

المتلازمات اللفظية في أداء الطلبة العرب عند تعلم الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية

ملخص

لا تزال دراسة ظاهرة المتلازمات اللفظية العربية وتأثيرها الهام على الأداء اللغوي عند متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية تحظى باهتمام محدود من قبل الباحثين اللغويين. لذلك نسعى في هذه الدراسة إلى إلقاء الضوء على مصطلح المتلازمات اللفظية وأنواعها ونميز بين نوعين من الأخطاء اللغوية: أخطاء لا علاقة لها بالمتلازمات اللفظية وأخرى ناجمة عن عدم معرفة الطالب بهذه المتلازمات وهذا النوع الأخير من الأخطاء هو الذي يعنينا في هذا المقام حيث نقوم بدراسة هذه الأخطاء وتحليلها وربط بعضها بعملية التداخل اللغوي. أما في الجزء الأخير من البحث فنقوم بتقديم بعض النتائج والتوصيات المتعلقة بكيفية التعامل مع هذه الظاهرة بشكل منظم من خلال لفت الانتباه إلى هذه الظاهرة والتأكيد على احتواء المقررات التي تدرس قواعد اللغة الإنكليزية والترجمة والكتابة على التدريبات اللغوية المناسبة الأمر الذي سيساعد الطالب على تعلم هذه العبارات والمصطلحات وبالتالي تحسن أدائه في اللغة الإنكليزية قواعدا وكتابة وترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المتلازمات اللفظية، التعبيرات المجازية، الأداء، التداخل لغوي، الأخطاء.

Collocational Performance of Arab Learners of English

1. Introduction

The interest in the linguistic term "collocation" has intensified only in the last few years. There have been numerous papers written, and dictionaries compiled, on collocations in English and other European languages; see Benson (1990), Cruse (1986), James (1998), O'Grady (1998) among others. However, the study of collocations in Arabic is still in its early stages. Therefore, there is a need for more research to highlight issues relating to collocations and the performance of learners of English in the area of collocations.

It is generally observed that Arab learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) face numerous problems in expressing themselves in situations where they have to use a collocational expression. As such, they resort to one of two strategies: avoidance or compensation (see Brown, 2000: 128). In many cases, the learner opts for avoiding the use of a lexical expression due to the difficulty of this expression or due to the lack of knowledge of the relevant item. For example, if a student does not know the English expression: "*make a decision*" or the idiom "*lift a finger*", s/he will avoid, or even abandon, the whole utterance. In such cases, the learner avoids producing, whether in speaking or in writing, expressions s/he does not know. This kind of strategy is not very helpful since it denies

the researcher any access to the learners' performance and consequently their competence, given that performance is a reflection of competence.

Alternatively, the learner may choose to compensate, or make up, for the collocation s/he does not know. That is, instead of avoiding an expression such as "*strong tea*" altogether, learners resort to their L1 experience and probably use something like "*heavy tea*", which is an Arabic expression that, according to them, equates the English collocational expression. If the two languages are identical in collocation use, there will be a case of positive transfer. However, if the two languages differ in this respect, there will be a case of negative transfer or interference (Brown, 2000: 95). For this reason, it is plausible to attribute these problems to the role that L1 plays in shaping learners' performance in L2. This is known technically as L1 interference or interlanguage transfer (Wang and Shaw, 2008).

The paper is organized as follows. First, it presents the purpose and methodology of this study. Second, it introduces the term collocation and gives some background information about the classes of collocations and collocation errors before considering collocations in the performance of Arab learners of EFL. Finally, this paper explores various ways of implementing the ideas and implications of this work in the classroom to improve learners' linguistic performance in English in the fields of translation and writing, as we will see later.

2. Objectives and Methods

To have a better understanding of the learners' collocational competence, there is a need to analyse and have a detailed description of learners' collocational performance. Once there is a full understanding of the performance problems that Arab learners of English face in the field of collocations, it becomes easy for teachers to decide what exercises or activities to include in the

term as a sequence of lexical items that habitually co-occur. Therefore, an adequate definition has to accommodate a wide range of terms extending from fixed expressions to more flexible ones such as phrases, fixed expressions, idioms, prefabricated patterns and other forms of word combinations.

