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Translating Collocations

2.4. Translation of COLLOCATIONS:

A 'collocation' is the 'habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items' (Crystal, 1981. Printed in Newmark, 1988: 212). It is 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.

Drawing a comparison between a text and the human body, Newmark (op.cit.: 125) likens grammar to the skeleton, words to flesh, and collocations are the tendons that connect them to one another. Indeed, collocations play a vital role in language. They are its beautiful part, and inject a refreshing spirit in it. They are present and inevitable in any kind of text with no exception. Hence their importance in translation. Students need to attend to them fully in Arabic to lend the Arabic version the same beauty of the English text. This means that undermining the concern with the translation of the English collocations in Arabic - which has been the case until very recently - results in a poor, despirited Arabic text.

The translation of collocations can be discussed through the discussion of their commonest types in English. In principle, fixed phrases and expressions of all types can come under the general umbrella of collocations. Yet, for convenience of discussion and classification, fixed phrases like idioms and proverbs in particular are assigned independent sections.

Types of Collocations :

There are several types of collocations. However, the concentration here is on the most important ones only, which are extremely recurrent in language use, and interest students and translators most. The classification of these types is purely *grammatical*, depending on the grammatical groupings of word classes according to their occurrence together in the use of language. The adoption of grammatical description makes the structure of collocations easier to follow, understand and, hence, translate into Arabic.

1.Adjective+noun collocations: e.g.

1. "hard labour":

(أشغال شاقة/مخاض عسير)

2. "net weight":

(الوزن الصافي)

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3. "raging storm": (ريح عاصف/عاصفة هوجاء)
4. "fast sleep": (سبات عميق)
5. "smashing victory": (انتصار ساحق)
- 6 "warm reception": (استقبال حار)
7. "lukewarm reception": (استقبال فاتر)
8. "idle talk": (كلام فارغ)
9. "straying sheep": (غنم قاصية/غنم تائهة)*
- 10."black market": (سوق سوداء)

* of '9' is taken from an authenticated Tradition (حديث صحيح) by the Prophet (peace be to him), the last part of which reads as follows: (إنما يأكل الذئب من الغنم (إنما يأكل الذئب من الغنم القاصية) (Literally: 'The wolf eats none but of straying sheep'))

Many examples can be found in both languages for this most popular type of collocations. Usually, these collocations are translated into identical Arabic ones (i.e. noun+adjective). As the examples show, this is possible in most cases, and students are encouraged to do their best to find the equivalent collocation in Arabic, because an English collocation is better translated into a collocation in Arabic.

However, there are English collocations which do not have identical Arabic equivalent collocations: e.g.

1. "peaceful death": (موت هادئ)
2. "great pleasure": (سعادة عظيمة/سعادة غامرة)
3. "bad news": (أخبار سيئة/غير سارة)
4. "good day": (يوم سعيد)
5. "standstill situation": (وضع مشلول)

The Arabic versions are not widely recognized collocations. They can be called semi-collocations, or just translations. The last one can exceptionally have a popular, informal Arabic equivalent as (مكانك راوخ (سر)).

The main problem for students is to find the proper Arabic equivalent collocation. The solution, however, is not difficult to bring about if they are prepared to exert personal efforts, looking it up in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, general and specialist (see 2.2. earlier), grammar and reference books, including the

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Holy Quran, the Prophet's Tradition (Sunnah), Islamic books, classic poetry and literature (these are the major sources of Arabic collocations). When they cannot find a way out, they just translate the meaning of the collocation at hand correctly and suitably into Arabic. This second choice is acceptable, but poorer than the first. In all cases, there are more guidelines to the translation of collocations into Arabic at the end of this section.

For the students of translation to appreciate these and other collocations in Arabic, they can draw a comparison between proper collocations (as in the first group of examples) and ordinary, different translations: e.g.

Compare:

1. (أشغال شاقة)	to	(أعمال مُضنية)
2. (عاصفة هوجاء)	to	(عاصفة هائجة/غاضبة)
3. (استقبال حار)	to	(استقبال ساخن)
4. (غنم قاصية)	to	(غنم شاردة)
5. (سوق سوداء)	to	(سوق داكنة)

The comparison between each pair of these examples indicates that the group on the left is more familiar, habitual and formal than the second one on the right

Special adjective-noun collocations are used to describe bad, inedible food. e.g.

1. "addled eggs":	(بيض فاسد/خرب)
2. "bad milk":	(حليب فاسد/خرب)
3. "putrid meat/fish":	(لحم /سمك فاسد)
4. "rancid butter":	(زبدة زنخة/فاسدة)
5. "rotten fruit":	(فاكهة فاسدة/عفنة)
6. "spoiled/bad meat":	(لحم فاسد/خام)

At first sight, these collocations cause some problems to the students of translation into Arabic, because it is difficult to find Arabic equivalents for the English adjectives. Perhaps they will not find them at all, for there are no adjectives like these in Arabic, apart from those in the examples.

The problem here is easy to overcome. The solution is simply to use the adjective (فاسد/فاسدة) with all kinds of bad food.

