, is subjective in that people differ about it. The word "black cats" for example, has the same denotative meaning in the two languages but it has a different connotative meaning from English and Arabic. While it has a positive connotative meaning in English 'good luck', it has a negative connotative meaning in Arabic 'bad luck'. (McCarthy, 1990:18). Moreover, collocations may have different connotative meanings even in the same language. For example, in Arabic although the collocations "رجل داهية" and "رجل محنك" have the same denotative meaning "intelligent man", they have different connotative meanings. "رجل داهية" has a negative connotative meaning in that

intelligence here is used to achieve bad goals, whereas "رجل محنك" has a positive connotative meaning in that intelligence aims at good purposes.

Connotation is the most difficult part to translate because it is often culture-specific word. Therefore, translators must try as possible as they can to preserve the connotative meaning expressed in the SL but they should also reflect the values and norms of the TL in order to avoid concepts that may be confusing to the target reader.

1.2.9. Difficulties and Problems in Translating Collocations

The translation of collocations is difficult for non-native speakers of a language and creates many problems for students and translators.

The main problem for students is to find the proper TL equivalent collocations. According to Armstrong (2005:98), "the difficulty for translators is not so much to recognize a SL collocation as to find an acceptable TL equivalent ". That is to say, although the equivalent may exist in the TL, to choose the appropriate equivalent requires a good competence in both languages. In some occasions, one word collocation (SL) needs to be translated with two or three words collocation in TL (difference of collocational patterning across languages). For example, "to misunderstand" is one word in English while its equivalent 'يسيء الفهم' in Arabic consists of two words and the expression 'A bit of information' is two words in English while its equivalent in Arabic 'معلومة' is one word. So, to do this translation successfully requires the translator's competence.

Another difficulty the students face is misinterpreting the meaning of a SL collocation. This is due to the influence of their native language (TL). This happens when a SL collocation seems familiar to students because it resembles another one in their native language. For example,

student may produce "This watch walks well"; instead of "this watch works well" which is a direct transfer from Arabic and which sounds odd to native speakers of English.

The choice between accuracy and typicality is another problem; students face a big difficulty when they have to choose between producing a typical collocation in TL and preserving the source meaning at the same time. For example, the nearest acceptable collocation for "hard drink" in Arabic is "مشروب كحولي", but they do not map completely because "hard drink" in English refers only to spirits as whisky, gin, and brandy; it does not include other alcoholic drinks such as beer or sherry. In Arabic, however, it refers to any alcoholic drink including beer, lager and sherry (Baker 1992). Therefore, there is a loss of meaning.

Another problem that students face is the difficulty of generalization. Some English words collocate with one and the same word in English but it is not necessarily in Arabic. For example, the adjective 'fat' in English collocates with "man" and its equivalent in Arabic "سمين" collocates with "رجل"; however, it collocates with 'salary' only in English since an Arab cannot say "راتب سمين" but "راتب ضخيم". Students will face problems in this case because they cannot generalize about the meaning of a word which collocates with different words because it may differ from collocation to another and from language to language (Ghazala 1993:32).

The considerable variation in collocability across languages poses difficulties for students. There is more than one possibility of collocations in the TL for the same SL collocation. For example, hard task / daunting task (مهمة شاقة) and sound sleep / fast sleep / deep sleep (نوم عميق) (ibid:32). Usually, these collocations have the same translation in Arabic, but students think that they have different translations and commit mistakes.

Students may face difficulties also in translating some new English collocations. According to Saricas (2006:37), "new English collocations which use noun compounds or adjectives +

noun are proved to be difficult to translate". These are usually common in social sciences and computer language. Some examples of these collocations are "lead time", "acid rain", and "sunshine industries". The translation of a new English collocation is difficult because it needs a specific use that needs a clear context. Moreover, some of these new English collocations are decisive in their physical meaning. For example, "narrow money" does not suggest at all "النقود المخصصة للمصرف أو الشخصي" and students may translate it into "أموال ضيقة" or "أموال قليلة" which is a strange translation (Ghazala, 1993:20).

Not only linguistic differences between English and Arabic that constitute difficulties in translating collocations, cultural differences also play a significant role in these difficulties. Ghazala (2001:1) says: "Usually cultural terms are thought to pose the most difficult problem in translation". Culture may create difficulties for students because of the different interpretations of these concepts by different societies both in their denotative or connotative meanings. In addition, there may be some lexical gaps; a concept that may exist in one language may not exist in another. According to Baker (1992:60), "like culture-specific words, they (collocations) point to concepts which are not easily accessible to the target reader."

In addition to linguistic and cultural differences, the overuse of literal translation proves to cause problems for students. As Ghazala maintains: "The central lexical problem faced (...) by students is their direct, literal translation of almost all words" (1995:84). The problem for students is that they think that literal translation can be applied for everything in language, thus they commit mistakes.

Conclusion

The interest in the translation of collocations comes from their great importance in language; they play a vital role in the coherence of the structure of language and thanks to them people can speak a native – like language. However, collocations illustrate considerable difficulties that foreign language students face when translating them because of their largely arbitrary nature i.e., they are not governed by semantic or syntactic rules. The difficulties can be related to the linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic -two sharply different cultures-. The overuse of literal translation is also a responsible factor for these problems. Students therefore, should not ignore the varieties of collocations and should be aware of cultural differences between English and Arabic They are required to be extra sensitive to collocations, to give the Arabic version the same beauty of the English text. This means that ignoring the concern with the translation of English collocations in Arabic results in a poor and odd text.

CHAPTER TWO

Students' Translation of Collocations

Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodology used to test our hypothesis: whether students' difficulties in translating collocations are a result of their unfamiliarity with English language and culture. Therefore, students' familiarity or unfamiliarity with the English collocations is assessed in relation to the students' main difficulties in translating collocations. In addition to the description of the test and the sample, this chapter analyses the data that are collected from the test given to the subjects of the study.

2.1.1. The Sample

The sample of the study consists of 30 students chosen randomly from two groups of third year students of English (Applied Languages Studies) at the English Department, Mentouri University, Constantine. The sample subjects are a homogenous group of boys and girls because the sex and the age variables are not important in our study. The subjects have been chosen on the basis of the following criteria: they are supposed to be familiar with English–Arabic translation since they have studied it for two years. Thus, they are likely to have basic theoretical knowledge about translation. More importantly, third year students are in their final year of study, hence they are supposed to be competent in English and able to translate collocations correctly.

2.1.2. Description of the Test

The data are collected through a series of two tasks. The first task is a translation task, students were asked to translate ten English sentences that contain collocations into Arabic. The second task is a multiple-choice test where students were asked to fill in the blanks with the suitable word from a list of three words with the aim of checking students' familiarity or unfamiliarity with English collocations. This test will help us to know if culture and language specificity of collocations influence students' translation from English into Arabic.

2.1.2.1. Task One

The first task is intended to test students' competence in translating English collocations into Arabic. The task consists of ten simple sentences which contain English collocations that are specific to English language and culture. The students were asked to translate only the underlined words or the collocations from each sentence. This task helps us to know whether students translate collocations as restricted or free combinations.

2.1.2.2. Task Two

The second task consists of ten English sentences chosen randomly with the aim of checking students' familiarity or unfamiliarity with English collocations. In each collocation, one item is omitted and replaced by a blank. Then students were asked to fill in the blank by choosing a word from a list of three words that have approximately the same meaning. The main goal of this task was not to get meaningful combinations but to check students' ability to produce native-like combinations or collocations.