One very important aspect of the study of collocation is the study of co-occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text. In other words, it has to do with how the occurrence of one word within an utterance influences the occurrence of some other nearby words. An example of this is illustrated by the following Arabic example:¹

1. *dhabaab kaθeef*.
fog heavy (heavy fog)
2. *matr ghazeer*.
rain heavy (heavy rain)

In the sentence in (1), the adjective "*kaθeef*" collocates, or co-occurs, with the noun "*dhabaab*" and the construction is fully grammatical. Similarly, in (2), the adjective "*ghazeer*" collocates with the noun "*matr*". However, the word "*kaθeef*" does not go with words like "*matr*", nor does "*ghazeer*" with "*fog*", as demonstrated by the ungrammaticality of (3) and (4):

3. **dhabaab ghazeer*.
4. **matr kaθeef*.

It is clear from the constructions in (1-4) that the essence of collocability depends on the syntagmatic or linear associations of lexical items.

4. Classes of Collocations

Collocations can be classified in a number of ways. One of these ways is according to the type of word class of the constituents or collocates as in Biskup (1992) and Lewis (2001). In this regard, collocations fall into two main categories: lexical and grammatical.

English courses they teach. This will, ultimately, contribute to a better linguistic performance and lead to the success of the educational process.

One purpose of conducting this research is to have some insights about the issue of collocations in Arabic because interest in this area is still at its beginning. A further, and more significant, objective of the work is to present a study of the collocational performance of Arab learners of EFL and highlight the role that Arabic has in this regard through language transfer.

The data used in this study consist of 33 different Arabic collocational expressions that had to be translated into English by 33 fourth year students majoring in translation in the open learning program at Al-Baath University. Their proficiency in EFL and their grades in the language skills courses were upper intermediate and a few were advanced level. The students were asked to translate phrases and sentences containing collocations but they were not told that their use of collocations would be studied because had they been told, this might have affected their performance one way or another. The collocations they had to produce vary in type and degree of difficulty and this has to do with how close Arabic collocations are to their English counterparts. Some collocations were lexical while others were grammatical. Lexical collocations included a variety of word order combinations such as noun + verb, verb + noun, adjective + noun, etc. On the other hand, grammatical collocations contained Arabic function words like articles and prepositions. However, this work focuses more on lexical collocations than on grammatical ones.

3. What are Collocations?

It was the British linguist J. R. Firth (1951) who first introduced the term collocation. Firth referred to the collocation of a word as "the company it keeps." Similarly, Jackson (1988) and Benson (1990) define the

Similarly, in (6), the adjective "*jadeed*" co-occurs with a noun like "*kitaabun*," or "*qalamun*", and the adjective "*ghaalin*" is inter-changeable with other adjectives like "*jadeedun*". In the case of free collocations like these in (5) and (6), there are no constraints on the co-occurrence of words other than the syntactic and the semantic ones. For example, the verb "*baa9a*" in (5), for syntactic purposes, requires a noun phrase that has the function of a direct object, since the verb is transitive. Semantically, the object that the verb in (5) selects should be something that can be sold. Thus, an object like "*as-sayarata*" or "*al-manzila*", things which can be sold, will be appropriate choices to co-occur with the verb "*baa9a*." This is what Cruse (1986) refers to as selectional restrictions. To illustrate this point, Cruse gives the following English examples:

7. * A male aunt
8. * A cat barked.
9. * Peter rushed slowly to the door.

The ungrammaticality of the constructions in (7-9) has to do with the inappropriateness of word selection or word combination. For example, the problem in (7) stems from the conflict in semantic features of the words "*male*" and "*aunt*," which is a female. Part of the meaning of the verb "*rush*" in (9) is "*moving very quickly*" while the verb is modified by the adverb "*slowly*". Thus, the clash in the meanings of the two words in this example and its ungrammaticality follows in a straightforward way.