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109 *Lexical Problems***2 Verb+ noun collocations: e.g.**

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| 1. "attend a lecture": | (يحضر محاضرة) |
| 2. "exert an effort": | (ي بذل جهداً) |
| 3. "pass a law": | (يسن قانوناً) |
| 4. "run a company": | (يدير شركة) |
| 5. "teach a lesson": | (يلقن درساً) |
| 6. "win confidence": | (يكسب الثقة) |
| 7. "score a victory": | (يحجز انتصاراً) |
| 8. "pay attention": | (يعبر الانتباه) |
| 9. "seize the opportunity": | (ينتهاز الفرصة) |
| 10 "draw a sword": | (يستل سيفاً) |

The central point here is to match a certain verb with a certain noun in Arabic (as the examples show). We usually say (ي بذل جهداً), not (يقدم جهداً); (يسن قانوناً), not (يضع/يحرر); (يلقن درساً), not (يُعلم درساً); (يكسب ثقة), not (يربح ثقة); (يستل/يشهر سيفاً), not (يخرج (سيفاً); etc.

The problem for students with these collocations is to find the suitable verb in Arabic. However, when it is difficult to do that, they can translate them into sense (i.e. literal, surface meaning): For example, (يصدر قانوناً) instead of (يسن قانوناً); (يحتج انتصاراً) instead of (يحجز انتصاراً); (يغفل الانتباه) instead of (يعبر الانتباه); (يسحب سيفاً) instead of (يستل سيفاً).

Concerning the grammatical structure of these collocations in Arabic, it is mostly a verb+ noun (or a verb+an object). Yet few exceptions can occur: e.g.

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| 1. "pay a visit": | (يقوم بزيارة/يزور) |
| 2. "recognize a state": | (يعترف بدولة) |
| 3. "shake hands": | (يتصافح/يتصافح) |

In '1' and '2', the grammatical construction in Arabic is: 'verb+ preposition+noun (i.e. a prepositional phrase)', whereas in '3', the collocation disappears in Arabic. However, these exceptions do not break the rule of translating the English verb-noun collocations into Arabic equivalents of correspondent structure.

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In their attempt to find an equivalent collocation in Arabic, students might be tempted to go for a word-for-word translation of the English collocation (i.e. verb+noun). This is possible, but can sometimes be unacceptable, as shown by '3' above. It is wrong to translate 'shake hands' literally into (يهز الأيدي), because it has a different and strange meaning. Therefore, such translation should be avoided to allow for the good translation into (يصافح) which implies the English 'hands', and is not a collocation.

3 Noun+ noun collocations: e.g.

1. "brain drain": (هجرة الأدمغة)
2. "nerve cell": (خلية أعصاب عصبية)
3. "gas cylinder": (أسطوانة غاز غازية)
4. "status quo": (الوضع الراهن)
5. "death sentence": (حكم الإعدام)
6. "Attorney General": (قاضي القضاة/النائب العام/الخامي الأول/رئيس القضاء)
7. "essay bank": (بنك المعلومات)
8. "state university": (جامعة حكومية)
9. "honey moon": (شهر عسل)
10. "poet laureate": (أمير الشعراء/شاعر البلاط)

These collocations usually have equivalents in Arabic, but with different grammatical structures, though. Two dominant structures are available in Arabic: (a) 'noun+ adjective' (4+8); (b) 'noun+noun' genitive construction (the other examples). Examples '2+ 3' can also be translated into: noun+adjective: (خلية عصبية) and (أسطوانة غازية). Yet, we cannot say (هجرة دماغية) for '1'; (شهر عسلي) for '9'; or (أمير شاعري) for '10'. The students should try to remember the fixed structure of these collocations in both languages, for back-translation test (i.e. translating the Arabic collocations back into English) will fail to get the proper English combinations. The result would look like this: 'cerebral immigration' (for 'brain drain'); 'honey month' (for 'honey moon'); 'poetic prince' (for 'poet laureate'). The suggested back-translated versions are not a part of English lexicon. Hence, students are warned against undertaking such literal understanding or translation of words, disregarding standard collocability of language in general.

The big problem for the students here is to know the proper equivalent collocation in Arabic, especially for difficult English collocations like 'brain drain', 'attorney general' and 'essay bank'. The solution is they have to be careful with literal

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understanding as much as they can, and do their best to understand the English collocation properly and translate it into its Arabic proper equivalent, using all available resources.

4. Noun+noun (the of-genitive (الإضافة) collocations: e.g.

1. "loss of memory": (فقدان الذاكرة)
2. "the heart of the matter": (جوهر الأشياء/حقيقة الأمر)
3. "association of ideas": (تداعي الأفكار/توارد الأفكار)
4. "the throes of death": (سكرات الموت/سكرة الموت/الغرغرة/الاحتضار)
5. "a sigh of relief": (تنفس الصعداء)
6. "the break of dawn": (بزوغ الفجر)
7. "the court of appeal": (محكمة الاستئناف)
8. "the hour of decision": (ساعة الحسم)
9. "the depths of despair": (أعماق اليأس)
10. "a ghost of a chance": (شبح فرصة)

All these collocations are translated into equivalent Arabic collocations of identical grammatical structure: 'of-genitive'. Although direct translation applies to such collocations, the students must be careful that some of them have different words in Arabic (i.e. (تنفس الصعداء) and not (تنهد الراحة); (بزوغ الفجر), not (كسر الفجر), (but we can say: (انبلاج الفجر) especially in formal and literary texts); (ساعة الحسم), not (ساعة) (القرار); etc.).

