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Translation Strategies of Arabic and English Collocations:
A Case Study of Algerian EFL Learners

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Abstract

Objectives: This paper aims to study the main challenges associated with translating idioms between English and Arabic, as well as the strategies used by Algerian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners to overcome difficulties in translating idioms from one language to another.

Methods: A translation test consisting of 18 sentences, 9 in English and 9 in Arabic, collected from Benson (1985), Mahmoud (1994), and Usama (1998), and As-Safi (2016), was administered to thirty Algerian postgraduate EFL students at Oran University in Algeria. Based on the translations provided in these sources, the accuracy of collocation translation was evaluated, and translation strategies were identified and entered into the Excel program, where frequencies and percentages were calculated.

Results: The participants' overall performance was unsatisfactory, with 11,85% accurate equivalent renditions of collocations from Arabic to English, and 27,03% from English to Arabic. Collocations displaying the "Adjective + Noun" pattern were particularly problematic for the participants. This can be attributed to a lack of knowledge of adjectives in the target language (TL) and their semantic differences, as evident in their excessive use of near-synonymous adjectives. Translating collocations from English to Arabic proved to be more challenging for them than translating collocations from Arabic to English. To compensate for their lack of familiarity with collocations, the EFL learners used the strategies of literal translation, synonymy, reduction, deletion, paraphrasing, and over-generalization.

Conclusions: These findings call for integrating English collocations in the school curricula in Algeria, the development of suitable instructional materials and programs for teaching collocations and prioritizing the teaching of collocations or word combinations in classrooms.

Keywords: Collocations, Translation Strategies, EFL, Algerians, Arabic, English.

استراتيجيات ترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية في اللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية:
دراسة لمثال نموذجي لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية من الجزائريين

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ملخّص

الأهداف: يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة التحديات الرئيسية المرتبطة بترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية والعكس، بالإضافة إلى الاستراتيجيات التي يستخدمها متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية من الجزائريين للتغلب على الصعوبات المرتبطة بترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية من لغة إلى أخرى.

المنهجية: جرى إجراء اختبار ترجمة يتضمن 18 جملة، 9 منهما باللغة الإنجليزية و9 باللغة العربية، جرى جمعهما من بنسون (1985)، ومحمود (1994)، وأسامة (1998)، والصافي (2016)، على ثلاثين طالبًا جزائريًا من طلاب الدراسات العليا باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية في جامعة وهران في الجزائر. بناءً على الترجمة المقدمة في هذه المصادر، جرى تقييم دقة ترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية، وجرى تحديد استراتيجيات الترجمة وإدخالها في برنامج Excel؛ حيث جرى حساب التكرارات والنسب المئوية للاستراتيجيات.

النتائج: كان الأداء العام للمشاركين غير مُرضٍ؛ حيث بلغت دقة الترجمة المكافئة للمتلازمات اللفظية العربية إلى الإنجليزية 11.85٪ ، و27.03٪ في الترجمة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية. وكانت المتلازمات اللفظية التي تعرض نمط "صفة + اسم" صعبة على المشاركين على نحو خاص. يمكن أن ينسب هذا إلى نقص معرفة الصفات في اللغة الهدف – المترجم إليها واختلافاتها الدلالية، كما يتضح من استخدامهم المفرط للصفات شبه المرادفة. وقد ثبت أن ترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية أكثر صعوبة بالنسبة إليهم من ترجمة المتلازمات اللفظية من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية. وللتعويض عن عدم إلمامهم بالمتلازمات اللفظية، اعتمد متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية استراتيجيات الترجمة الحرفية، والمرادفات، والاختزال، والحذف، وإعادة الصياغة، والتعميم المفرط.

الخلاصة: تدعو هذه النتائج إلى إدراج المتلازمات اللفظية في المناهج الدراسية في الجزائر، وتطوير مواد وبرامج تعليمية مناسبة لتدريس المتلازمات اللفظية، وإعطاء الأولوية لتدريس طريقة التركيب أو الجمع بين الكلمات في قاعات التدرس.

الكلمات الدالة: المتلازمات اللفظية، استراتيجيات الترجمة، لغة أجنبية، الجزائريون، اللغة العربية، اللغة الإنجليزية.