4. 2. Restricted Collocations

Another class of collocations is restricted collocations (cf. Wang and Shaw, 2008). These are fixed combinations where one of the two collocates is fixed while the other is free. For example, "*butter*" is used with so many other words, but "*rancid*" is typically used with

"*butter*" as in (10). The same thing is also true of the Arabic construction in (11):

10. rancid butter/bacon

11. jareemah nakra'a

crime heinous (a heinous crime)

In this case, the degree of expectancy is high. The adjective "*rancid*" has a very strong expectation for the word "*butter*" or "*bacon*". So it is almost the case that whenever the word "*rancid*" occurs, it should be followed by, or associated with, the word "*butter*" or "*bacon*". This explains why (12) is ungrammatical:

12. *rancid cheese/beef

The same argument holds for (11). In other words, choosing the relevant vocabulary item within this kind of expression is more predictable than it is in the case of free collocations discussed above, indicating that the level of expectancy is quite high.

4. 3. Bound Collocations

According to Benson (1989), bound collocations can be looked at as transitional expressions that are close to idioms, but they are not idioms. This is because they appear in phrases that are almost fixed or frozen. One very important characteristic of these collocations is that one word is "uniquely selective of the other" in some sense as in this Arabic example:

13. Harbun dharuus

war drastic (a drastic war.)

In this example, the Arabic adjective "*dharuus*" co-occurs uniquely with "*Harbun*". Expectancy in this case is very high indeed.

4. 4. Idioms as a Special Case of Collocations

Finally, there is one special class of collocations known as idioms. Expressions belonging to this class are "relatively frozen" with no expectancy at all (cf. Wang

and Shaw, 2008). One basic feature of these collocations is that the word combination is arbitrary (see Benson, 1990). In other words, the meaning of the idiom is not compositional or transparent as the total meaning does not come from the meaning of the individual words put together. Consider the contrast in the way meaning is derived in (14), (15), and (16):

14. lam juHarrek yada-hu.

not move-he hand-his.

(He did not move his hand.)

15. lam yuHarrek saakinan.

not move-he static (He did not lift a finger.)

16. John kicked the bucket.

The meaning of the sentence in (14) is derived from the meaning of the individual words that make up the sentence: *him not moving his hand*. This is not the case in (15), however. In fact, the individual words in the idiom in (15) do not retain their normal or original meanings as the sentence has nothing to do with the literal meaning "*lam yuHarrek saakinan*." Further, the English example in (16) is more explicit as the meaning of the idiom in (16) has nothing to do with kicking or buckets.²

5. Collocational Versus Non-Collocational Errors

Before, we embark on studying collocational performance of EFL learners, it has to be pointed out that not all L2 errors are collocational.³ In fact, there is a good proportion of these errors that could be traced back to incompetence in the grammar or even the lexicon. Hence, there is a need to distinguish between these types of problem. An error resulting from lack of knowledge of the rules of the language is a grammatical error. This is the case in English constructions like (17):⁴

17. *He did some researches on pollution in Homs.

18. He did some research on pollution in Homs.

The problem in this example comes from using the word "researches" in the plural instead of the singular form. Thus, the ill-formedness of the construction has to do with number since the noun "research" is non-countable as can be concluded by the grammaticality of (18). The problem in (17) is not collocational because the subcategorisation requirement of the verb "did" is satisfied. This is supported by the fact that although the examples in (17) and (18) are identical collocationally, they differ in their well-formedness.

Another category of non-collocational errors is the lexical errors due to the wrong choice of words as in:

19. *I lost my road.

Here, the learner was supposed to use "I lost my way". That is, the learner used the word "road" and was unable to come up with the word "way". Similarly, when the learner uses the derogatory word "skinny" as a compliment instead of the word "slim", the error is lexical and not collocational.

Finally, there are errors that stem from the failure to use the appropriate word combination. These are collocational errors. An example of this is:

20. *He attempted his best.

In this example, the problem lies in the illegitimate combination "attempted his best." It is actually related to the use of the verb "attempt" with the object NP "his best," as the two elements do not co-occur. In fact, for (20) to be well-formed, it should have the verb "did", indicating that the verb "do", but not "attempt," collocates with the NP "his best." The problem in this case is definitely collocational and it is this type of error that the next section of the study aims at dealing with.