On the other hand, most of these collocations are translated into collocations in Arabic. Yet , a number of them can be translated into meaning only (e.g. '4 , 9, 10').

5. Noun+and +noun(addition (العطف) collocations: e.g.

1. "means and ends": (الوسائل والغايات)
2. "wonderments and bewilderments": (عجائب وغرائب)
3. "bread and butter": (مورد رزق/قوت اليوم/لقمة العيش)
4. "food and drink": (الطعام والشراب)
5. "good and evil": (الخير والشر)

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| 6. "form and content": | (الشكل والمضمون) |
| 7. "vice and virtue": | (الفضيلة والرذيلة) |
| 8. "terms and conditions": | (بنود وشروط) |
| 9. "heart and soul": | (قلباً وقالياً) |
| 10. "goods and chattels": | (أموال منقولة وغير منقولة) |

Seemingly, these collocations of addition are easy to translate directly into 'noun +and+noun' collocations in Arabic. However, few of these collocations can be different in grammatical form. The ninth example has the grammatical function of an adverb, as in:

"He is with us heart and soul":

(هو معنا قلباً وقالياً)

This is equal to:

"He is with us *wholeheartedly*": (an adverb)

Other English collocations of addition are not collocations in Arabic, such as '8' which is a translation of sense. On the other hand, '10' is a well-known collocation both in English and Arabic laws, and should be rendered in this form into Arabic. Students need to consult a specialized dictionary, or a good English-Arabic dictionary.

Direct translation should always be watched in collocations like '3' and '7'. In '3', we do not have the collocation (الخبز والزبدة) but (مورد رزق/لقمة العيش), which is a fixed phrase of some kind in Arabic.

In '7', the word order in Arabic is the opposite of that in English: 'vice' (الرذيلة) is before 'virtue' (الفضيلة). Therefore, literal translation of the English word order does not work.

6. Adjective+adjective collocations: e.g.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. "hale and hearty": | (بصحة جيدة) |
| 2. "healthy and well": | (بصحة وعافية/صحيح معاف) |
| 3. "alive and kicking": | (حي يرزق) |
| 4. "well and good": | (على خير ما يرام) |
| 5. "right and proper": | (في أحسن حال/كامل مكمل/تمام التمام) |

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The problem of translating such everyday collocations into Arabic is that, first, the grammatical structure is different and unpredictable. That is , ‘ 1,2,4,5’ can be translated into: ‘preposition+noun+noun’, whereas ‘3’ is: “noun+verb”; yet ‘3+5’ have further possible ‘noun+adjective’ variations. Although the Arabic translations are collocations, numbers ‘1 and 5’ can be translated into one and the same collocation: either (بصحة جيدة) , (على خير ما يرام) or (في أحسن حال). Beside that, one word can be enough to translate them: (صحيح), (معاق) or (سليم). But one word is not a collocation, and is regarded as weaker than the former version as well as the English original: These collocations can also be translated into two words each (adj.+adj.) as : (صحيح) or (معاق) or (كامل مكمل), which are not bad.

7.Adverb+adverb collocations e.g.

1. “wholly and heartedly”: (بالتمام والكمال/من أعماق القلب/بكل إخلاص)
2. “secretly and publicly”: (سراً وعلانية/في السر والعلن)
3. “willy nilly”: (شاء أم أبى/رغمًا عن أنفه)

The three Arabic translations are collocations, but have different grammatical structures. They are grammatically different from the English collocations. Therefore, like those of ‘6’ above, they create a problem to students. However, they are not difficult to understand and translate for they are not unusual nor idiomatic.

The collocations of types ‘6’ and ‘7’ can be described as redundant. That is, the two words of the collocation are synonymous and explain each other (‘2’ in ‘7’ is an exception): ‘hale=hearty’; healthy=well’; wholly=heartedly’, etc. Also, they are rare and, therefore, should not bother the students.

8.Noun+verb collocations (names of sounds: e. g.

1. “bees buzz”: (دوي النحل)
2. “bells ring /toll”: (رنين الأجراس)
3. “cats mew”: (مواء القطط)
4. “dogs bark”: (نباح الكلاب)
5. “donkeys bray”: (هقيق الحمير)
6. “doors creak”: (صرير الأبواب)
7. “flies buzz”: (طنين الذباب)

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| 8. "lions roar": | (زئير الأسود) |
| 9. "snakes hiss": | (فحيح الأفاعي) |
| 10. "sparrows chirp": | (زقزقة العصافير) |
| 11. "trees rustle": | (حفيف الشجر) |
| 12. "wolves howl": | (عواء الذئاب) |

These collocations are not difficult to translate into collocations in Arabic. The only problem for the students is to be able to recognize in Arabic the sound of the animal, insect or thing required.

The solution is to know the name of the sound in question in the target language, which is possible for students. No better solution is available. For example, using the word (صوت) as a general word to describe the sound of anything is poor and, therefore, not advisable (e.g. (صوت النحل); (صوت الجرس); (صوت القطط); etc). However, it is better than nothing.