1. Introduction

Being an element of naturalness in speech, collocations make up a large proportion of everyday communication in any language. Hence, they are considered an integral part of native-speaker competence. This in turn makes them central during the process of language learning and teaching. According to Alexander (1984, p. 128), collocations are one of the "Cs" that should be prioritized when learning a language, along with context and connotation. Due to the association of words that they display, collocations are an effective way for learners to acquire vocabulary and store words in memory (Nattinger, 1988; Taiwo, 2004). Additionally, they assist learners in selecting more native-like vocabulary; hence, improving their language fluency (Shin and Nation, 2007). Accordingly, collocations are a means through which second and foreign language learners can enhance their four common language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

For EFL learners, having a sufficient vocabulary in the target language (TL) does not necessarily equate to an ability to use words in a native-like manner. This leads to a lack of collocational proficiency in the TL. This is due to collocations' inconsistencies in the cultural and linguistic structures between languages. Hence, learners are required to have sufficient, if not wide, knowledge of both source language (SL) and TL and their respective cultures. Other factors, pertinent to the learners, contribute to the difficulties in acquiring collocations in the TL. Studies have revealed that the influence of the mother tongue is a major contributor to collocation errors (Bahns, 1993; Fan, 2009; Koya, 2003; Ying, 2009). Consequently, Learners often resort to inadequate strategies such as literal translation, synonymy, transfer (Davoudi & Bahchad, 2015; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Herbst, 1996; Shakir & Farghal 1991), and repetitions and generalizations (Davoudi & Bahchad, 2015; Shih, 2000; Fan, 2009).

Studies of collocations in the Arab World mainly focus on one-way translation, either from English to Arabic or Arabic to English. Furthermore, research on Algerian EFL learners is quite scarce in comparison to other Arab-speaking EFL learners. Being bilinguals (with Arabic as a mother tongue and French as a second language), Algerian EFL learners may have a higher risk of encountering difficulties with collocation acquisition in English due to the risk of mother tongue and second language interference. The present study tackles the production of both, Arabic and English collocations; hence, provides an encompassing image of collocations as produced by Algerian EFL learners. The current study contributes to evaluating and enhancing EFL learners' knowledge of collocations and highlights the areas of difficulty in translating collocation from one language to another from other less explored cultures and settings, as is the case with Algerian EFL learners.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

The present study explores EFL learners' production of collocations through an analysis of the translation of collocations from Arabic to English and vice versa. The objectives of the study are to (1) investigate Algerian postgraduate EFL students' ability to produce collocations, (2) shed light on the challenges that they face when attempting to use collocations in the target language, and (3) the strategies that they employ to circumvent these problems. Accordingly, the study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. To what extent are Algerian EFL learners able to translate selected collocations from Arabic to English and vice versa?

2. What are the difficulties these learners face while translating these collocations?

3. What are the translation strategies that they resort to in order to render collocations from English to Arabic and vice versa?

4.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Collocations

Collocations are essential to any language, as they are among the techniques used to bring cohesiveness and textuality to any sort of writing. Collocations are spontaneously used, whether in everyday speech or in writing, and are learned either from experience, through extensive reading, or by interacting with native speakers. According to Sarikas (2006, p.36), collocations are word combinations that give a natural-sounding speech and writing to a language. Thus, collocations fulfill

several tasks, among which is supplying clarity of meaning, because a language extremely rich in collocations tends to be more precise and detailed in presenting information.

While definitions proliferate in the literature, collocations remain "notoriously difficult to define" (Leśniewska, 2006, p. 95). From a general perspective, collocations can be defined as a sequence of two or more words that consistently occur together in different contexts. They are those recurrent, non-idiomatic expressions habitually used together to convey a particular meaning derived from their association, e.g., "seize the opportunity" and its Arabic equivalence "انتهز الفرصة". Different aspects of collocations are highlighted in their definitions based on different linguistic levels. In semantics, they represent word combinations that have one semantic unit (Cruse, 2006, p. 27), while syntactically, they are word patterns that are recognized as being syntactically correct (Van der Wooden, 1997, p. 5).

2.2. *Types of Collocations*

Various scholars have proposed a classification of collocations into clear set categories (Benson, et al. 1986, Hill 2000, Lewis 2000) in an attempt to delimit the range of a node's (warm) collocates (welcome, day, reception). According to Lewis (2000, p. 133), collocations fall into lexical or grammatical categories depending on the word class. Lexical collocations include a set of open-class words, i.e., adverbs, adjectives, verbs, and nouns. Grammatical collocations are those that combine an open-class word and a closed-class word, i.e., prepositions, pronouns, determines) (See Altakhaineh et al., 2021). Table 1. Bellow provides examples of lexical and grammatical English collocations and their equivalents in Arabic.