6. Analysis and Discussion of Data

For the purposes of testing students' knowledge of collocations, we prepared a list of 33 collocational

expressions that were translated into Arabic by 33 fourth year students in the translation program of open learning at Al-Baath University. There is an appendix at the end of this paper listing 11 sample collocations that represent the different patterns of expressions designed for the study. Some of the collocational expressions were phrases while others were full sentences. Variation in terms of word order and word parts was taken into consideration. The data comprised a wide variety of collocational possibilities to cover as many word combination errors as possible.

Upon close scrutiny of the collocational errors that learners made in our study, it is noticeable that these errors vary in type. Following Benson (1989) and (1990), we classify collocations in terms of their structural type into several groups including V + N, Adj + N, N + V, V + PP, N1 + N2, V + Adv, etc. However, in this study we focus on the lexical collocations of the structural types that are most frequent in learners' production of English.

6. 1. Verb + Noun (Object)

This kind of error is quite frequent and it involves a combination of a verb and its direct object. Consider the following examples:

21. qata9a wa9d-an
cut-he promise-a (He made a promise.)

22. itaXa9a qarar-an
took-he a-decision (He made/took a decision.)

Out of the 33 testees, 57% gave the correct English collocations "*made a promise*" and "*made a decision*". 26% of the answers showed interference problems of the type "*give a promise*." This is literal translation of the equivalent Arabic expression. Some gave right answers but without collocations such as: "*He promised / He decided*". Those who used full verbs instead of the collocational expressions were 9%. The remaining 8%

were wrong answers of the type "*decision degree*". There were no cases of avoidance at all as all testees attempted to translate these two expressions.

6. 2. Noun (Subject) + Verb

Collocations belonging to this pattern consist of a subject noun followed by a verb as in these examples:

23. dharabat al-9aSifatu al-mantaqah.

hit the-storm the-region

(The storm hit / struck the region.)

24. habitat al-as9aaru.

fell the-prices (Prices went down.)

Findings in this category of sentences were different. We believe that the difference in the results in this section of the test has to do with the data. The two sentences in (23) and (24) are simple and some literal translation will lead to positive transfer. If the learners choose to use the verbs "*hit*" and "*went down*" or "*fell*", the outcome will be correct in English. This explains the fact that negative transfer rate here was only 3% while the correct answers were 52%. Wrong answers were 33% and those that provided the meaning of the collocations were only 3%. Those that used the avoidance strategy were 9%.

6. 3. Adjective + Noun

This type of collocation is probably the most common cross-linguistically. Examples belonging to this class of collocations involve an adjective that is followed by a noun. Here, we had more collocations than we had in any other section so that we can have variation in the degree of difficulty of items. However, the findings in this section of the test vary from one collocation to another. This is due to the familiarity, or otherwise, of the item itself. Some items are identical in both languages, making the translation task easier. This explains the fact that interference was minimal in (25):

25. qaa'imah sawda'a

list black (a black list)

In the case of the example in (25), 91% of answers gave the correct collocation "*black list*" and only 3% gave wrong answer. In fact, only two answers out of 33 showed L1 interference in either word of the expression. One of these answers used "*black table*" instead of "*black list*". In Arabic, the word for "*list*" and that for "*table*" are somehow close. They are "*qaa'imah*" and "*jadwal*", respectively. The other wrong answer contained "*draft list*". Again to many native speakers of Arabic, "*draft*" and "*black*" are related. Thus, the dominant type of transfer that Arabic plays in the last examples is positive rather than negative. Now consider (26):

26. XaTa? qatil

mistake deadly (a deadly mistake)

As for the collocation in (26), 39% of the answers were correct while 33 % were wrong. Cases of interference were 13% only and those who failed to give the exact collocation but gave the meaning of the collocation were 15%. Again, the low level of interference of L1 in L2 performance is attributed to the familiarity of the expression to Arab learners of EFL. Let us consider (27):

27. istiqbaal Haar

welcome hot (a warm welcome)