On the other hand, the grammatical structure in Arabic is noun+noun' (i.e. genitive), not noun+ verb' as in English. Yet, a noun-and-a-verb construction is possible in Arabic if the context requires that: e.g.

"I heard the dogs bark last night":

(سمعت الكلاب تنبح ليلة أمس)

9. Prepositional collocations:

9.1. "Noun+preposition collocations": e.g.

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| 1. "A play on (words)": | (تلاعب بـ (الألفاظ)) |
| 2. "A claim for": | (إدعاء بـ) |
| 3. "A protest against": | (احتجاج على) |
| 4. "A burst at": | (رمي على) |
| 5. "A pride in": | (تفاخر بـ) |
| 6. "Ignorance of (something)": | (الجهل بـ (شيء ما)) |

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(Predictable examples are not included :e.g. ‘conversation about’ (محادثة عن/حول); ‘a suggestion concerning’ (اقتراح يتعلق بـ/بخصوص); ‘the escape of’ (the prisoner) (هروب (السجين) and ‘of-genitive’ constructions; etc.).

The students should beware of the direct translation of the preposition. We do not say (جهل شيء ما) or (تفاخر في); (قذيفة إلى); (احتجاج ضد); (ادعاء لـ); (تلاعب على الألفاظ) in Arabic. The problem here, then, is to find the suitable preposition after the noun in Arabic. This needs to be done apart from the English preposition. The solution is the students’ increasing interest in Arabic prepositions and their unusual use in context.

9.2.Preposition+noun collocations: e.g.

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| 1. “by accident”: | (بمحض المصادفة/مصادفة) |
| 2. “under the patronage (the auspices)(of)”: | (تحت رعاية) |
| 3. “on call / duty(doctor)”: | (طبيب مناوب) |
| 4. “in advance”: | (مقدماً/سلفاً) |
| 5. “on(the)alert”: | (على أهبة الاستعداد) |
| 6. “to(somebody’s)advantage”: | (في مصلحة(فلان)) |
| 7. “on(somebody’s) advice”: | (بناء على نصيحة(فلان)) |
| 8. “in turn”: | (بدوره) |
| 9. “in return”: | (بالمقابل) |
| 10.“by surprise”: | (على حين غرة/فجأة/غيلة) |
| 11.“on the contrary”: | (على العكس) |
| 12.“at the expense(of)”: | (على حساب) |

These English collocations are fixed phrases and cannot be translated literally. Although many of them are translated into identical Arabic prepositional phrases (i.e. preposition+on); others are quite unpredictable, like ‘3’. Some of the translations in Arabic are well-known collocations (‘1’, ‘5’, and ‘10’ in particular).

The problem for the students at translating these collocations is to understand them rightly as fixed expressions in Arabic. The solution is to work harder in order to

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produce good translation in Arabic, bearing in mind the risks of literal translation of words. Usually, good dictionaries include such collocations.

9.3. Adjective+preposition collocations: e.g.

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| 1. "full of": | (مليء بـ) |
| 2. "fond of": | (مغرم بـ) |
| 3. "angry at": | (غاضب من/على) |
| 4. "afraid of": | (خائف من) |
| 5. "foreign to": | (أجنبي (غريب) عن) |
| 6. "contrary to": | (على عكس/معاكس لـ) |
| 7. "made of/from": | (مصنوع من) |
| 8. "angry with" | (زعلان من) |

(Expected combinations like 'adjacent to (محاور لـ); 'inclined to' (ميل لـ); etc. are not included).

The problem of translation here lies in the meaning of the preposition which should be translated with extra care by the students. Literal translation of words is again risky here. The solution is to be on the alert that some of these collocations can be fixed phrases with fixed meanings. In any case, the grammatical construction in Arabic is the same as in English (i.e. 'adjective+preposition').

9.4. Verb+preposition collocations (prepositional verb). e.g.

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|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1. "long for": | (يشتاق إلى/لـ) |
| 2. "wait for(somebody)": | (ينتظر (فلاناً)) |
| 3. "call at": | (ينادي على) |
| 4. "protest against": | (يحتج على) |
| 5. "dream of/with": | (يحلم بـ) |

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Prepositional verbs like these resist direct translation. We cannot say (يشتااق لأجل); (يشتااق لأجل) consecutively. A back translation of the correct versions illustrates the point further:

1. (يشتااق إلى)	→	"long to"
2. (ينتظر فلاناً)	→	"wait somebody"
3. (ينادي على)	→	"call on"
4. (يحتج على)	→	"protest on"

These collocations are not acceptable in English. Equally, the Arabic literal translations of words are unacceptable too. By comparing these English and Arabic versions with one another, the students may find a solution of some kind.