Table1: Types of Collocation

Types of Collocations	English Collocations	Equivalent in Arabic
Adjective + Noun	"Raging storm" "Smashing victory"	"عاصفة هوجاء" "انتصار ساحق"
Verb + Noun	"Pass a law" "Teach a lesson"	"يسن قانونا" "يلقن درسا"
Noun + Noun	"Death sentence" "Status quo"	"حكم الإعدام" "الوضع الراهن"
Adverb + Adverb	"Quite often" "Right now"	"في اغلب الأحيان" "على الفور"
Noun + Prepositions	"A play on" "A Meeting with"	"التلاعب ب" "لقاء مع"
Collocation of similes	"As stubborn as a mule" "As cunning as a fox"	"أعند من البغل" "أمكر من الثعلب"

2.3. *Translation of Collocations*

Translators have long struggled to provide a clean translation with no disruption or change in meaning. This difficulty is amplified by the unpredictability and variability of collocations. Hatim and Mason (1990, p.205) state that "there is always a danger that, even for experienced translators, SL interference will occasionally escape unnoticed and an unnatural collocation will flaw the TT." Accordingly, it is only fair for learners of a foreign language to face challenges pertinent to learning and using collocations.

Collocation equivalency, assuming it exists in the TL, is one of the greatest challenges faced by language learners. Selecting the proper equivalent needs proficiency in both SL and TL. In some cases, a one-word collocation in English has a two-word equivalence in Arabic and vice versa; such as "put off" (يأجل) and "يخطئ في الهجاء" (to misspell). Further issues stem from the effect of the mother tongue on EFL learners' selection of collocations in the TL. For instance, students may produce the collocation "the computer is walking slow" (يمشي ببطء) instead of "running slow", which may sound odd to native English speakers. Another challenge of collocations stems from students' lack of cultural knowledge of the target language. An interesting example of culture-specific collocations is given by Baker (1992, p. 49). She points out that the Arabic phrase "يولد امرأة" and the English collocation "to deliver a baby" demonstrate how the Arabs focus on the woman in childbirth while the English place the emphasis on the baby. This demonstrates the variations in the way words collocate

in different languages. When faced with these challenges, EFL learners make use of different strategies when conveying collocations from the SL to the TL.

2.4. Translation Strategies

The most praised type of strategy when it comes to the translation of collocations is dynamic translation. Dynamic equivalence is the closest natural and faithful translation that produces natural-sounding speech for the target language audience (Nida, 1964). For instance, the dynamic equivalence of the English collocation "hard time" would be (وقت عصيب) in Arabic, as opposed to the formal equivalence (وقت صعب) which is more literal and less effective. Research dedicated to investigating the strategies used by EFL learners to translate collocations from SL to RL revealed that learners who fail to provide proper equivalents in the TL employ several translation strategies, namely, Reduction, Overgeneralization, deletion, synonymy, compensation, paraphrase, and Literal (Davoudi & Bahchad, 2015; Fan, 2009; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995, Herbst, 1996; Lalouci, 2022; Mahdi & Mohd Yasin, 2015; Shakir & Farghal, 1991; Shih, 2000).

- Literal Translation: A word-for-word translation that involves translating words separately. E.g., "short life" as "حياة قصيرة" which is an appropriate translation. On the other hand, the translation of the Arabic collocation "يوم سعيد" as "happy day" is not an accurate translation. A more appropriate equivalence would be "good day". (See Khalifah & Zibin, 2022 for more details on when this translation is needed).

- Synonymy: This strategy involves the use of synonyms or words closely related to the actual equivalents. E.g., The translation of "essay bank" as "مصرف المعلومات" instead of its proper equivalent "بنك المعلومات".

- Overgeneralization: This occurs when a word in the source text (ST) is translated into a more general term in the target text (TT). E.g., Translating the word "واجهة متجر" (storefront) to "window".

- Compensation: Refers to a meaning transfer procedure wherein the lost meaning of the SL text is translated into the TL text. E.g., "fantastical tale" as "قصة من نسج الخيال".

- Paraphrase: In this procedure, the translator provides a more detailed explanation of the translated text. This is often referred to as descriptive equivalence. E.g., "تلصص من الشباك" as "he was eavesdropping from the window".

- Reduction: This process involves the omission of redundant or unnecessary information from the SL text. E.g., "with his head down, he then left" as "ثم غادر".

- Deletion: This occurs when the text intended to be translated gets deleted in the TT.

2.5. Previous Studies

Studies on collocations proliferate in the literature between those attempting to define collocations based on their lexical, semantic, and syntactic features (Gorgis & Al- Kharabsheh, 2009; Howart, 1998; Nation, 2001), and those that examined them from a pedagogical perspective (Balcı & Çakır, 2012; Lewis, 2000; Rahimi & Momeni; 2012). The latter are divided between studies that focus on the developmental aspect of collocation acquisition in the TL, and studies that attempt to determine the sources of collocational errors and the strategy types utilized by EFL and ESL Learners to overcome their collocational deficiencies in the TL.