This is another collocational expression where an adjective collocates with a following noun. 30% of the learners gave the correct collocation. Instances of avoidance were 12% while those of negative transfer were 21%. Learners used the adjective "*hot*", which is the literal translation of the Arabic "*Haar*," instead of the appropriate English word "*warm*". The rate of wrong answers was 18% and those who gave the meaning of the expression but failed to use an English collocational expression were 18%. Some testees used words like

"good" and "great" instead of "warm", and this is acceptable in this context. A more difficult collocation is:

28. saa?iqun mutahawirun

driver reckless (a reckless driver)

What is striking about this particular example is that there is only one correct answer out of 33 making the rate 3% only. The rate of those who paraphrased the collocation was 45% while those who avoided answering it were 18%. It is clear that in the absence of a ready collocation, the testees resort to making up for what they do not know by paraphrasing the expression. As for the wrong answers, they were 30%. It is interesting that we could not find any interference examples here. This is due to the fact that learners couldn't find a literal English expression for the Arabic "*mutahawir*", so they expressed the meaning of the collocation in different words or in a non-collocational form.

6. 4. Verb + Prepositional Phrase

In this kind of collocation, there is a verb followed by an optional object that is followed by a PP that consists of a preposition and a noun phrase that may contain an adjective as in (29):

29. qatala Sadiqa-hu bi-damin baaridin.

killed-he friend-his with blood cold

(He killed his friend in cold blood.)

The results we got here were very surprising as 30% of the test takers opted for the avoidance strategy. They simply left the question unanswered. Another 33% of the answers showed negative transfer as they provided a literal translation of the Arabic collocation. In almost all of the transfer cases, the learners used the preposition "*with*" instead of "*in*" and only in one case we noted the use of the preposition "*by*" for the Arabic preposition "*bi-*". It was only in 15% of the answers that the learners successfully conveyed the meaning of the collocation. As

for the correct collocation involving the preposition followed by an adjective and a noun, it appeared in only 6% of the answers. This leaves 18% as wrong answers for both grammatical and semantic problems.

6. 5. Noun1 + Noun2

This kind of collocation can also be referred to as binominal as the construction involves two nouns. An example of this is:

30. šahadatu zuurin

testimony falsehood (a false testimony or perjury)

In this example, 27% of answers were wrong while 24% used the correct collocation. 20% of learners avoided answering this question due to lack of knowledge of this particular expression. The percentage of negative transfer was 21% and learners used expressions like "*unreal degree*", which is an English literal translation of the Arabic expression. The learner here is referring to a "*testimonial*," which is the same in Arabic.

6. 6. Verb + Adverb

The verb in this type is intransitive but it can be modified by the AdvP "*bi-ghazarah*" or "*heavily*":

31. hatala al-mataru bi-ghazarah

fell the-rain by/with intensity (It rained heavily.)

It was noticeable that there were no cases of avoidance or negative transfer in this example at all. This is because testees couldn't find an English word that has the literal meaning of "*bi-ghazarah*" but we saw errors where "*great rain*" was used. The percentage of wrong answers was 33%. As for the correct answers, they were 42% and they used one of these two constructions "*It rained heavily*" or "*There was heavy rain*" so the collocation was used correctly. 24% of the answers expressed the same meaning or paraphrased and contained other collocations like "*It rained cats and dogs*".

7. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Having presented and analysed some samples of students' collocational performance in the preceding section, we move to consider some of the conclusions and pedagogical implications that result from this study. One conclusion that one can draw from this analysis is that they use different strategies when they encounter difficulties in translating certain collocations. It was noticeable that in many cases, learners avoided translating the expression altogether. Recall that the rate of avoidance in (28) "*saa?iqun mutahawirun*" was as high as 18% and in (29) it rose to "*qatala Sadiqa-hu bi-damin baaridin*" 30%. This can be explained in terms of the difficulty or familiarity of the expression itself. The Arabic expression "*mutahawirun*" in (28) is quite difficult for the learner to translate. Not many Arabic speakers know the word "*reckless*". As for (29), the major problem lies in translating the preposition "*bi-*". Many learners preferred not to translate these two collocations because of the difficulty in finding the English equivalent. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that avoidance in (21) "*qata9a wa9d-an*" is zero and the correct answers are 57%.