2.2. Data Analysis

2.2.1. Task One

2.2.1.1. Sentence One: Finally, I relieved a sigh

Students translation	N°	%
خففت الإشارة ميزت الإشارة اكتشفت الإشارة تلقيت الإشارة	4	13.33%
تنهدت تنفست الصعداء	8	26.66%
وصلت إلى نتيجة توصلت إلى حل توصلت إلى قرار حصلت على المبتغى	4	13.33%
ألقيت نظرة اتضح الرؤيا	3	10%
ارتاح بالي ارتحت من الحزن	5	16.66%
اكتشفت معنى	3	10%
اخترت إجابة ظهر أمل اتضح الأمر	3	10%
Total	30	99.96%

Table 1: Students Translation of the Collocation ' To relieve a sigh'

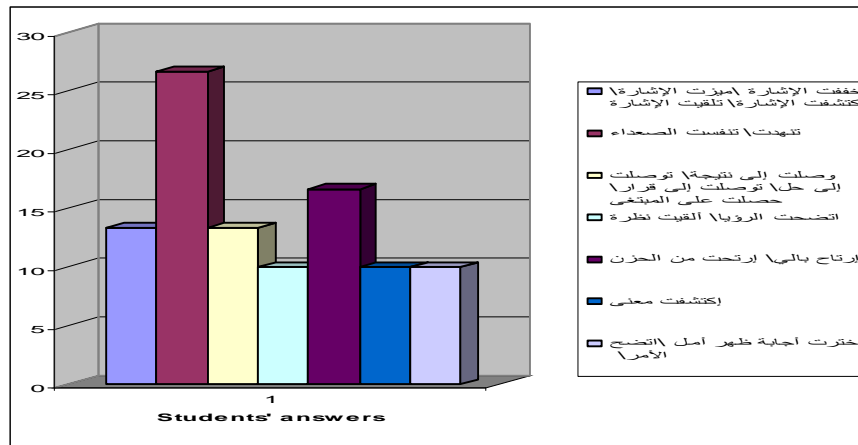


Figure 1: Students Translation of The Collocation ' To relieve a sigh'

From the table above, it is noticed that most of the subjects do not know that the equivalent of the English collocation 'to relieve a sigh' in Arabic is 'تنفست الصعداء' or 'تنهدت'. The proof is that only 26.66 % from the overall number of subjects translated it correctly. 16.66% of the subjects translated it into 'ارتاح بالي' or 'ارتحت من الحزن' which reflect a part of the meaning but they are not the appropriate collocations in Arabic. 13.33% of the subjects confused between the word 'sigh' and 'sign', thus they translated it into 'إشارة'. Similarly, 10% of the subjects confused between the word 'sigh' and 'sight' and translated it into 'نظرة' or 'رؤية'. The remaining part of the subjects did not find an acceptable equivalent in Arabic; it is clear from their answers that they have just paraphrased it from the context 'Finally'. So, it is obvious that students vocabulary is poor. The problem for the students is not only in the word 'sigh' but also the word 'delivered'. Thus, 13.33 % of the subjects understood it as achieving a result or getting a desired goal. 10% translated it into 'اكتشفت معنى' and 10% used a different combination that has nothing to do with the adequate collocation 'تنفست الصعداء' or 'تنهدت'. The results proved that students are not familiar with the collocation 'to relieve a sigh'.

2.2.1.2. Sentence Two: Rural dwellers live a very hard life.

Students' translation	N°	%
سكان الريف	21	70%
حفارو الريف العمال المزارعون العمال الريفيون	3	10%
سكان المناطق النامية	1	3.33%
منازل المدينة	2	6.66%
عمال المناجم	2	6.66%
الفقراء و المساكين	1	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 2: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Rural dwellers'

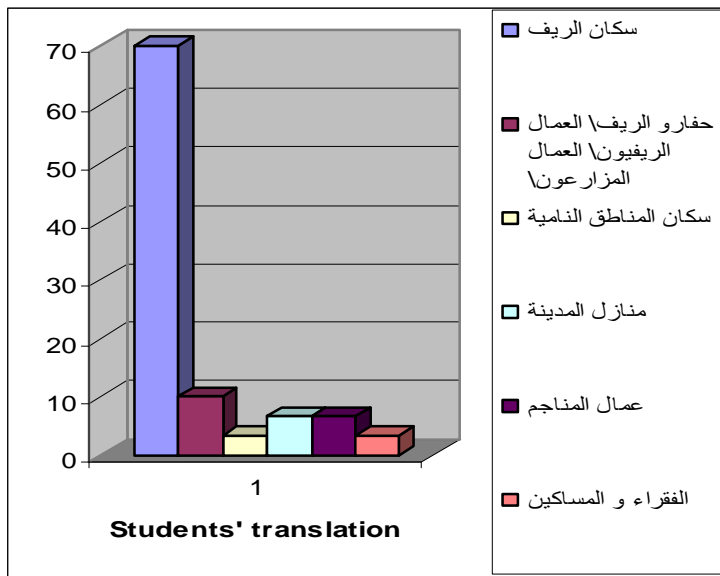


Figure 2: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Rural dwellers'

Although subjects used word for word translation, 70% translated the collocation 'Rural dwellers' into its proper form in Arabic which is 'سكان الريف'. 10% understood only the first part of the collocation 'rural' but misunderstood the last part 'dwellers' since they translated it as people who work in the countryside. Even if their collocations have a part of the meaning of

the collocation 'سكان الريف' , but they are not the adequate equivalent because someone who is working in a particular place does not necessarily means that he is living in that place. On the other hand, 3.33% of the subjects translated the second part ' dwellers' correctly but mistranslated the first one. Thus, they destroyed the meaning because 'المناطق النامية' is used to refer to an underdeveloped country which means that it indicates both the countryside and cities in an underdeveloped country. 6.66% translated it as ' منازل المدينة' because they did not distinguish between the adjectives 'civil' and 'rural', thus they end in a wrong translation that has merely the opposite meaning of the correct one. 6.66 % of the subjects translated it into 'عمال المناجم' and 3.33% translated it into 'الفقراء و المساكين' which are totally wrong translations.

2.2.1.3. Sentence Three: He earns a fat salary

Students' translation	N°	%
دخل جيد معاش جيد معاش ضخيم راتب عالي راتب كبير راتب مرتفع راتب ضخيم أجر مريح ماهية جيدة	25	83.33%
ثمن كبير	2	6.66%
ثروة كبيرة مبالغ طائلة	3	10%
Total	30	100%

Table 3: Students' Translations of the Collocation 'Fat salary'

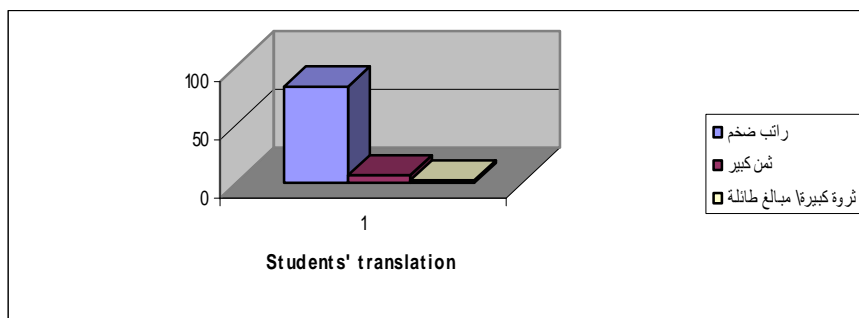


Figure 3: Students' Translations of the Collocation 'Fat salary'

Concerning the collocation 'Fat salary', 83.33% of the subjects translated it correctly because it is a very common collocation in English. 16.66% understand the meaning but they did not render the appropriate form. Thus 6.66% used the words 'ثمن' or 'سعر' that are equivalents to the word 'price' in English and not 'salary'. Similarly, 10% translated it into 'ثروة كبيرة' or 'مبالغ طائلة' which cannot be considered as an adequate equivalent to 'راتب'.