Zughoul and Abdul-Fattah (2003) analyzed the level of collocation competence of Jordanian EFL learners at the graduate and undergraduate levels, as well as the strategies they employ when translating them into Arabic. Participants were given a multiple-choice test and a translation test, from Arabic to English, to determine their receptive and productive collocation competence. According to the findings, the subjects performed better on the receptive test than on the productive test. While the graduates performed better than the undergraduates in both tasks, the performance of both groups was considerably low. In addition, the productive task generated twelve translation strategies, including avoidance, literal translation, substitution, overgeneralization, quasi-metaphorical similarity, assumed synonymity, paraphrase, and false TL translation.

In a similar vein, Shehata (2008) investigated the effect of the mother tongue on the perception and production of collocations in the TL by advanced Arab EFL and ESL learners. In particular, the study investigated collocations of the type verb-noun and adjective-noun. Shehata (2008) made use of a total of two productive tests, a receptive test, and a vocabulary recognition test which included the words of the collocations in isolation. The results showed that EFL and ESL

students differed significantly with regard to their ability to comprehend and produce collocations. The performance of ESL learners surpassed that of the EFL learners. This indicates that the learning environment affects collocation acquisition. Similar to Zughoul and Abdul-Fattah (2003), the perceptive test yielded more positive results than the productive test. When it comes to the collocation type, EFL and ESL learners performed better in verb-noun collocations than in adjective-noun collocations.

Hadi (2014) conducted a study on Iraqi EFL learners' ability to determine a node's collocates and their proficiency in using collocations in English. The study found that the Iraqi EFL students struggled with collocation patterning and made inaccurate word associations. As an added challenge, the participants had trouble translating the Arabic collocations to English; hence, demonstrating a lack of knowledge of collocations in the TL. The participants used substitution, transfer, and generalization as strategies to overcome the challenges they faced during the translation. Learners' high reliance on these strategies is indicative of their limited knowledge of collocations and rudimentary command of the language as a whole.

Habtoor and Al-Swaidan (2019) examined whether there is any correlation between Students' familiarity and productivity of collocations in the TL. Accordingly, 40 Saudi EFL learners were put through a two-part test adopted from Gllystad (2007) to assess their familiarity with collocations and an English-to-Arabic translation test to investigate their productivity. The results revealed that, as English language majors, the participants' knowledge of collocations was considerably low. A positive correlation was found between EFL learners' familiarity and productivity of collocations in terms of their translation into Arabic through the use of different strategies such as literal translation, synonymity, and paraphrasing.

In another study exploring difficulties that EFL learners face when it comes to collocations, Al-Jarf (2022) targeted undergraduate students majoring in translation. He examined how these future translators deal with the translation of English collocations of the type Adjective + preposition, Verb + preposition, and noun + preposition. An analysis of word + preposition collocations in the students/ translators' graduation projects revealed a deficiency in both L1 and L2. During their translation of the prepositions, the participants made three types of errors: using incorrect prepositions, adding a preposition to a word that did not require one, and omitting the preposition when the word necessitated one.

Various studies addressing Arab-speaking EFL learners' knowledge of collocations, at varying proficiency levels, revealed that collocations are one of the major stumbling blocks for learners during the process of language acquisition. However, the majority of these studies, including the ones reviewed above, are unidirectional in their investigation of collocations (either from English to Arabic or Arabic to English). Furthermore, research on Algerian EFL learners is quite scarce in comparison to other Arab-speaking EFL learners. Hence, the present study provides further insight into less explored EFL settings in terms of the production of collocations from Arabic to English and from English to Arabic by Algerian EFL learners, the difficulties they face when attempting to render collocations in the TL, as well as the strategies they employ to overcome these difficulties.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants in the current research consisted of 30 Algerian EFL students, aged between 22 to 28. The sample are all native speakers of Arabic. The participants started learning standard Arabic along with French (as a second language) in primary school, and English language (as a foreign language) in middle and secondary schools and during their bachelor's degree. The students are currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Oran in Algeria. It can be assumed that the participants have sufficient knowledge of the English language. Likewise, the sample is expected to have adequate knowledge of the Arabic language and its system since they are all native speakers of Arabic.