In other cases, instead of avoiding the collocation, students resorted to the strategy of paraphrasing it or they used a non-collocational expression. One very interesting example is (28). What happened in this example is that up to 45% of learners provided a paraphrase of the collocation. This is because they couldn't find the appropriate collocation. They were keen on making up for something they do not know. Thus, paraphrasing is another strategy that EFL learners may opt to when their collocational competence is not good enough.

Another conclusion is that the extent of negative transfer is attributable to how unfamiliar or difficult the collocation is to the learner. This explains the

discrepancy in the extent of L1 interference in L2 production in examples (23) and (29). In the former, interference was only 3% whereas it was 30% in the latter. Thus, familiarity of the collocation is the key for the learner in order to guarantee a good collocational performance. In other words, this has to do with how close the English collocation is to its Arabic counterpart. For example, collocations which are identical in both Arabic and English were the easiest to learn or comprehend. It is probable that this is due to positive transfer. This means that some English collocations have their Arabic counterparts that are worded in exactly the same way. Examples of this include:

32. qaa'imah sawda'a (a black list)
mantaqa Hurra (a free zone)
33. Xata? qatil (a deadly mistake)
dharabat al-9aSifah al-mintaqah
(The storm hit the region.)

Thus, the level of transfer in the collocation performance of Arab learners of English varies according to how close the expressions are to their English counterparts.

One concludes from this that whenever learners face a difficulty in translating a collocation, they first try to paraphrase it in some way. If they fail to do so, they rely on their previous linguistic experience through L1 interference or transfer. Still, if this does not work, they opt for avoidance as a last resort. Therefore, we can look at avoidance, paraphrase, and negative transfer as three strategies used by learners of EFL to deal with the difficulty and unfamiliarity in using collocations.

A further conclusion is that there is little awareness among learners regarding the phenomenon of collocations, as seen through the literal translation they have provided for English collocations. If we analyse the collocation data in terms of right and wrong ratio, we find that learners failed to provide the exact collocation

in most cases. In fact, one can easily see the poor collocational performance of our learners through the unstable rate of correct collocations in the data presented above. For example, in (25) the rate of correct answers was 91%, in (21 and 22) 57%, in (23-24) 52%, in (26) 29%, in (27) 30%, in (30) 24%, in (29) 6%, and in (28) only 3%. Our explanation of this phenomenon is that learners of EFL do not have the components of each collocation in their mental lexicon as a unit, indicating lack of linguistic knowledge of linguistic constituents or phraseology. Thus, knowing the collocations of a lexeme is an integral part of knowing its meaning. This is in line with what Yule (1996: 123) argues when he states that knowing a language involves knowing not only the meaning of words, but also their typical collocations. Thus, part of one's knowledge of a word like *fresh*, for instance, is that it collocates with *air* as in *fresh air*. This is consistent with the argument that a good knowledge of collocational use in English, as James (1998: 152) puts it, "contributes greatly to one's idiomaticity and native-likeness."

Now, let us turn to look at some pedagogical implications of this study. One of these implications is that there is a need to teach collocations in English language courses. Thus, ways of improving learners' collocational performance should be implemented. This can be achieved through working at two levels: the teacher and the teaching materials. First, the teacher has to draw the learners' attention to collocations and the surrounding context of lexical items. This helps the learners to understand the meaning of an item in its appropriate context and to understand how it can be used. For example, the teacher can at the end of a reading lesson choose some useful collocations and try to re-enforce the students' intake by introducing more exercises on collocations. The teacher should directly

draw students' attention to the notion of collocational restrictions. For example, s/he has to point out to them that there are no rules that govern how words come together as in "*strong tea*", but not "*powerful tea*" although the words "*strong*" and "*powerful*" are two synonymous English words. It is crucial that teachers draw the students' attention to the similarities and the differences between the two languages (i.e., Arabic and English) concerning the collocational patterns and their actual realisations in language use.