10. Collocations of similes(as-as constructions):e.g.

1. "as beautiful as a lark/as pretty as a picture": (أحلى من البدر/من القمر ليلة البدر/من الصورة)
2. "as red as a beetroot": (أشد حمرة من الدم/من الشمندر)
3. "as faithful as a dog / as honest as the day is long": (أوفى من السموريل/أوفى من الكلب)
4. "as patient as a donkey": (أصبر من الحمار)
5. "as strong as a lion/a horse": (أقوى من الأسد/الحصان)
6. "as stubborn as a mule": (أعند من البغل)
7. "as sweet as honey (sugar)": (أحلى من العسل/السكر)
8. "as old as the hills": (أقدم من التاريخ/موغل/غارق في القدم)
9. "as cunning as a fox": (أمكر من الثعلب)
10. "as bad as bad can be": (أسوأ من السيئ)
11. "as slender as a thread": (أرفع من العود/أرفع من الخيط)
12. "as slippery as an eel": (أزلق من السمك/مثل الزئبق)
13. "as soft as a snake": (أملس/أنعم) من الحية)
14. "as quick as lightning": (أسرع من البرق)

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15. "as swift as an arrow":

(أَسْرَعُ مِنَ السَّهْمِ / أَسْرَعُ مِنْ لَحِ الْبَصْرِ)

16. "Job's patience":

(صَبْرُ أَيُّوبَ)

These similes are fixed, cultural idiomatic collocations. They cannot be changed or interrupted in the middle. Some are also specific to English culture and people. Yet, most of them have identical similes in Arabic and are treated as proverbs. They are usually in the comparative grammatical form of exaggeration (صيغة التفضيل) (i.e. 'better than'), rather than the form of equalness (i.e. 'as much as'/'something=something'). This form is too established to be questioned. Indeed, it is one of the basic, common forms of hundreds of Arabic popular proverbs. (For more confirmation and evidence, see Majmaa Al-Amthaal (مجمع الأمثال) (4 vols.), Al-Maydaani, (1996), Al-Murjed Fil Lughati wal-Aalam: Arabic-Arabic Dictionary (1987 (29th edn): pp. 970-1014), Al-Ghalayeeni (1998: 195), Ghazala, (2007: 95-106), and most established Arabic Language Dictionaries and reference books). Having said that, it is acceptable to translate these collocations into equivalent forms of equality between the two parts of the simile, as suggested below. This is the first important point that the students have to take into account at translating these collocations.

The second important point is to consider the cultural aspects of some of these similes. For example, the bird 'lark' (القُفْرَة) (1) is a symbol of beauty in English culture, but not in Arabic culture. The 'hills' (الهضاب) (8) are also used to imply the meaning of oldness for the English, not for the Arab people. This cultural problem can be beaten by searching for the cultural equivalent simile in Arabic, regardless of the difference of wording. That is, 'lark' is not used in Arabic in this context, but words like (صورة), (قمر) or (بدر) are used instead. Therefore, we ignore 'lark' altogether and use one of these three words which are equally favourable. The students are warned against direct translation, or looking for the equivalent word in the same lexical family in Arabic. That is, they might think that 'lark' is a bird used in English to symbolize beauty, so they have to search for the equivalent bird in Arabic that may symbolize beauty like the 'nightingale' (العندليب) or the 'hoopoe' (الهدمد), for example. In a similar way, they may insist on translating 'hills' into its direct meaning of (تلال/هضاب), or a similar word like 'mountains' (جبال), 'plateau/highland' (مجد), etc. Such translations will not be successful. The same applies to recent similes like 'as fast as a bullet' (Literally: (أَسْرَعُ مِنَ الرِّصَاصَةِ) / 'as quick as Concorde' (literally: (أَسْرَعُ مِنَ الْكُونْكَورد) which interchange with '14' and '15' above. They are translated into Arabic in the same way the two examples are translated and into the same similes. The students and

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translators are not required to invent new collocational similes to match the English recent ones. (See Ghazala; 2002, for more details).

The solution is to ignore the individual words and take the whole simile as an expression of a specific cultural meaning, which should be translated regardless of the words used in the simile. That is the reason behind translating 'lark' into (صورة) and 'hills' into (تاريخ) in the examples above.

Having said that, most of these similes have identical Arabic ones, as illustrated by the examples earlier. On the other hand, it is possible to translate them into the same grammatical structure of equality between the two parts of each simile. Here they are respectively: (قوي), (صبور كالخمار), (وفي كالكلب), (أحمر كالشمندر), (حلو مثل الصورة), (سيئ), (ماكر كالثعلب), (قديم قدم التاريخ), (حلو كالعسل/مثل السكر), (عنيد كالبغل), (كالأسد/مثل الحصان), (سريع كاليرق/مثل اليرق), (أملس/ناعم مثل الحية), (زلق كالسمك), (رفيع مثل العود/مثل الخيط), (كالسوء), (مثل الزئبق) of '13' has this form only, whereas (صبر أيوب) of '14' is an exception because :

1. It is a fixed, religious untouched phrase.
2. It has no comparative form of exaggeration (i.e. أصبر من أيوب), for there is no 'patience' greater than the Prophet Job's, or even like it !

The problem facing the students with these similes is their unawareness of their equivalents in Arabic, especially the cultural ones. The solution is try to understand the implied meaning of the simile, and translate it into Arabic in some way or another if and when they do not know the proper equivalent simile in Arabic.