2.2.1.4. Sentence Four: They drink a dry wine.

Students' translation	N°	%
خمر جاف	6	20%
خمر من نوع خاص	1	3.33%
شراب بدون دوق شراب غير منعش شراب سيئ شراب ثقيل خمر رخيص	9	30%
نبيد نادر شراب منعش خمر جيد شراب خفيف كحول بارد خمر بدون كحول	9	30%
كحول خمر	3	10%
ريح	1	3.33%
Blank	1	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 4: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Dry wine'

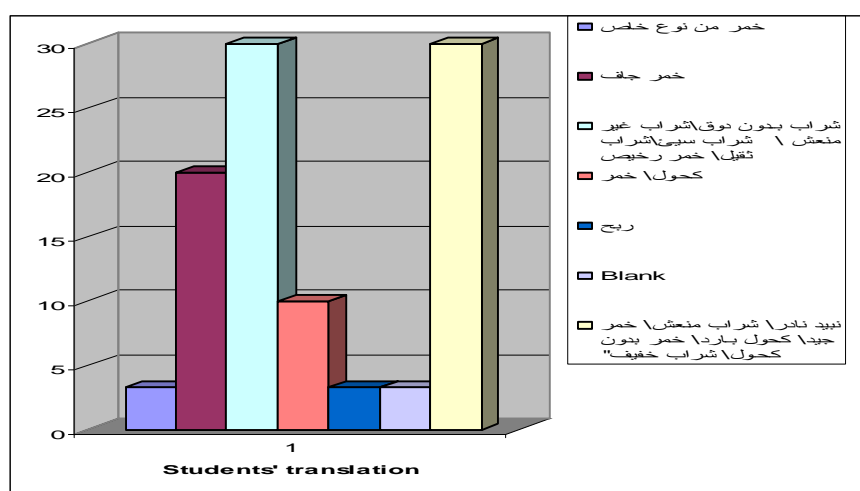


Figure 4: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Dry wine'

The results are not satisfying at all, because 0% of the subjects gave the correct translation of the collocation 'Dry wine'. Only 3.33% of the subjects translated it into 'خمر من نوع خاص' which can be accepted as an acceptable equivalent. 20% of the subjects adopted a word for word translation and translated it into 'خمر جاف'. 80% of the subjects mistranslated the meaning of the collocation 'Dry wine'. Therefore, 30% understood it as a 'good kind of wine', so they used adjectives such as 'منعش جيد نادر... الخ'. On the other hand, 30% understood it as 'a bad kind of wine'; this is clearly evident in their translations as 'رخيص سيئ ثقيل'. 10% of the subjects eliminate the word 'dry' for two reasons: either they do not know its meaning in Arabic or they failed to find its appropriate equivalent. The same thing can be said about 3.33% who did not translate the collocation at all. So, for all 96.67% of the subjects the problem was not in the word 'wine'. Only 3.33% of the whole subjects translated it wrong as 'ريج' because the students confused between the word 'wine' and 'win' and eliminate the last part of the collocation. This indicates that subjects do not know English collocations enough and not familiar with its culture. The problem is that subjects are not sure about the exact meaning of the word 'dry'. It has nothing to do with the word 'بدون سكر' which literally means 'without sugar'. The word 'dry' acquires the meaning of 'بدون سكر' or 'غير حلو' only if it collocates with the word 'wine'. The students mistranslate wine in this context because they failed to recognize that a word changes its meaning when it collocates with other words.

2.2.1.5. Sentence Five: You must reserve some narrow money.

Students' translation	N°	%
بعض المال القليل من المال مبلغ صغير مال محدود	14	46.66%
أموال ضيقة	1	3.33%
نقود للضيقة مال لوقت الحاجة مال احتياطي مال زائد المدخرات	9	30%
نقود مستعارة مال كاف أموال معروفة الأموال النقدية قطع نقود	6	20%
Total	30	100%

Table 5: Students' Translation of the collocation 'Narrow money'

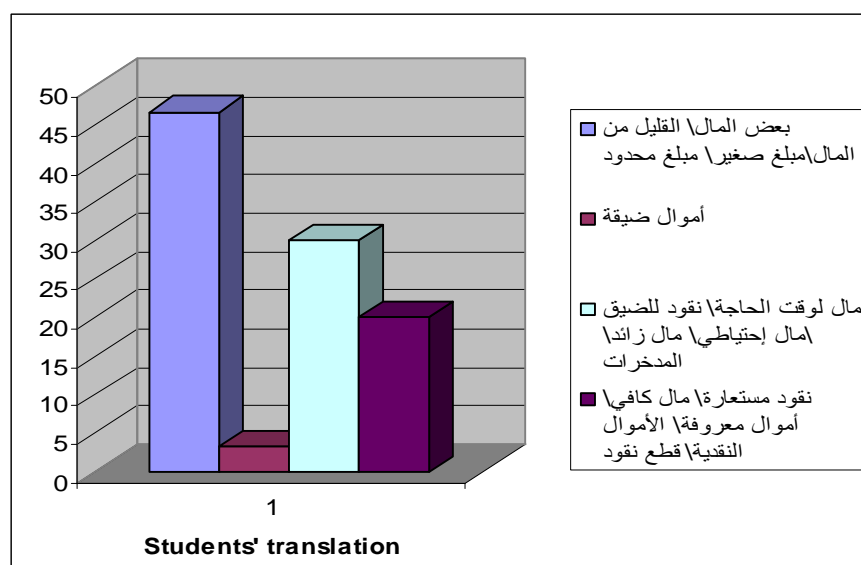


Figure 5: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Narrow money'

The collocation 'narrow money ' is a new English collocation that cannot be translated as a collocation in Arabic. Although students are not expected to find its adequate equivalent in Arabic, they are supposed to translate its appropriate meaning using any method such as a descriptive translation. However, the results reveal that 0% of the subjects failed to translate it into its appropriate meaning 'الأموال المخصصة للمصروف العائلي أو الشخصي'. 3.33% of the subjects translated it literally as 'أموال ضيقة' which is an unacceptable combination in Arabic because the word 'ضيقة' in Arabic usually co-occur with nouns that indicate size such as places, clothes, but not with 'أموال'. This indicates that students cannot master even their mother tongue . 46.66% of the subjects understood it as 'small amount of money'. This is obvious from their translation as 'مال محدود القليل من المال', 30% paraphrased it from the context as 'money reserved for need'. 20% mistranslated it at all either because they did not know the meaning of the word 'narrow' or did not find its appropriate equivalent in Arabic. The problem for the students is that they insist on having the same word number because they ignore that collocational patterning differs from English into Arabic.

2.2.1.6. Sentence Six: The attorney asked for a court of appeal.

Students' translation	N°	%
محكمة الاستئناف	1	3.33%
محكمة إستئنافية استئناف من المحكمة استئناف الحكم	4	13.33%
إعادة حكم تأجيل حكم	4	13.33%
قرار استئناف جلسة إستئنافية استئناف قضائي	6	20%
محكمة القضاء محكمة عليا محكمة الجنايات إذن من المحكم بيان من المحكمة	8	26.66%
جلسة مطالبة الطعن دستور الجنايات إلغاء بعض الأمور	5	16.66%
محكمة	2	6.66%
Total	30	99.97%

Table 6: Students' Translation of the Collocation ' court of appeal'

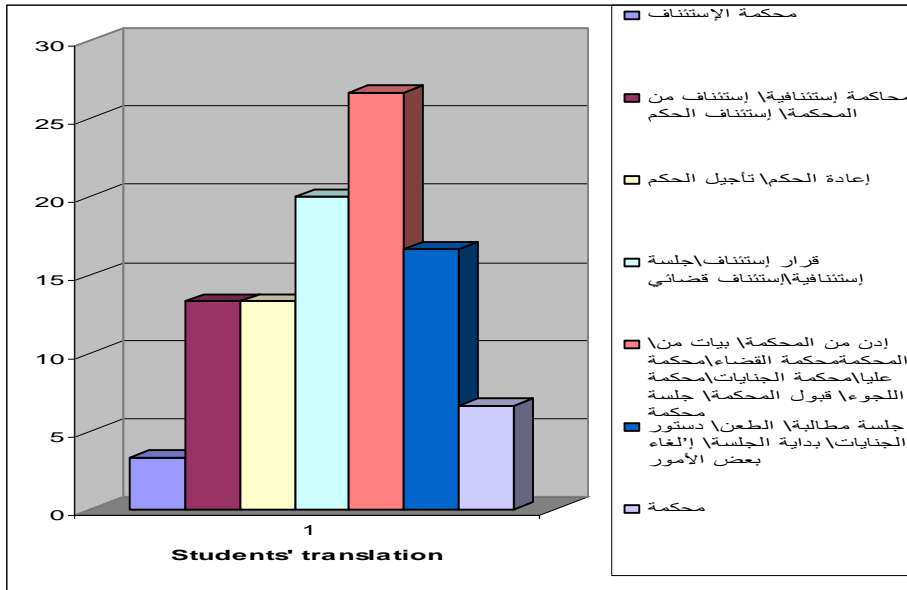


Figure 6: Students' Translation of the Collocation ' court of appeal'