As for the teaching material, some collocational exercises should be integrated into the teaching materials in grammar, writing and translation courses where learners can be asked to use collocations in the adequate context.⁵ In particular, two aspects of the collocation should be focused on. First, the materials should introduce the syntactic restrictions or word combinations of lexical items such as a verb requiring an object NP as in: "*take advantage of something*" and not "*take benefit of something*", or requiring a PP as in "*give up smoking*". Second, teaching materials should also emphasise the semantic restrictions and how lexical items may collocate. This is why collocations should be taken into consideration when designing a language course. Another point that has to be stressed in this context is the need for bilingual (Arabic-English) collocational dictionaries due to the lack of Arabic dictionaries of collocations.⁶ This maximizes the learners' exposure to English collocations and make collocations accessible to learners.

APPENDIX 1

This is a comprehensive list of the 33 collocational expressions that were used in this study.

a black list	قائمة سوداء
a deadly mistake	خطأ قاتل
a warm welcome	استقبال حار
a reckless driver	سائق متهور
false testimony	شهادة زور
He made / took a decision	أخذ قرارا
He made a promise.	قطع وعدا.
It rained heavily	هطل المطر بغزارة
The storm hit the region	ضربت العاصفة المنطقة
Prices went down	هبطت الأسعار
He killed his friend in cold blood	قتل صديقه بدم بارد
a free zone	منطقة حرة
a desperate attempt	محاولة يائسة
candid camera	كاميرا خفية
a handsome young man	شاب وسيم
a sworn translator	ترجمان محلف
a tame animal	حيوان أليف
grave losses	خسائر جسيمة
short term	قصير الأمد
widespread	واسع النطاق
good-hearted	طيب القلب
He expressed his appreciation.	عبر عن تقديره.
He sought / looked for the best.	سعى إلى الأفضل.
He called.	اتصل هاتفيا.
He did it accurately.	نفذ بدقة.
extremely hard.	صعب للغاية.
He had a heavy meal.	تناول وجبة دسمة.
He took proper measures.	أخذ تدابير ملائمة.
He did not lift a finger.	لم يحرك ساكنا.
He hit the nail on the head.	أصاب كيد الحقيقة.

He held his breath. حبس أنفاسه
He committed a crime. ارتكب جريمة
He waged war. شن حربا ضد حلفائه

APPENDIX 2

These are three different types of collocation exercises / activities that can be used in grammar classes:

1. Supply the missing words:

- a. His health is not that good; he easily cold.
- b. I have no money left. I can't the bill.
- c. We them a visit last weekend.
- d. She came back late, so she didn't the dishes.
- e. She wants to money.
- f. He is no longer interested in the project. He ...his mind.
- g. He is not honest. He is tricks with us.

2. Choose the appropriate verb in brackets for each item:

- a. (do/make) an attempt to
- b. (win/beat) a match
- c. (put/carry) out a plan
- d. (put/bring) something to an end
- e. (put/bring) an end to something
- f. (do/make) a complaint about

3. Fill in the gaps with these words:

widespread, luxury, outright, crowning, damaging

- a. They've made some highlyccusations about us.
- b. We need to crack down hard on the abuse of drugs.
- c. I don't know him very well. He's just a acquaintance.
- d. This will probably be the achievement of her career.

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Collocational Performance of Arab Learners of English

Abstract

The analysis of collocational performance of Arab learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) has attracted only little attention. The aim of this study is to shed light on collocation-related problems in the performance of Arab learners of English. It is an explanatory study of the collocational difficulties that Arab learners of English encounter in the process of L2 learning. The paper introduces the term "collocation" and looks at various ways of classifying collocations. Then, it distinguishes between two kinds of errors: collocational and non-collocational, before analysing data taken from collocational performance of Arab learners of English who are still in the process of learning English.

In the remaining part of this work, the focus will be on some pedagogical implications and ways of implementing findings of this work in the teaching of EFL to Arab learners. The paper concludes by recommending certain measures to be implemented in while teaching English grammar, writing and translation classes at the English department to target the learners' skills relating to use of collocations. This improves learners' competence, and consequently their performance. We believe that this goal is not only worthwhile but also necessary.

Key Words: collocation, idioms, errors, performance, transfer.