11. Parts of countable nouns' collocations: e.g.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. "a bouquet of flowers": | (باقة ورد/باقة من الورد) |
| 2. "a crowd of people": | (حشد من الناس) |
| 3. "a flock of sheep": | (ثلة من الغنم/ثلة غنم) |
| 4. "a herd of buffalo": | (قطيع من الجواميس/قطيع جواميس) |
| 5. "a herd of cattle": | (قطيع من الماشية/قطيع ماشية) |
| 6. "a pack of dogs": | (فريق من الكلاب/فريق كلاب) |
| 7. "a pride of lions": | (قطيع من الأسود/قطيع أسود) |

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8. "a school of whales": (قطيع من الحيتان/قطيع حيتان)
9. "a set of glasses": (طقم من الكؤوس/طقم كؤوس)
10. "a swarm (colony) of bees": (خَشْرَم (سرب) من النحل/سرب نحل)
11. "a shoal (school) of fish": (سرب/فوج/قطيع من السمك)

These collocations are also fixed phrases. Each one is a part of a whole which can be counted. For example, 'flowers' is a countable whole; and 'bouquet' is a small number of flowers, and, therefore, one part of that whole.

In Arabic, there are equivalent collocations. The students should insist on finding them. Perhaps they do not have a problem with words of daily use like (باقة ورد) and (حشد من الناس). However, they come across a problem at finding (تلة غنم) (it should be with 'fat-hah', for with 'dammah' (i.e. تلة), it refers to a group of people, as in the Holy Quran (Chapter of 'The Event' (الواقعة): 13, 39, 40)). (See also Ath-Thaalibi, 1983). The same applies to (قطيع حيتان) and (قطيع أسود), (فريق كلاب), as the word (خَشْرَم من النحل), as the word (خَشْرَم) is quite uncommon and highly specialized in Arabic. That is why (سرب) is preferred to it.

The solution that can be suggested here - in case that students do not distinguish the proper word in Arabic - is to use the generic word (مجموعة) or (عدد) to precede a group of anything countable (i.e. people, animals, insects or things): (مجموعة ورد من), (مجموعة ورد (من), etc. The generic word (قطيع) can be used with any group of animals, whereas (سرب) with any group of insects. We may also limit the use of (مجموعة) to any group of people or things. Thus, there is a choice between '1' on the one hand, and '2, 3, 4', on the other, from the following:

1. The use of (مجموعة) or (عدد) to describe a part of any countable noun .
2. The use of (قطيع) with any group of animals.
3. The use of (سرب) with any group of insects and birds.
4. The use of (مجموعة) or (عدد) with any group of people or things.

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As to the grammatical structure of Arabic collocations, it can be either: 'noun+from+noun', or: 'noun+noun' (genitive). The former is applicable to all, whereas the latter is limited to some only. For example, we usually do not say (حشد) but (حشد من الناس). Having said that, students have a choice between the two structures.

12. Parts of uncountable nouns' collocations:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. "an act of violence": | (عمل عنف) |
| 2. "an article of clothing": | (صنف من الثياب/قطعة قماش) |
| 3. "a bit (piece) of information": | (معلومة) |
| 4. "a bit (piece, word) of advice": | (نصيحة) |
| 5. "a cake of soap": | (لوح صابون/قطعة صابون/صابونة) |
| 6. "an item of news": | (نبأ/خبر) |
| 7. "a pat of butter": | (قالب(صب)الزبدة)/قالب خشي لصب الزبدة) |
| 8. "a plot of ground": | (قطعة/رقعة أرض) |
| 9. "a portion of cheese/butter": | (قطعة/مكعب/قالب جبنة) |
| 10. "a piece of music": | (مقطوعة موسيقية) |
| 11. "a loaf of bread": | (رغيف خبز) |
| 12. "a glass of water": | (كأس من الماء) |
| 13. "a cup of tea/coffee": | (كوب(فنجان)شاي/قهوة) |
| 14. "a bottle of milk": | (زجاجة حليب) |
| 15. "a slice of meat": | (شريجة لحم) |

These collocations are used to refer to parts of nouns which cannot be counted in English. There are similar collocations in Arabic. Yet, some nouns are uncountable in English, but countable in Arabic: e.g.

- | | | |
|------------|---|----------|
| 1. معلومات | ← | (معلومة) |
| 2. نصائح | ← | (نصيحة) |
| 3. أخبار | ← | (خبر) |

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Therefore, they are not translated into collocations, but into one word each only (see 3, 4, 6).

Some of these collocations are known to students, and, therefore, easy to translate into Arabic (especially the examples from '11' to '15'). Yet, they may find some difficulty at translating the rest of the examples.

Unlike the collocations of '14' above, there is no one general word that can be used with all these collocations. Although the word (قطعة) can be used with '2, 5, 7, 8, 9' and less frequently with '10, 11 and 15', other collocations need specific words (as in '1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15').

The problem is, therefore, confined to the search for the appropriate word used to refer to the part of a specific uncountable noun. The solution is, first, to make sure that the noun is uncountable as English uncountable nouns are not the same in Arabic (e.g. 'news' (أخبار/خبر); 'information' (معلومات/معلومة); etc. Secondly, students have to try to locate the proper word for the part of the uncountable noun, asking help from various sources including Arabic-Arabic dictionaries. When unable to find it, a general word like (قطعة) or (شيء من) can be used.