The collocation 'court of appeal' is a register specific collocation. Although it is very common in the register of law, it is not common in everyday English. However, third year students of English are supposed to have enough knowledge in English collocations in general and register specific collocations in particular. The results reveal that 96.67% failed to find the adequate equivalent which is 'محكمة الاستئناف'. Only 3.33% gave the correct answer. 33.33% of the subjects translated it 'محاكمة إستئنافية' or 'استئناف من المحكمة' which have a part of the meaning but not the appropriate one. 20% of the subjects translated just the last part correctly 'الاستئناف' and mistranslated the first part because they did not know its equivalent in Arabic. On the other hand, 26.66% translated just the first part and mistranslated the first part 'الاستئناف'. 13.33% did not distinguish between 'محكمة' and 'حكم' and translated it into 'إعادة حكم' or 'تأجيل حكم' which have totally different meanings of 'محكمة الاستئناف'. 16.66% failed to translate the two parts of the collocation because they did not know their meanings. 6.66% eliminated the last part totally because they did not know the meaning of 'appeal'.

2.2.1.7.Sentence Seven: The doctor delivered a baby

Students' translation	N°	%
ولد الحامل	1	3.33%
سلم الرضيع	5	16.66%
استقبل طفلا تبنى رضيعا توقع الحمل	9	30%
أخرج المولود ولد طفلا ساعد في إنجاب الطفل قام بعملية التوليد أنجبت طفلا	8	26.66%
فحص رضيعا عالج رضيعا شفي رضيعا	5	16.66%
أنقض رضيعا	2	6.66%
Total	30	99.96%

Table 7: Students Translation of the Collocation 'Delivered a baby'

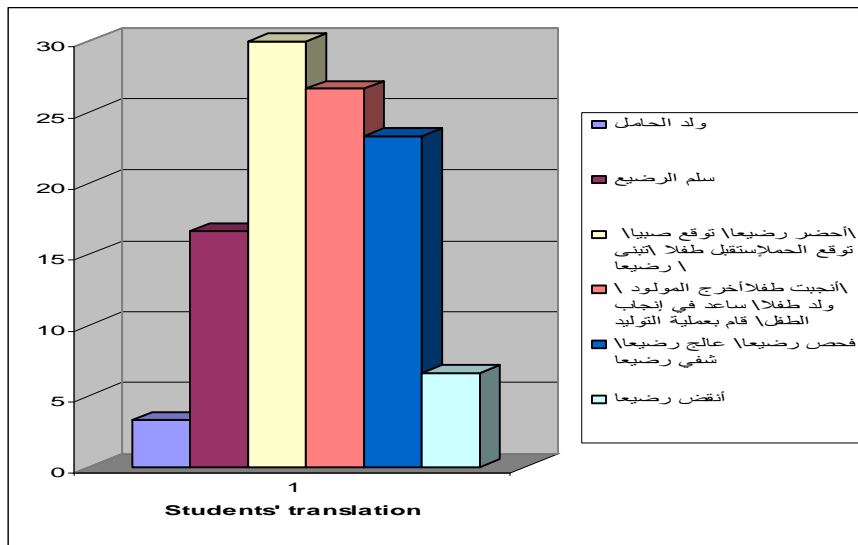


Figure7: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Delivered a baby'

The collocation 'to deliver a baby' is a culture-specific collocation. This suggests that differences in collocational patterning among languages can involve totally different ways of portraying an event. In the process of childbirth, English focuses on the baby whereas Arabic focuses on the woman. However, the results are unsatisfactory at all because only 3.33% of the subjects gave the correct answer which is 'ولد المرأة' or 'ولد الحامل'. 26.66% understood the meaning of the collocation which is 'giving a birth to a baby' but they failed to give the appropriate form and translated it into 'قام بعملية التوليد' 'أخرج مولودا'. 16.66% of the subjects translated it literally as 'سلم الرضيع'. 53.33% misunderstood the verb 'delivered'; it is clear from their translations that they have just paraphrased the meaning of the collocation from the context. Thus 30% translated it using different verbs such as 'تبنى', 'استقبل', 'توقع'. The other 16.66% understood it as 'examining a baby by the doctor' since they translated it into 'فحص رضيع' or 'عالج رضيعا'. 6.66% understood this meaning but instead of using the word 'أنقض' they used the word 'أنقض'. This proves that students are not competent enough even in their mother tongue. The majority of the subjects failed to translate it correctly because they failed to recognize that the patterns of the collocations are arbitrary and independent of meaning. Moreover, students

ignored the role of cultural differences between English and Arabic in translating collocations.

2.2.1.8. Sentence Eight: For English people, law and order are very important

Students' translation	N°	%
القانون و الأمر	12	40%
القانون و النظام	13	43.33%
القانون و الحق القانون و السلطة القانون و الطلب	3	10%
الأساسيات الحقوق و الواجبات	2	6.66%
Total	30	100%

Table8: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Law and order'

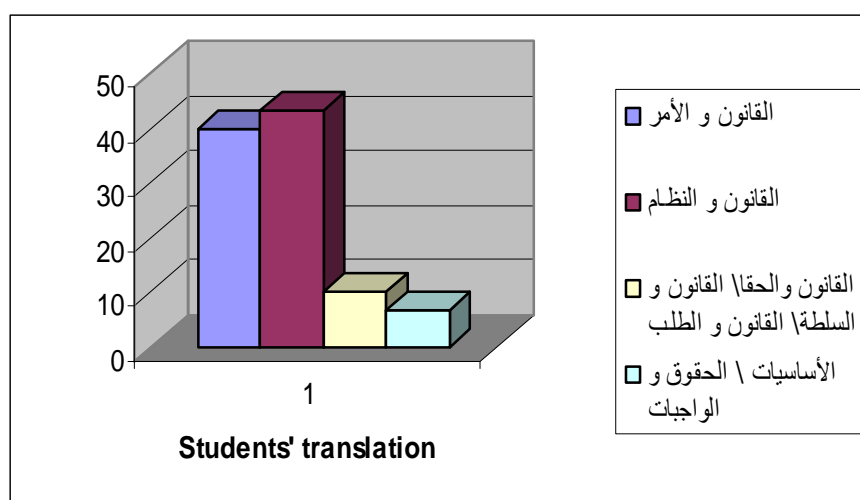


Figure 8: Students' Translation of the Collocation 'Law and order'

To a great extent, the results are not satisfying at all because 100 % of the subjects failed to find its typical equivalent in Arabic which 'القانون و التقاليد'. 43.33% of the subjects translated it into 'القانون و النظام' and 40% translated it into 'القانون و الأمر' as a consequence of the students'

literal translation since the word order means both أمر and نظام . 10% of the subjects translated only the first part of the collocation 'law' and mistranslated the word 'order' may be because they did not know its equivalent in Arabic. 6.66% of the subjects mistranslated the whole collocation; it is obvious from their answers that they did not know both parts of the collocation. Therefore, the problem for most of the students was in the word 'order'. The English collocation reflects the high value that English speakers place on order and the Arabic collocation reflects the high respect accorded by Arabs to the concept of tradition. The students failed to recognize that different languages have different cultures. Thus the collocation 'law and order' reflects the preferences of specific language communities for certain modes of expression. Learning a language means learning its culture.

