

**Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel**  
**Translating Collocations**

**Definition of Collocation**

A collocation is the habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items. It is merely considered "the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing" as stated in Oxford Collocation Dictionary (2003). Another definition might be "a combination of two or more words that always occur together consistently in different texts and contexts in language." That is, a certain noun occurs with a certain adjective (e.g. 'blind confidence': ثقة عمياء ) a verb with a noun (e.g. 'draw a sword': يستل سيفاً ) a noun with a noun (e.g. 'brain drain': هجرة الأدمغة ) etc. simply, it is which goes with which in language, namely, which word goes with which word. Many collocations are two words each.

**Types of Collocations in English**

There are numerous types of collocations in English. However, the concentration here is on the most significant ones only, which are extremely recurrent in language use, and interest students and translators most. The classification of these types according to Benson, and Ilson (1986) is purely grammatical, depending on the grammatical groupings of word classes according to their occurrence together in the use of language. There are different types of collocations that are manifested as follows:

**A- Adjectives and Nouns Collocations**

smashing victory	إنتصار ساحق
lukewarm reception	إستقبال فاتر
raging storm	عاصفة هوجاء

**B- Nouns and Nouns Collocations**

status quo	الوضع الراهن
essay bank	بنك المعلومات
state university	جامعة حكومية

Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel

**C- Verbs and Nouns Collocations**

teach a lesson	يلقن درسا
win confidence	كسب الثقة
exert an effort	يبذل جهدا

**D- Verbs and Adverbs Collocations**

examined thoroughly	درس/فحص بدقة
whispered softly	همس برقة/بلطف
smiled proudly	إبتسم بفخر

**E- Adverbs and Adjectives Collocations**

fully aware of	على علم تام
happily married	متزوج سعيد/بسعادة

**F- Adjective and Adjective Collocations**

healthy and well	بصحة و عافية
alive and kicking	حي يرزق
right and proper	في احسن حال

**G- Adverbs and Adverb Collocations**

willy nilly	شاء ام أبي
wholly and heartedly	بكل إخلاص
secretly and publically	سراً وعلانية

**H- Prepositional Collocations**

## ➤ noun and preposition collocations

ignorance of (something)	الجهل ب (شيء ما)
a protest against	إحتجاج ضد

## ➤ preposition and noun collocations

on call/duty (doctor)	طبيب مناوب
to (someone's) advantage	في مصلحة (فلان )

## Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel

## ➤ Adjective and preposition collocations

angry with

غاضب من

contrary to

على العكس

## ➤ Verb and preposition collocations

burst into tears

اجهش بالبكاء

dream of

يحلم بـ

**Collocations in Arabic**

As a matter of fact, little attention has been paid toward presenting a systematic study of Arabic collocations. It is found in Arabic, under different titles as: "التلازم", "التضام" and "المصاحبات / المتلازمات اللفظية". Hassan (1973:217) refers to collocation in Arabic as "التضام". He sub-categorizes "التضام" into two types: "التلازم" (inseparableness) and "التضام" (mutual incompatibility). He defines the term "التضام" as the habitual co-occurrence of two lexical items. The relation that binds between these two lexical items could be rhetorical or grammatical. Whereas Husam Eddin (1985:257) defines collocations as: "المصاحبة الإعتيادية لكلمة" (The normal occurrence of a word with certain other words in a language). He further argues that words do not appear together in a language just by chance and that there are "ضوابط المصاحبة" (collocational restrictions) that govern their usage. These collocational restrictions, according to Husamaddin (1985:258), are:

1. *Association: agreement which* means that there has to be an agreement between words that collocate with each other. For example, one could say (جبل شاهق a high mountain), but not (رجل شاهق a high man).

2. *Collocational range:* A collocational range is the number of collocates a word can have in order to produce acceptable collocations. The verb (مات to die), for example, has a wide collocational range. It can collocate with many different words. It can be used with the noun (إنسان a human being), (حيوان an animal), and (نبات a plant).

**Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel**

3. (تواترية المصاحبة *Co-occurrence*): By cooccurrence we mean words that appear together regularly in a language.

**Types of Collocations in Arabic**

Hafiz (2002, cited in Brashi, 2005: 44-45) classifies Arabic collocations into twelve different types based on both grammatical and lexical patterns. They are as follows:

- Verb + noun, whether the noun is subject, object, or state حال Examples are:

هدأ الموج	the waves subsided)
ضرب الخيمة	he pitched the tent)
استشاط غضبا	he was inflamed with rage)

respectively.

- Verb + prepositional noun phrase, e.g:

إستقال من العمل	he resigned from work)
-----------------	------------------------

- Verb + prepositional noun phrase, where the phrase acts as an adverb, e.g:

نفذ بدقة	he precisely implemented)
----------	---------------------------

- Verb + noun phrase, where the noun is in the form of an adverbial-condition, e.g:

اتصل هاتفيا	he made a phone call)
-------------	-----------------------

- Verb + conjunction + verb, e.g :

طار وحلق	he flew and soured)
----------	---------------------

- Noun + noun اضافة e.g :

مسرح الاحداث	scene of events)
--------------	------------------

- Noun + conjunction + noun, e.g :

عزم واصرار	intention and insistence)
------------	---------------------------

- Noun + adjective, e.g :

قوة عظمى	a supreme, mighty or ultimate power)
----------	--------------------------------------

- Noun + prepositional noun phrase, e.g :

في غاية الادب	extremely polite)
---------------	-------------------

**Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel**

## ➤ Noun + preposition, e.g :

( مقارنة ب ) in comparison with)

## ➤ Adjective + noun, e.g :

( حسن الاخلاق ) having high morals)

## ➤ Adjective + adverbial phrase, e.g :

( مستنكر بشدة ) strongly condemns)

**Translating collocations**

Collocations are simply the way certain words habitually occur together. However, these combinations sound natural to native speakers, but language learners have to make a special effort to learn them because they may be often difficult to guess. Some collocations can be transferred from one language into another without any kind of change. On the other hand there are many other types of collocations which differ across languages and cultures. In other words; collocations can be universal or language specific. In English for example, they say “to break the rule/law but in Arabic we say يخالف القواعد/القانون David Crystal (1987: 105) noted that “collocations differ greatly between languages and provide a major difficulty in mastering foreign languages.” For instance, in Arabic the word نظام can co-occur with many words like ( نظام عام/public order ), ( نظام مرور/traffic law ), ( نظام شمسي/solar system ), ( نظام عالمي/world order ), ( نظام غذائي/diet ), and ( نظام حكم/regime ). The same applies in translating collocations from English into Arabic. For example, Baker (2008:137) noted that the word “deliver” can go with a list of varied nouns, e.g., to deliver a letter رسالة يسلم to deliver news, ينقل اخبار, to deliver a verdict يصدر حكما to deliver a baby تلد امرأة to deliver a lecture/speech يلقي محاضرة/خطبة Therefore, collocations may differ across languages and cultures.

**Basically, there are three types of collocations in terms of translatability:**

1. In Arabic and English we may find typical compatible collocations which may be translated word-for-word without any loss of semantic or stylistic features, e.g:

( green light الضوء الأخضر ) ( blind trust ثقة عمياء )

Mr : BOULKHESSAIM Adel

2. Semi-compatible collocations where one or more components change across cultures, e.g: (مطر غزير) heavy rain), (نظام عام) public order).

3. Non-compatible collocations. These are mainly cultural words and as such they are language specific, e.g:

(المؤودة the female infant that is buried alive),

And (أُحْكَم الجاهلية to be ruled by the law of pagan ignorance), which need further commentary or footnotes when being translated. Any attempt to paraphrase such non-compatible or semi-compatible collocations without prior knowledge of the cultural and linguistic properties of both languages may lead to less effective mistranslation.