3.2. Material

The administered test comprised 18 sentences, 9 in English and 9 in Arabic, each sentence containing at least one collocation. The selected Arabic collocations were collected from As-Safi's (2016) book entitled *Translation of types of*

discourse for Arab translation theorists and practitioners which addresses discourse and translation criticism. The book contains a corpora of bilingual original and translated excerpts including idioms and collocations. The remaining English collocations were selected from Benson (1985), Mahmoud (1994), and Usama (1998), as this model proved to be efficient and successful in proving precise and reliable results. This model is widely used in similar research (Faris & Sahu, 2013; Muayad & Muhd Yassin, 2015). The selected participants were requested to provide an Arabic and an English translation of the following collocations underlined in the sentences in Table 2 below.

Table 2: English Collocations **Table 3**: Arabic Collocations

English Collocations
He gave me a <u>warm reception</u>.
Today is a <u>good day</u>.
We must <u>seize the opportunity</u> when it comes.
English Literature is an <u>essay bank</u>.
It is hard to learn about <u>the hour of decision</u>.
The contract has <u>terms and conditions</u>.
She feels <u>well and good</u>.
I will stand with you <u>secretly and publicly</u>.
In my dreams, I saw <u>a school of whales</u>.

Arabic Collocations
يستهلك <u>مدخن مفرط</u> أكثر من 31 سيجارة في اليوم
سمع أهل القرية <u>صرخة مدوية</u>
تبحر السفن في <u>البحار الهائجة</u>
كانت إبنته ذات <u>ملامح جميلة</u>
استخدمت <u>زبدة فاسدة</u> بالخطأ
تعلم المدرسة الأطفال <u>السلوك المستقيم</u>
انتشرت رائحة <u>السمك الفاسد</u> في الغرفة
أغتيل الرئيس بينما كان <u>يلقي خطابا</u>
لم نستطع رؤية الطريق بسبب <u>الضباب الكثيف</u>

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The present research made use of online data collection method for its convenience in administering the questionnaire, collecting the participants' responses, and analyzing the data. Furthermore, the time span needed to complete online questionnaires is on average two-thirds shorter than that of traditional research methods. Accordingly, the questionnaire was administered online via an on-demand software branded *SurveyPlanet* designed to produce surveys and collect results. In accordance, a link to the survey was then sent out to the selected sample via e-mail kindly requesting their participation. The participants were asked to translate the collocations from English to Arabic and vice versa. The author had prior contact with the participants to make sure that no bilingual dictionaries, electronic or otherwise, were used during the translation. No time limit was given; hence, the participants had sufficient time to finish the test. The results of the test were later analyzed in terms of the accuracy of the translated collocations, difficulties that EFL students face when attempting to use collocations in the target language, and the strategies they employ to overcome these difficulties. Based on the equivalents provided by Safi (2016) and Benson (1985), Mahmoud (1994), and Usama (1998), from which the collocations were selected, the researcher evaluated the accuracy of the translated collocations. Following this, the translation strategies were identified and then entered into the Excel program, where frequencies and percentages of the strategies were calculated.

4.   Results and Discussion

The present study is conducted to examine Algerian EFL learners' proficiency in producing collocations, the difficulties they encounter during the translation, and the strategies they use to avoid these problems. Accordingly, two translation tests were administered to the students to assess their ability to understand and provide equivalent collocation from English to Arabic and vice versa. An analysis of the obtained results and the translation strategies used by the participants are provided below.