2.2.1.9. Sentence Nine: Developed countries encourage the sunshine industries

Students' translation	N°	
الصناعات المعتمدة على أشعة الشمس الصناعات الطاقة الشمسية الصناعات الشمسية الأجهزة التي تعمل بالطاقة الشمسية	16	53.33%
الصناعات الجديدة	3	10%
الصناعات المزدهرة	2	6.66%
الصناعات البارزة الصناعات الخفيفة الصناعات المنتجة الصناعات الجيدة الصناعات التقليدية الصناعات الخاصة الصناعات الحارة	7	23.33%
الصناعات	1	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 9: Students' Translation of the Collocation ' Sunshine industries'

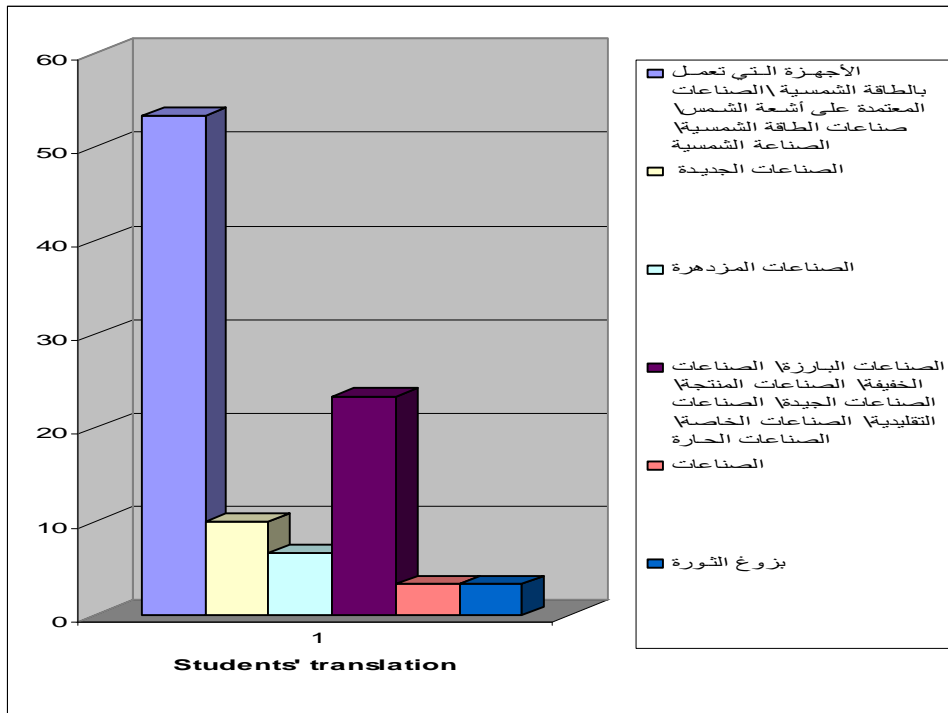


Figure 9: Students' Translation of the Collocation ' Sunshine industries'

From the table above, it is clear that none of the subjects translated the collocation 'sunshine industries' into its appropriate equivalent (الصناعات الرائدة (الإلكترونية و التكنولوجية).). The problem for the students is that it is a new English collocation and they are not familiar with it. In addition, they think that literal translation can be applicable to anything in language, thus they made mistakes. 53.33% of the subjects translated it into 'الصناعات المعتمدة على' or 'الصناعات الشمسية' because they adopted the literal translation as their main method in translation. Therefore, they destroyed the meaning of the collocation. 10% of the subjects translated it into 'الصناعات الجديدة' and 6.66% into 'الصناعات المزدهرة' which have a part of the meaning of the collocation 'الصناعات الرائدة' but not the adequate equivalent. 23.33% paraphrased it from the context using different adjectives which are far from the correct translation such as التقليدية... 3.33% translated just the word 'industries' and eliminated the word 'sunshine' because they did not find its equivalent in Arabic. So, for 96.67% of the subjects the problem

was in the word 'sunshine' and not 'industries'. Only 3.33% of the whole subjects failed to translate the two words that combine a collocation because they translated it into 'بزوغ الثورة'.

2.2.1.10. Sentence Ten: He is still a green worker.

Students' translation	N°	%
عامل نشيط	7	23.33%
عامل ابتدائي عامل مبتدئ عامل جديد	6	20%
عامل تنقصه خبرة	2	6.66%
عامل بسيط عامل خيري عامل مخلص عامل مجتهد	4	13.33%
عامل اخضر	2	6.66%
عامل بستاني عامل محافظ على البيئة عامل من أجل البيئة	3	10%
عامل يافع عامل فتي	5	16.66%
Blank	1	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 10: Students' Translation of the Collocation "green worker"

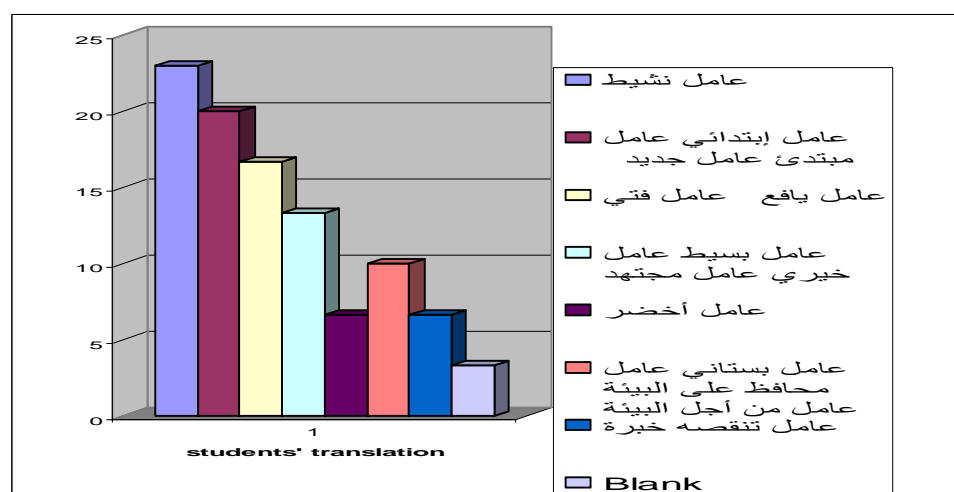


Figure 10: Students' Translation of the Collocation "green worker"

The collocation 'green worker' is specific to English language. The colour 'green' in English has a negative unpleasant connotation. In this collocation, it is the colour of immaturity inexperience. However, in Arabic the colour green generally has a positive connotation; the notion lack of experience is expressed differently in Arabic. For this reason, most of the subjects failed to recognize that the equivalent of the English collocation 'green worker' in Arabic is 'عامل تنقصه خبرة' which is given only by 6.66% of subjects. 20% translated it into 'عامل جديد' which is close in meaning to 'عامل تنقصه خبرة'. It may be accepted as an equivalent in Arabic even if 'جديد' does not necessarily always mean someone who lacks experience; he may have acquired experience from another job in the same domain. 10% of the subjects translated it 'عامل بستاني' or 'عامل من أجل البيئة' because the colour green usually refers to the environment. 6.66% of the subjects translated it literally into 'عامل أخضر' which is a meaningless combination in Arabic. 3.33% did not translate it at all because they may not find the appropriate equivalent. The remaining part of the subjects translated it using different adjectives that indicate a positive connotation. Thus 23.33% of the subjects translated it into 'عامل نشيط' and 16.33% translated it into 'عامل يافع' since the colour green is usually associated with youth in Arabic. Similarly, 13.33% of the subjects translated it using different adjectives that have a positive connotative meaning such as 'مجتهد، مخلص، خيري'. The problem for the students is that they failed to recognize that the collocation carries a connotative meaning which may differ from culture to culture and therefore from language to language.