Conclusion: General Problems and Solutions:

1.General problems of collocability:

The translation of English collocations into Arabic has two main general problems discussed below:

a. The difficulty of generalization: Some English words collocate with one and the same word, but they are not necessarily so in Arabic. For example, 'commit a mistake' has an identical collocation in Arabic as (يرتكب خطأ). Also, 'commit a murder, is translated into (يرتكب جريمة), (but we use (يقترف جريمة) a great deal). Yet, we do not say in Arabic (يرتكب انتحاراً) for 'commit suicide', but (ينتحر). Thus, 'commit' is not always (يرتكب) or (يقترف).

In a similar way, 'fat' (سمين/بدن) collocates both in English and Arabic with 'man/woman' (رجل/امرأة). Nevertheless, we say only in English: 'fat salary'/'fat book', but in Arabic we say (راتب سمين/كتاب سمين), not (راتب ضخم/كتاب ضخم (سميك)).

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Also, we say in Arabic (بشرة ناعمة) for 'soft skin', but we cannot say (مياه ناعمة) for 'soft water', nor (مشروبات ناعمة) for 'soft drinks', but (ماء عذب/فرات/زلال) and (مشروبات) consecutively. Likewise, 'soft soil' is (تربة خصبة), not (تربة ناعمة), while 'soft ground' can be either (أرض ملساء) or (أرض ناعمة).

Finally, here is a detailed example, showing the various words that collocate with one and the same word: 'bright' (مشرق), to produce different collocations of different meanings:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. "bright beauty": | (جمال متألق/فتان/أخاذ) |
| 2. "bright child": | (طفل ذكي/بارع/متقن الذهن) |
| 3. "bright colours": | (ألوان زاهية) |
| 4. "bright face": | (وجه وضاء/مشرق) |
| 5. "bright future": | (مستقبل زاهر/باسم/باهر) |
| 6. "bright idea": | (فكرة براءة/رائعة) |
| 7. "bright light": | (نور وضاء/ضوء منير) |
| 8. "bright red": | (أحمر براق/أحمر هي) |
| 9. "bright remark": | (ملاحظة بارعة) |
| 10. "bright sky": | (سماء صافية) |
| 11. "bright sun": | (شمس مشرقة/شمس ساطعة) |
| 12. "bright victory": | (انتصار باهر) |
| 13. "bright voice": | (صوت رخيم/صوت عذب) |
| 14. "bright drink/wine": | (مشروب/شراب) صاف/أحمر رائق |

This long example confirms that words like 'bright' which collocate with several different words are problematic for the students. Extra caution is, therefore, demanded here. Fortunately, these collocations can be found in good dictionaries (e.g. Al-Mawrid English-Arabic Dictionary).

Thus, the students of translation cannot generalize about the meaning of a word that collocates with several words. It can be different from one collocation to another, and from one language to another.

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b. Variability of collocations: Different collocations for the same meaning can exist in English, but they have one collocation and one single meaning in Arabic: e.g.

1. "commit a mistake/make a mistake": (يرتكب/يقترف خطأ)
2. "go on a visit/pay a visit": (يقوم بزيارة)
3. "hard task/daunting task": (مهمة شاقة)
4. "empty talk/idle talk": (كلام فارغ/هراء)

Usually these equivalent collocations have one and the same translation in Arabic. Students need not have different versions for equivalent English collocations, or else they may commit mistakes. For example, they need not translate 'make a mistake' and 'commit a mistake' into (يصنع/يعمل خطأ) and (يرتكب خطأ) respectively, for both mean (يرتكب/يقترف خطأ). Yet, if there are equivalent collocations in Arabic, they can give them, bearing in mind that anyone is qualified to translate the synonymous English collocations: e.g .

1. "deep sleep": (نوم عميق)
2. "heavy sleep": (نوم ثقليل)
3. "sound sleep": (سبات عميق)
4. "fast sleep": (سبات عميق)

Any version in Arabic can translate all these English collocations .

2. Flexibility of collocations:

Some types of collocations are flexible. That is, they can be interrupted in the middle by a word, especially an adjective or an adverb. Usually, the following types can be interrupted:

1. Adjective + noun collocations : e.g.

"Black market" → "black illegal market": (سوق سوداء غير مشروعة)

2. Verb + noun collocations : e.g.

"Exert an effort" → "exert a great effort": (ي بذل جهداً عظيماً)

3. Noun + noun (the of-genitive) collocations : e. g.

"Association of ideas" → "association of some ideas": (تداعي بعض الأفكار)

4. Noun + verb collocations (names of sounds): e.g.

"Bees buzz" → "bees strongly buzz": (يدوي النحل بقوة/دوياً قوياً)

5. Verb + preposition collocations : e. g.

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“Long for” → “long so much for”: (يشتاق كثيراً جداً)

6. Parts of countable nouns' collocations : e. g.

‘a bouquet of flowers’ → “a bouquet of red flowers”: (باقة ورد حمراء)

7. Parts of uncountable nouns' collocations : e. g.

“A pat of butter” → “a pat of Danish butter”: (قالب صب زبدة دنماركية)

Yet, the remaining types of collocations are fixed, inflexible and cannot be interrupted in the middle:

1. Noun+noun collocations.
2. Noun+and+noun collocations.
3. Adjective+adjective collocations.
4. Adverb+adverb collocations.
5. Noun+preposition collocations.
6. Preposition+noun collocations.
7. Adjective+noun collocations.
8. Collocations of similes (as ... as)

The sixth type has some flexible collocations like:

1. “To somebody’s advantage”: (في مصلحة/لمصلحة فلان)
2. “On the alert”: (على أهبة الاستعداد)
3. “In your turn”: (بدورك/أنت)

However, the greater number are inflexible.