4.1. Analysis of the Translation of Collocations from Arabic to English

Table 4: Analysis of the Translation from Arabic to English

No.	Collocation	Discussion
1	مدخن مفرط	The participants were successful in translating this collocation in comparison to the other collocations. 10 out of 30 students managed to provide the accurate dynamic equivalence "Heavy Smoker". According to Nida (1964, p. 165), dynamic equivalence is concerned with making the target text natural for its receptors, by providing "the closet natural equivalent to the source-language message." When they were unable to find the equivalent collocation, the participants maintained the grammatical structure and tried to transfer approximately the meaning as in "addict, addicted smoker", or resort to literal translation such as "Over/Excessive smoker".
2	صرخة مدوية	The accurate translation of this collocation would be of the grammatical structure (Adjective+ Noun: Good Cry). The vast majority of the participants used near-synonymous words to translate the collocation, using "Loud/Strong/Deafening Scream/Cry". This type of collocation proved to be difficult for the students to render into Arabic, as they failed in finding the proper English adjective equivalent.
3	البحار الهائجة	The rendition of the third collocation was not successful. All of the students failed to provide the proper equivalence, displaying a lack of knowledge of the collocations in the target language. The majority of the participants provided the translation "Rough Seas" while 6 of them opted for the literal translation "Raging/Angry Seas". Similar to the second collocation, the students seem to focus on delivering the idea, albeit vaguely.
4	ملامح جميلة	This collocation demonstrated the students' tendencies to use word-for-word translation. The most frequent translation was "Beautiful Features/Traits". While this translation is not odd and does fit within the given context, the dynamic equivalent, as provided by As-Safi is "Good Looks". Furthermore, the translation of this collocation exhibited the students' tendency to translate the meaning irrespective of form or function. For instance, 9 students provided the translation "His daughter was Beautiful/Pretty/ Gorgeous".
5	زبدة فاسدة	For this collocation, the majority of the participants again used literal translation "Rotten/ Bad Butter", while 13 of them chose to transfer the meaning in order to compensate for their lack of knowledge of the collocations in English by providing near synonymous words such as "Expired/Old Butter".
6	السلوك المستقيم	In this collocation, a total number of 6 students succeeded in capturing and transferring the proper English equivalent "Good Behavior". The remaining students provided near-equivalents such as "Proper/Right Behavior/Manners" with the exception of 4 students who provided a word-for-word translation as in "Straight behavior". This is yet another instance where students demonstrated problems with finding equivalent English adjectives.
7	السمك الفاسد	Similar to the fifth collocation, this was another instance in which participants resorted to literal translation to circumvent the problem of lacking collocation knowledge in the TL. The majority of students translated the collocation as "Rotten Fish," while the remainder used synonymous words or the reduction strategy in which they transferred only half of the collocation's meaning.
8	يلقي خطابا	Sentence eight was accurately rendered to English as "Deliver a Speech" by precisely 10 students. While some of the remaining participants opted for a literal translation, the other half resorted to the strategy of deletion. The sentence "أغتيل الرئيس بينما كان يلقي خطابا" was translated as "The president was assassinated" with the complete deletion of the collocation which resulted in the loss of relevant information from ST.
9	الضباب الكثيف	The collocation was translated using mainly words that are synonymous or near-synonymous to the actual equivalent "heavy fog" such as "thick fog". The participants further employed the deletion strategy negatively by only partially translating the collocation because they found it difficult to find equivalent adjectives in the TL.

Translation Strategies Used in Rendering Collocations to English

Table 5: Translation Strategies of Collocations from Arabic to English

No. Collocation	Equivalence	Incorrect	Literal Translation	Synonymy	Reduction	Deletion	Paraphrase	Generalization
1	10	-	8	9	-	-	3	-
2	-	1	1	24	2	2	-	-
3	-	-	6	22	2	-	-	-
4	-	-	13	-	8	-	-	9
5	-	1	13	15	1	-	-	-
6	6	3	7	12	1	-	1	-
7	-	2	21	4	3	-	-	-
8	10	-	-	11	-	9	-	-
9	6	2	3	8	4	5	2	-
Frequency	**32**	**9**	**72**	**105**	**21**	**16**	**6**	**9**
Percentage	**11,85%**	**3,33%**	**26,66%**	**38,88%**	**7,77%**	**5,92%**	**2,22%**	**3,33%**

Table 5 presents the strategies that EFL learners used during their translation of Arabic collocations into English and their frequency of use. The participants' overall performance was considerably low, demonstrating a lack of knowledge of English collocations. This can be seen in their frequent use of literal translation (26.66% of the overall strategies) and synonymy (38.88%) as a strategy to compensate for this inadequacy. Arabic Collocations of the from Noun + Adjective were problematic to translate often due to the participants' inability to find a proper adjective equivalent in English. Hence, they used words that are synonymous or near synonymous to transfer the meaning irrespective of form or function. Furthermore, while the reduction strategy is often used in translation to cut words or phrases that seem redundant and unnecessary, the participants tended to use it when they did not know the collocation or, at least part of it. Hence, they resorted to transferring half the collocation in English and losing, as a result, relevant information. The use of deletion and reduction strategies is another indicator of not only a lack of knowledge of collocation in the TL, but also a deficiency in the TL's vocabulary repertoire.