From the previous results, we can notice that third year students still face many problems in translating English collocations into Arabic. The problem for the students is that they committed themselves wholly and heartedly to literal translation that is in most of the cases may misleading and destroys the meaning since collocations are opaque and cannot be translated on a word for word basis. Students do not know that a word meaning changes when

it combines with another word. Moreover, students insist on having the same word number because they do not pay attention to the fact that different languages have different patterning. Thus, a notion that is expressed in English in two words may be expressed in Arabic into three or more words. In addition, although students understand the meaning of some collocations, they failed to render the appropriate equivalent in Arabic. New English collocations created much more difficulty for the students because they are not well known as the other ones. Similarly, the results reveal that culture-specific collocations have also created a great difficulty for students since the big majority of them failed to give a collocation that is specific to Arab culture. The problem can be related to the ignorance of cultural differences between the two languages because of lack of exposure to cultural information.

2.2.2.Task Two

2.2.2.1. Sentence One

The brain phenomenon has increased (immigration, movement, drain)

Students' answers	N°	%
Brain immigration	10	33.33%
Brain movement	5	16.66%
Brain drain	15	50%
Total	30	99.99%

Table 11: Students' Answers to the Collocation "Brain drain"

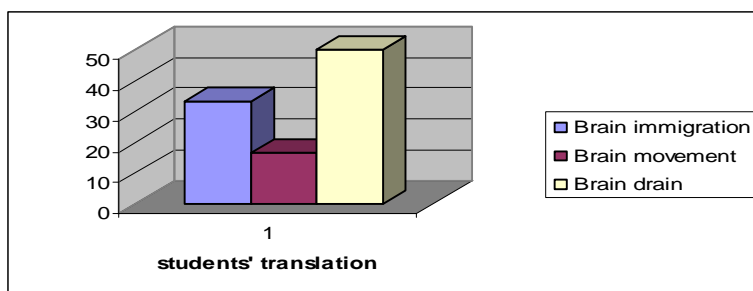


Figure11: Students' Answers to the Collocation "Brain drain"

As Table 11 shows, 50% of the subjects answered correctly to the collocation 'brain drain'. The remaining 50% chose the wrong answer. The collocation 'brain drain' literally means 'هجرة الأدمغة' in Arabic. This may explain the fact that 33.33% of the subjects answered as 'brain immigration' because of the interference from their first language (Arabic). 16.66% chose 'brain movement' which is not an acceptable combination whether in English or in Arabic, they might not understand the meaning of the word 'brain ' or might confused it with another word thus they thought that it is acceptable combination. This proves that most of the students are not familiar with the collocation 'brain drain' although it is a very common collocation in English.

2.2.2.2.Sentence Two

Generally women obey..... the law than men do (respect, obey, follow)

Students' answers	N°	%
Respect the law'	20	66.66 %
obey the law'	5	16.66 %
follow the law'	5	16.66 %
Total	30	99.98 %

Table 12: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' obey the law'

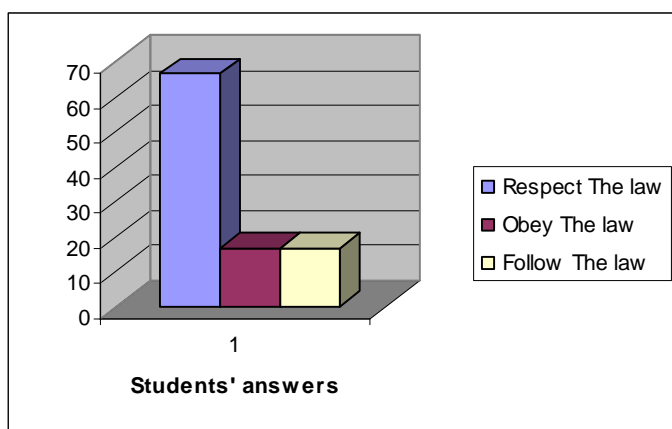


Figure12: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' obey the law'

Concerning the collocation 'obey the law' only 16.66% of the whole subjects gave the correct answer. 16.66% of the subjects answered 'follow the law'. 66.66% of the subjects answered 'respect the law' due to negative transfer from their first language, Arabic since the most acceptable equivalent to this collocation is 'يحترم القانون' and not 'يطيع القانون'. Students did not recognize that different languages have different collocational ranges. A lexical item and its equivalent in TL may have different collocates and therefore different meanings. Native-speakers of English may understand the combination 'respect the law', but the most typical collocation is 'obey the law'. This proves students' unfamiliarity with the collocation 'obey the law'

2.2.2.3. Sentence Three

At the funeral people..... their last respect to the dead (pay, give, take)

Students' answers	N°	%
Pay respect	4	13.33%
Give respect	24	80%
Take respect	2	6.66%
Total	30	100%

Table 13: Students' Answers to the Collocation "pay respect"

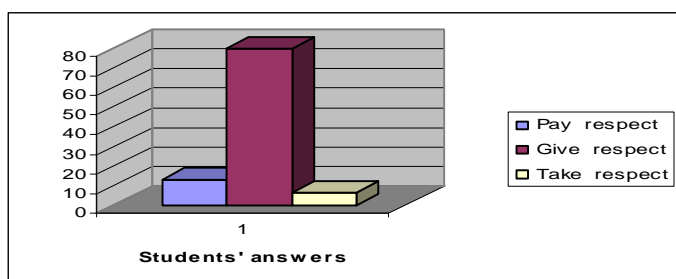


Figure 13: Students' Answers to the Collocation "pay respect"

From the table above, we can notice that students are not familiar with the collocation 'pay respect' the proof is that only 13.33% of the whole subjects give the correct answer. 6.66% answered 'take respect'. The collocation 'pay respect' literally means 'يدفع احتراماً' that is not an admissible combination in Arabic. In Arabic, the most adequate collocation that is equivalent to the collocation 'pay respect' is 'يقدم احتراماً'. This may explain the fact that 80% of the subjects answered as 'give respect'. Negative transfer from the students' first language leads them to make mistakes. Moreover, students concentrate only on the core meaning of the word because they ignored that a polysemous word has many senses and each sense depends largely on its collocates. Hence, they ignored that a word may change its meaning when it collocates with another word

2.2.2.4. Sentence Four

She is living in afamily (small, nuclear, young)

Students' answers	N°	%
Small family	24	80%
Nuclear family	5	16.66%
Young Family	1	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 14: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Nuclear family'

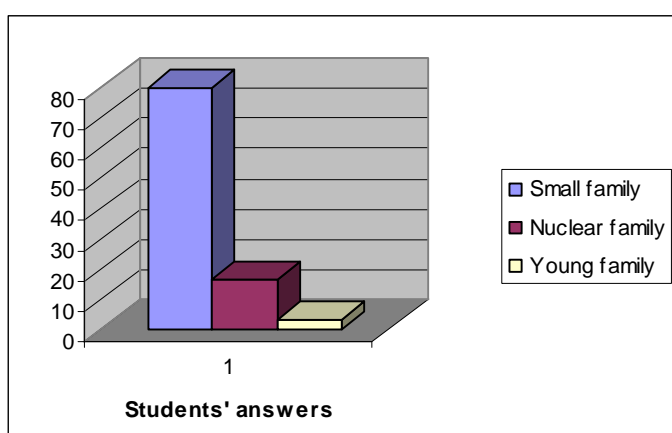


Figure 14: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Nuclear family'

The results indicate students' unfamiliarity with the collocation 'Nuclear family' since 83.33% of the students' answers were wrong. 80% of them answer 'small family' which is an acceptable combination but not the natural collocation in English. 3.33% answered as 'young family'. They may generalize it since we can say 'young baby' or 'small baby'. They ignored that even synonyms have different collocational range. Although 'small' and 'young' literally means 'صغير' in Arabic, 'young' used to refer to 'age' thus it is inadmissible collocation to speak about 'young family'. The fact that only 16.66% of answered correctly is the best proof on the student's unfamiliarity with the collocation 'nuclear family'.