Having said that, collocations are generally and mostly used fixed, uninterrupted and unseparated. That is why they are considered as fixed phrases.

3. Translation Procedures: Solutions to the translation problems of collocations:

The following is a summary of the suggested possible solutions to the translation problems of English collocations into Arabic. They are introduced in order of preference (i.e. the first is the best, then the second, then the third, etc).

1. Tracing the identical collocation in Arabic, if and when available. Usually a great number of English collocations have equivalent ones in Arabic.

2. In case that an identical collocation is not found in Arabic, a close collocation can be suggested. For example, ‘straying sheep’ is (غنم قاصية), but when students fail to get it, they can suggest a close alternative like (غنم شاردة/تائهة/ضائعة/ضالة/متخلفة عن القطيع).

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3. When '1' and '2' are not possible, a suitable collocation in Arabic can be suggested: two words for two words, three for three, etc. 'Shock enormity', to take one example, is (هول الصدمة). When students do not know that, they may suggest a two-word collocation of their own such as (صدمة قوية), (ضخامة قوة/تأثير الصدمة), or even (صدمة قوية).

4. If none of the previous solutions is at the students' disposal, a translation of the correct meaning of the collocation is an acceptable resort. It does not matter whether it is translated into one, two, three or more words. For example, 'alive and kicking' (حي) can be translated into: (على قيد الحياة), (ما يزال حياً), (بصحة جيدة), (صحته على ما يرام), etc. The grammatical structure of the English collocation is ignored completely here.

5. A direct meaning should be translated into a direct meaning (as most of the examples above), and an indirect meaning into an indirect meaning in Arabic (especially the collocations of similes). For example, it is not advisable to translate 'as swift as an arrow' into a direct meaning as (سريع جداً), but into an indirect meaning as (أسرع من لمح البصر/أسرع من البرق/أسرع من السهم).

6. If the English collocation is colloquial, it can be rendered into a colloquial Arabic collocation, if possible. Yet using formal Arabic is quite acceptable. For example, 'smashing victory' is rather colloquial, and can be translated into a colloquial Arabic collocation: (انتصار هائل/كبير). However, the formal (انتصار ساحق) is feasible, even better at this stage, and in formally written texts in particular.

7. By the same token, if the English collocation is formal, the Arabic equivalent should also be formal (as the vast majority of the previous examples show). It is not advisable at all to translate it into a colloquial Arabic collocation.

8. Fixed collocations like 'as....as' similes, which cannot be interrupted in the middle, should be translated into equivalent Arabic ones with extra care. We cannot say, for instance: 'he is as very stubborn as a mule' in English, nor can we say (هو أعند جداً من) (هو عنيد كالبغل/هو أعند من البغل). We simply say: 'he is as stubborn as a mule' (هو عنيد كالبغل/هو أعند من البغل), as indicated earlier in connection with these similes.

9. When unable to work out a better solution and as the last resort, students may escape with a blind, literal translation of words. However, it is the poorest translation. It can also be quite risky because it may result in a wrong, funny Arabic version. For example, 'hard currency' is (عملة صعبة), but if it is translated into (عملة قاسية), it will sound

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strange and funny. Likewise, 'brain drain' cannot be translated into (تصفية الدماغ) because it is unclear and may bring to mind irrelevant meanings and implications in Arabic

Nevertheless , some collocations can be translated in a direct way quite properly, as many examples of this section confirm. After all, students should be cautious and refuse to surrender from the first attempt to the direct, word-for-word translation of any collocation, or else they would commit serious mistakes at times, as illustrated throughout this discussion of the translation of collocations.

Generally speaking, in the Arabic translation of collocations we insist as much as we can on the collocation's:

1. fixedness/flexibility
2. grammatical structure
3. directness/indirectness
4. clarity/unclearity
5. formal/colloquial style
6. simplicity/complexity
7. context
8. familiarity/strangeness

Yet, if students think that, for good reasons concerning the nature of Arabic (such as the difference between the word order of adjective+noun), they cannot meet one or more of these points, they may simply overcome them.

Finally, the rapidly growing interest in the translation of collocations in translation studies is due to their special importance in language. They play a vital role in the coherence of the structure of language. They are also the source of its attraction and special flavour that makes it more beautiful, more rhetorical, more effective and more powerful. The translation of collocations is an everlasting struggle to match the proper nouns with the proper verbs, the proper verbs with the proper nouns, the proper nouns with the proper nouns, the proper adjectives with the proper nouns, and so on and so forth. The students of translation are, thus, required to exercise patience, caution and be extra sensitive to them in translation. They are advised to do their best to find the proper collocation in Arabic, if and when available. Without collocations, their Arabic translation would seem poorer, weaker, and less inspired than the English original.