4.2. *Analysis of the Translation of Collocations from English to Arabic*

Table 6: Analysis of The Translation from English to Arabic

No.	Collocation	Discussion
1	Warm reception	14 participants provided the accurate dynamic equivalence "إستقبال حار". Using near-synonym, the second most provided translation was "ترحيب بحفاوة" and "ترحيب حار". Only four participants opted for literal translation "إستقبال دافئ" and paraphrasing strategy "رحب بي كما يجب", displaying a lack of knowledge of this collocation in Arabic.
2	Good day	Surprisingly, only one of the participants was able to provide an accurate equivalence. This type of collocation proved to be difficult for the participants. While they succeeded in keeping the right grammatical structure (Noun + Adjective), they could not produce the equivalent Arabic adjective. Synonymous and near-synonymous adjectives were used during the translation such as "خير، رائع، جميل".
3	Seize the opportunity	The translation of the third collocation was successful. The majority of the participants produced the proper equivalent and maintain the grammatical structure "Verb + Noun) "إنتهز الفرصة" and "نتخطف الفرصة" or "إغتنم الفرصة". The rest of the failed translations either displayed synonymy paraphrasing "لا يجب ان تضييع الفرصة عندما تسنح لنا" (we should not waste an opportunity).
4	Essay bank	This collocation demonstrated the participants' tendencies to use word-for-word translation, failing to guess the meaning even within context. The most frequent translation was "بنك مقالات" which is odd within the provided context. Other avoided the translation of the collocation by using the deletion strategy. This demonstrates the students' lack of knowledge of this collocation. Only 2 out of 30 participants succeeded in properly translating the collocation into "بنك معلومات".

No.	Collocation	Discussion
5	The hour of decision	With reference to their answers, the participants seemed to lack knowledge of the collocation in the SL. Only 4 participants succeeded in translating this collocation. The majority depended on literal translation such as "ساعة القرار" and "وقت القرار" instead of the appropriate equivalent " ساعة الحسم"
6	Terms and conditions	The translation of the sixth collocation demonstrated that while the participants understood the collocation, they could not provide an accurate Arabic equivalence. This can be seen in their use of terms closely related to the actual equivalence such as "بنود وقوانين". Some of them used a reduction strategy to translate the two-word collocation into a one-word collocation "شروط" (conditions).
7	Well and good	Only 1 Student was able to accurately translate the collocation and succeeded in using the proper grammatical structure (Preposition + noun + noun) "على مايرام خير". The rest of the participants used literal translation, reduction, and synonymy to transfer the meaning from SL to the TL, producing collocation such as "رائعة وجيدة" , "بخير", and "بصحة وعافية"
8	Secretly and publicly	The participants had the highest success rate in producing a proper Arabic equivalent of this collocation despite the difference in the grammatical structure of this collocation in English (Adverb + Adverb) and Arabic (Adjective + Adjective) for "سرا وعلانيةً" or (Preposition + Noun + Noun) for "في السر والعلن".
9	**School of whales**	This collocation proved to be one of the most challenging to translate, as no exact equivalent was produced. A significant number of students failed to correctly understand the English collocation, resulting in awkward and nonsensical translations such as "كابوسا" (nightmare), "مدرسة الحيتان", and "مدرسة خيال" (fantasy school). An exception can be made to those who provided the near equivalence of the collocation "مجموعة / سرب من الحيتان". The majority used literal translation, deletion strategy, or transliteration "مدرسة ويلز".

Translation Strategies Used in Rendering Collocation in Arabic

Table 7: Translation Strategies of Collocations from English to Arabic

No. Collocation	Equivalence	Incorrect	Literal Translation	Synonymy	Reduction	Deletion	Paraphrase
1	14	-	2	12	-	-	2
2	1	-	10	19	-	-	-
3	19	-	2	7	-	-	2
4	2	8	12	1	2	4	1
5	4	-	20	4	0	1	1
6	10	-	20	-	0	-	-
7	-	-	21	6	3	-	-
8	23	2	5	-	-	-	-
9	-	3	19	8	-	-	-
Frequency	**73**	**13**	**111**	**57**	**5**	**5**	**6**
Percentage	**27,03%**	**4,81%**	**41,11%**	**21,11%**	**1,85%**	**1,85%**	**2,22%**

Table 7 shows the strategies used by EFL students to translate English collocations into Arabic and their frequency of use. The participants' overall performance in translating collocations from English to Arabic is better in comparison to their performance in translating collocations from Arabic to English. However, overall performance remains considerably low. The literal translation was the most frequently used strategy (41.11%). This shows that the participants were not familiar with the English collocations; hence, they resorted to translating them word by word, irrespective of meaning. The results, produced by this method, are not always satisfactory, particularly with regard to the use of collocations. Literal translation typically

produces non-native-like, awkward, and at times misleading expressions, such as the translation of "school of whales" as "مدرسة حيتان" and the translation of "seize the opportunity" as "نستولي على الفرصة". Similar to the translation of collocations from Arabic to English, the participants struggled with finding an adjective equivalent when translating collocations displaying the Noun + Adjective form. As a way of dealing with insufficient vocabulary breakdowns, they used other adjectives that have various (but not all) essential components and can (but not at all times) be used interchangeably.