2.2.2.5. Sentence Five

Some people have hair. (ginger, red, orange)

Students' answers	N°	%
Ginger hair	12	40%
Red hair	15	50%
Orange hair	3	10%
Total	30	100%

Table 15: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Ginger hair'

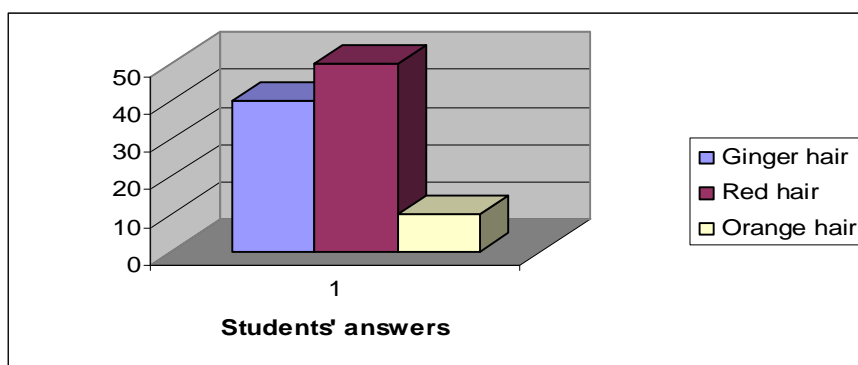


Figure15: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Ginger hair'

Concerning the collocation 'ginger hair', we can notice that 40% of the subjects answered correctly. Thus, subjects are not quite familiar with this collocation. 50% of the subjects used the adjective 'red hair' as a result of their interference from Arabic since the combination 'شعر أحمر' is acceptable in Arabic although in reality the hair' colour is not red but orange- brown. This can be accounted for to explain why 10% of the subjects chose the adjective 'orange' as their literal description of that hair' colour . Students failed to recognize that collocations are not just a matter of combining words that are linguistically correct , but they are a matter of putting the words that should occur together appropriately in order to achieve native-like language.

2.2.2.6. Sentence Six

The children a joke on their teacher. (make, trick, play)

Students' answers	N°	%
Make a joke	18	60%
Trick a joke	4	13.33%
Play a joke	8	26.66%
Total	30	100%

Table 16: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Play a joke'

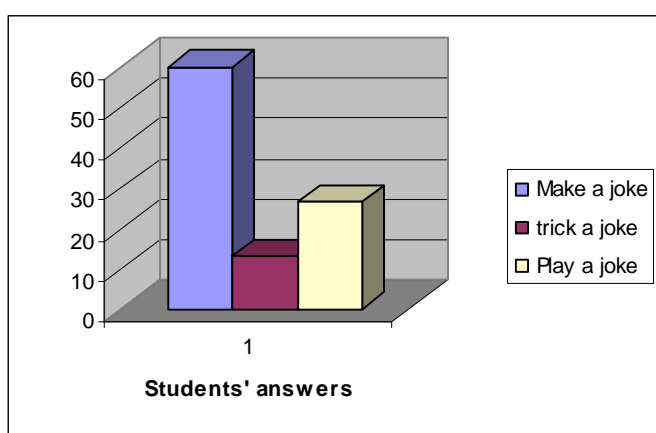


Figure 16: Students' Answers to the Collocation 'Play a joke'

According to the results obtained, we can conclude that Students are not familiar with the collocation 'play a joke'. The fact that only 26, 66% only gave the correct answer is the best evidence of students' unfamiliarity with this collocation. 60% of the students answered as 'make a joke' and 13, 33% as 'trick a joke' which seem for them more acceptable than 'play a joke'. The problem for the students is that they concentrate only on the core meaning of the word ignoring that the word 'play' has a wide collocational range in English. Moreover, they try always to compare any collocation in English to its identical equivalent in meaning in Arabic. Therefore, they end in making mistakes

2.2.2.7. Sentence Seven

She is a baby. (expecting, waiting for, hoping)

Students' answers	N°	%
Expecting a baby	11	36.66%
Waiting for a baby	17	56.66%
Hoping a baby	2	6.66%
Total	30	99.98%

Table 17: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Expecting a baby'

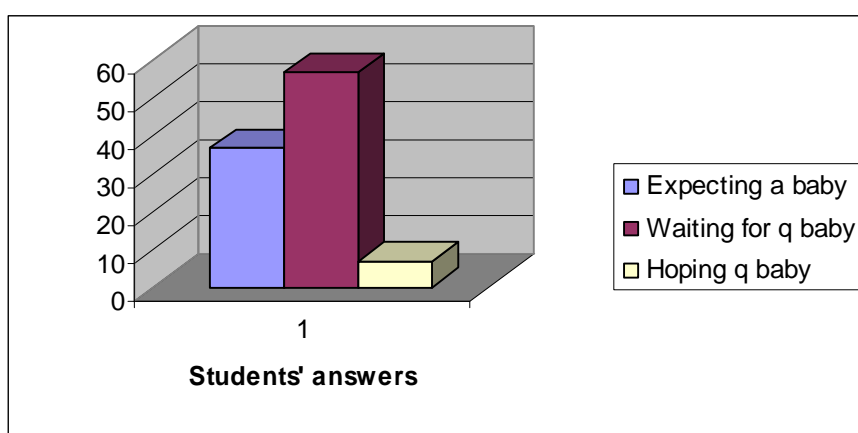


Figure17: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Expecting a baby'

Although the collocation ' expecting a baby ' is very common in English, only 36.66% of the whole subjects gave the correct answer. 6.66% selected the combination 'hoping a baby' which has a different meaning from ' expecting a baby. 56.66% of the students answered ' waiting for a baby' which can be understood by native speakers of English but for them it is not the typical collocation. Negative transfer from the students' first language often leads them to producing something unnatural. Based on these results we can conclude that students are unfamiliar with the collocation 'expecting a baby'.

2.2.2.8. Sentence Eight

Dawn.....at 5:00 o'clock. (breaks, raises, starts)

Students' answers	N°	%
dawn breaks	8	26.66%
dawn raises	7	23.33%
dawn starts	15	50%
Total	30	99.99%

Table 18: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Dawn breaks'

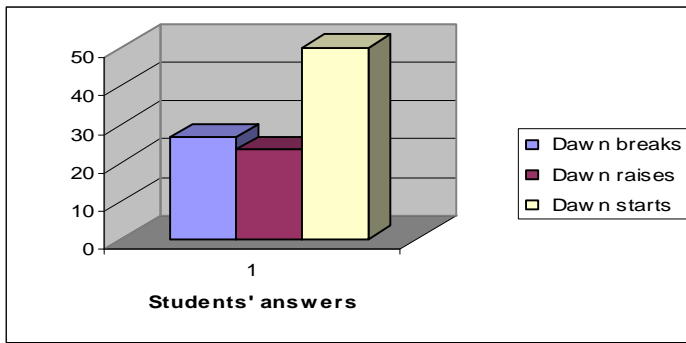


Figure18: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Dawn breaks'

According to the results shown in the table 18, we can infer students' unfamiliarity with the collocation 'dawn breaks' because only 26.66% answered correctly. 23.33% gave the answer 'the dawn raises' they may generalized it from the collocation 'the sun raises' since we can say in Arabic 'تطلع الشمس' as well as 'يطلع الفجر'. Students ignored that the SL word and its TL equivalent may have a different collocational range. 50% of the subjects created the combination 'dawn starts' since they thought that it is more acceptable than 'breaks'. The students knew the common meaning of 'break' as 'ينكسر' in Arabic. However, they ignored that the word 'break' has more than one meaning since it is a polysemous word and that each meaning is totally different from the other one depending on its pattern of collocation

2.2.2.9. Sentence Nine

In a computer text, data may be (processed, treated, arranged)

Students' answers	N°	%
Data processed	7	23.33%
Data treated	16	53.33%
Data arranged	7	23.33%
Total	30	100%

Table 19: Students' Answers to the collocation 'data processed'

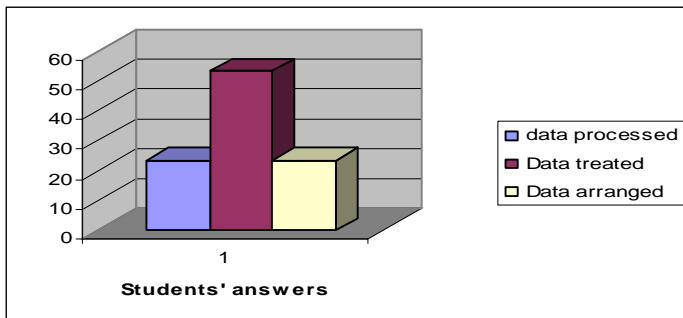


Figure19: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' data processed'

Concerning the collocation 'data processing', most of the subjects failed to give the correct answer. From the whole subjects only 23.33% gave the correct answer. The reason may be related to the fact that this collocation is specific to the register of law and not very common in everyday English. 23.33% of the subjects answered as 'data arranged'. Although 'arranged' and 'processed', have approximately the same meaning, 'data arranged' is inadmissible collocation in English. The literal equivalent of the collocation 'data processing' in Arabic is 'معالجة المعلومات' 50% chose the collocation 'data treating' as a result of their interference from their first language 'Arabic'. The Arabic verb 'يعالج' has a wide collocational range than its English equivalent 'treated' that is why we can say 'معالجة المعلومات' but not 'data treating'. These results prove that students are not familiar with the collocation 'data processed'

2.2.2.10. Sentence Ten

Ahmed Shawki is a poet.....in the Arab world. (prime, prince, laureate)

Students' answers	N°	%
Poet prime	0	0%
poet prince	27	90%
Poet laureate	3	10%
Total	30	100%

Table 20: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Poet laureate'

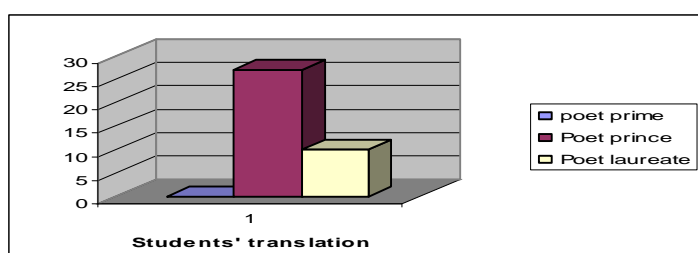


Figure 20: Students' Answers to the Collocation ' Poet laureate'

The subjects' answers were unsatisfactory at all because 90% answered as 'poet prince' which is a negative transfer from their mother tongue 'Arabic' since the equivalent of the collocation 'poet laureate' in Arabic is ' أمير الشعراء '. Native speakers of English may understand the combination 'poet prince' but the natural way to say it in English is 'poet laureate'. These results account for students' unfamiliarity with the collocation 'poet laureate'

From the previous results, one can conclude that students are not familiar with English collocations. Students' inability to select the appropriate word to fill in the gaps is the best evidence of their unawareness of the collocation phenomenon.. Thus, they do extensively transfer from their first language 'Arabic' that in fact caused the majority of their errors. Students' unfamiliarity with English collocations is in fact a result of their lack of competence in English language and culture.

2.3. Collocations Translation Suggestions

The difficulties and problems in translating collocations can be related to the overuse of literal translation, and to the linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic. Lack of exposure to socio-cultural information and limited knowledge of certain properties of these two languages are also responsible factors. On the light of these difficulties, some solutions are suggested for students to consider when translating collocations.

First of all, students must understand the relationship between words, i.e., which nouns are used with which verbs, which verbs used with which nouns, which adjectives with which nouns. In order to produce the most natural collocation in the TL, they must have enough information about the relationship of words in both SL and TL.

The necessity of linguistic competence of students is also important. They must have a native-like competence in the two languages, which is acquired by practicing translation for a long time. Thus, they can overcome the difficulties of finding the appropriate equivalent.

As a result of the difference in collocational patterning between English and Arabic, it does not matter for students to translate one word English collocation into two or three words Arabic collocations; their main goal should be to preserve the SL collocational meaning.

Students must distinguish between the figurative meaning and the free one. So they must translate the figurative collocation by a figurative one and the free by a free one, only in the case of the absence of a figurative collocations equivalent they may translate it into a free one. For example, «it rains cats and dogs» cannot be translated into "تمطر السماء قططا و كلابا " because it is odd in Arabic, thus it has to be "تمطر السماء بغزارة "

Concerning new English collocations, students should try first to translate them into new

Arabic collocations; if this is impossible, students should translate them into collocations which already exist in Arabic. If these two cases do not work, students should adopt the descriptive translation which means giving much information about the collocation or use footnotes to help the reader to understand it. This means that it is not necessary to render any new English collocation into a new Arabic collocation because it does not always exist.

Culture-specific collocations need more emphasis because they are specific to a given social group. Thus, they cannot be translated literally from SL into TL. Students should make sure to maintain the same connotative meaning of SL collocation into TL, either by paraphrasing, expanding, or using synonyms or more explaining. Students must have a wide cultural knowledge of the TL which is acquired by the exposure of socio-cultural information.

Finally, students can avoid a lot of problems by avoiding the use of literal translation which may be often misleading in getting the appropriate TL collocation. That is because collocations are opaque and cannot be translated always on word-for-word basis, instead translation must be provided for the phrase as a whole.

In addition, some suggestions are also given to teachers of English in general and of translation in particular. To improve their students' collocational competence and raise their awareness of the phenomenon of word combinations, teachers should teach collocations in an explicit way by designing lexical lessons for students of English. They should teach collocations by referring to the students' first language and highlighting the similarities and differences between English and Arabic. They should also provide socio-cultural information in pedagogical material as possible as they can to make students familiar enough with English collocations.

Conclusion

The analysis of the two tasks reveals that English students are unaware of the phenomenon of collocations. In the first task, students failed to translate English collocations correctly into Arabic. Most of the students have operated for a word for word translation, rendering the core meaning of each SL item by its direct equivalent without taking into consideration the surrounding words. Furthermore, students failed to recognize that a word meaning changes when it combines with another one and produced free combinations rather than collocations. Similarly, the second task shows that students are unfamiliar with the English collocations. Interference from their first language affects negatively their translation; negative transfer is considered the prime factor that leads them to make mistakes. Students' unfamiliarity with the English collocations reflects their failure to translate them correctly. If they were competent in English language and culture, they would render their appropriate equivalents in Arabic. Therefore students should improve their collocational competence and teachers should raise their awareness to this phenomenon.

General Conclusion

Collocations are one of the most inevitable sources of loss in translation in both source and target languages. Students must have a good collocational competence in order to decide which noun goes with which adjective and what its appropriate equivalent in the target language. They must have sufficient knowledge on all the collocations and their varieties in order to make an acceptable or correct translation from the source language to the target one.

This dissertation examined students' production of English collocations in English–Arabic translation. The main objective is to investigate whether students' difficulties in translating collocations is a result of their unfamiliarity with English language and culture. The role of students' first language on students' production is also investigated.

The results have given evidence that third year students of English, although they are in their final year of study, they actually face a great number of difficulties in translating collocations.. They have translated them as free combinations rather than fixed combinations because of their overuse of word for word translation. This kind of literal translation generally leads students to commit mistakes because it ignores the role of culture in translating collocations. Moreover, the data analysis has yielded that interference from students' first language is a source of their errors. This can explain their failure to produce the appropriate collocations.

Finally, even this study is limited in that the results go only on a small number of students and on a quite small set of collocations. However, it is hoped that this small quantity of data has given evidence that third year students of English face serious problems in translating collocations and that students' lack of proficiency in translating collocations is a result of their unfamiliarity with English language and culture.

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