4.3. Discussion

Data analysis of the translation of Arabic and English collocations, as performed by EFL learners, revealed an overall low performance, which is consistent with previous research done in the area (Davoudi & Bahchad, 2015; Fan, 2009; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Herbst, 1996; Lalouci, 2022 Mahdi & Mohd Yasin, 2015; Shakir & Farghal, 1992; Shih, 2000). The participants performed better in the translation of collocation from English to Arabic, with an accuracy percentage of 27.03%, than they did in the Arabic-to-English translation, with a success rate of 11.85%. This is consistent with Bahumaid (2006), who found that even for experienced translators, whose mother tongue is Arabic, the translation of collocations from Arabic to English proved to be more challenging than that in the opposite direction. It can be argued that the EFL learners' proficiency in the Arabic language in general (SL), and knowledge of Arabic collocations in particular, are comparatively higher than their proficiency in the English language (TL). Synonymy was the most used translation strategy during the rendition of the Arabic collocations, while literal translation emerged as the first go-to strategy when translating English collocations to Arabic. The EFL learners' struggle in finding proper adjective equivalents can be attributed to their insufficient knowledge of English synonyms and their semantic differences (Zibin et al., 2020). This is consistent with various research investigating the production of adjectives by Arabic-speaking EFL learners, in which findings indicated that EFL learners often fail to use correct synonyms and collocational synonyms (Alanazi, 2017; Fadlallah, 2021; Rabab'ah & Abu Rumman, 2023). Overall, the extensive use of literal translation and synonymy is an indication of learners' lack of awareness of collocational patterns and collocational restrictions.

According to research on collocations' efficacy as a vocabulary-teaching method, learners are better able to learn and retain new words when presented in the form of collocations rather than in isolation (Al Musa, 2022; Nizonkiza, 2017). Collocations are an essential component that needs to be mastered to achieve proficiency in any language. Accordingly, collocations should be prioritized in the classrooms. The current study sheds light on EFL learners' knowledge of collocations and highlighted the areas of difficulty in translating collocation from one language to another from less explored cultures. Data analysis revealed that EFL learners do not seem to understand that the meaning conveyed by a given collocation is derived from the association between words. This can be seen in their extensive use of literal translation and near synonymy when rendering collocations from Arabic to English and vice versa. It is often stated that identifying the problem is half the solution. Accordingly, the results of the present study have pedagogical implications that may be of use to teachers and learners of foreign languages, textbook writers, and syllabus designers. The identified collocational problems call for 1) integrating English collocations in the school curricula in Algeria, 2) generating suitable materials and programs for teaching collocations, and 3) prioritizing explicit instruction in making word combinations in the classrooms. Students should be trained on how to combine words to create meaning. This way, they can develop lexical competence and enrich their vocabulary repertoire. This in turn enables students to better decode the meaning of word combinations such as collocations. Additionally, instructors need to focus on collocations that do not have a direct translation equivalent. In doing so, students will become less dependent on literal translation and focus on the meaning of collocations derived from the words' association.

5. Conclusion

The paper has identified the major challenges associated with translating collocations from English to Arabic and vice versa, and the strategies that EFL learners employ to circumvent the difficulties associated with rendering collocations from one language to another. The overall performance of the Algerian EFL learners in the translation of collocations from English to Arabic and vice versa was considerably low, suggesting a serious lack of proficiency in the use of collocations.

The findings are consistent with previous research on the translation of collocations by EFL learners (Davoudi & Bahchad, 2015; Fan, 2009; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Herbst, 1996; Lalouci, 2022 Mahdi & Mohd Yasin, 2015; Shakir & Farghal, 1992; Shih, 2000). In comparison to the translation of Arabic collocations, the participants performed better in the translation of English collocations. To compensate for their ignorance of the collocation, the EFL learners used literal translation, synonymy, reduction, deletion, paraphrasing, and over-generalization. The major problems that the EFL learners faced stemmed from:

- A general lack of knowledge of collocations, as evident in their poor performance in the production of collocations.
- The reliance on literal translation, which more often than not, does not provide an accurate translation of the ST, especially with collocations.
- A lack of knowledge of adjectives in the TL, as evident in their struggle with collocations of the type Adjective + Noun, and their excessive use of near-synonymous adjectives rather than the actual equivalent.
- A general lack of vocabulary knowledge, as evident in their use of reduction and deletion strategies in the translation of collocations from Arabic to English in comparison to the translation of collocations from English to Arabic.
- It can be recommended that conducting further studies on differences of collocations in L1 and L2 from a pedagogical and lexicographical perspective are needed to shed more light on the challenges encountered by EFL learners in comprehending English collocations.

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