

الكفاءة في ترجمة التراكيب اللغوية بين اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية عند متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الأردن د. معتر محمد الخرشة*

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الملخص

غالبًا ما يواجه الناطقون باللغة العربية متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تحديات عند ترجمة التراكيب اللغوية بين اللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تحديد المجالات الصعبة التي يواجهها الطلاب عند ترجمة التراكيب اللغوية واستكشاف الاستراتيجيات المحتملة لمعالجة هذه الصعوبات. تحقيقًا لهذه الغاية، تم إجراء اختبار تشخيصي تضمن 50 طالبًا في جامعة مؤتة في الأردن، بما في ذلك التراكيب اللغوية باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية. بعد الانتهاء من الاختبار، تم تقييم ترجمات الطلاب وتحليلها باستخدام الإحصاءات الوصفية. إضافة إلى ذلك، أُجريت مقابلات شبه منظمة مع أربعة من أساتذة الترجمة ذوي الخبرة، مما أسهم في تقديم رؤى قيمة حول الاستراتيجيات المحتملة لمعالجة هذه التحديات واقتراح أساليب تدريس أكثر فعالية. وتم تحليل المقابلات من خلال التحليل الموضوعي. كشفت النتائج عن أن مستوى الكفاءة في الترجمة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية بلغ 56.28% بينما بلغت نسبة كفاءة الترجمة من اللغة العربية إلى الإنجليزية 46.42%. مما يسلط الضوء على وجود آفاق كبيرة للتحسين. وبناءً على ذلك، تدعو هذه الدراسة إلى تحسين مستوى تعليم التراكيب اللغوية، ودمج أساليب التعلم القائمة على المتون اللغوية، واستخدام المعاجم ثنائية اللغة وكذلك أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي كأدوات أساسية لتعزيز مهارات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الترجمة. وتهدف هذه التوصيات إلى تمكين الطلاب والمعلمين على حد سواء في سعيهم لتحقيق التميز في الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المعاجم ثنائية اللغة، ترجمة التراكيب اللغوية، التعلم القائم على المتون اللغوية، التعليم الفعال، التراكيب النحوية، التراكيب المعجمية، والترجمة والذكاء الاصطناعي

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Translating Arabic-English Collocations Proficiency among EFL Jordanian Learners

Abstract

Arabic-speaking EFL learners often encounter challenges when translating collocations between English and Arabic. The current study aims to identify the challenging areas that students face when translating collocations and explore potential strategies to address these difficulties. To this end, a diagnostic test was administered to 50 students at Mu'tah University in Jordan, including grammatical and lexical collocations in both Arabic and English. Following the completion of the test, students' translations were evaluated and analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with four experienced translation instructors were conducted, contributing valuable insights into potential strategies for addressing these challenges and suggesting more effective teaching methods. The interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed a proficiency level of 56.28% in English to Arabic translation and 46.42% in the reverse direction, highlighting substantial prospects for improvement. Consequently, this study calls for the enhancement of collocation instruction, the integration of corpus-based learning approaches, and the utilization of bilingual dictionaries as well as AI tools as essential tools to strengthen the translation competencies of Jordanian EFL students. These recommendations aim to empower both students and educators in their pursuit of translation excellence.

Keywords: Bilingual Dictionaries, Collocation Translation, Corpus-Based Learning, Explicit Teaching, Grammatical Collocations, Lexical Collocations, Translation and AI.

1.Introduction:

Translation has evolved throughout history to facilitate interlingual and intercultural communication, a complex process involving the transfer of meanings and forms from source text (SL) to target text (TL). Hence, achieving equivalence demands a particular equivalent of linguistic and extra-linguistic elements within distinct knowledge systems. Texts exist within complex linguistic, textual, contextual, and cultural environments introduced with communicative intent and interpretive impact.

Consequently, rendering meaning and intent across interconnected levels from the source to the target text poses critical challenges for translators. In this regard, numerous scholars have studied the inherent difficulties in translation, which arise due to differences in morphology, vocabulary, syntax, and phonology among languages. Specifically, Ghazala (1995) categorized these challenges into grammatical, lexical, phonological, and stylistic facets. Importantly, a significant challenge faced by EFL students in translation involves the precise rendering of collocations. Indeed, collocations present a considerable challenge since they require an understanding of how native speakers naturally combine words. Consequently, this disparity creates a communication gap due to the importance of precise collocation translation to maintain the intended meaning, tone, and cultural aspects.

In the Jordanian context, several studies have been conducted to shed light on the obstacles encountered by EFL students in translating collocations. Specifically, some studies highlighted the challenges faced by EFL students in this regard, while others focused on the levels of difficulty and the reasons behind them. Furthermore, certain studies built their analysis on the translation strategies employed by students, and some suggested potential solutions (Alshehab & Rababah, 2020; Olimat et al., 2022;

Khalifah & Zibin, 2022). Notwithstanding, the examination of collocation translation remains insufficiently investigated (Hmaidan, 2024; Youcef et al., 2024).

This gap necessitates attention, particularly to enhance the linguistic proficiency and translational competence of students within Jordanian universities, such as Mu'tah University (MU).

1.1. Aims and Scope of the study:

This study aims to contribute to this field of research by investigating the areas of weakness that university students in Jordan have about different types of collocations.

1.2. Significance of the study:

The study explores the reality of the pedagogical environment and mechanisms employed in teaching collocations through extensive interviews with instructors, providing significant recommendations to bring about the necessary changes for achieving better results. By conducting this study, a clearer roadmap could be provided to the educators and learners in the field of translating collocations at the Jordanian level as well as the local one due to its in-depth insights into characterizing the current issue among EFL Arab learners and its potential strategies to overcome such an issue.

1.3. Research Questions:

The research questions that are formulated in this study are:

RQ.1) What are the challenges that EFL Jordanian students encounter in translating collocations effectively?

RQ.2) What are the potential strategies that can be implemented to counter students' inability to translate collocations effectively?

2 Literature Review:

2.1. Collocation:

Collocation has been a focal point in translation studies. Halliday and Hasan (1976, 7) defined collocation as the co-occurrence of words, often transcending sentence boundaries. Additionally, Benson et al. (1997) expanded this concept to include specific word combinations or grammatical structures forming meaningful language units when used together. This emphasizes the paramount importance of using correct collocation for effective communication. In essence, O'Dell and McCarthy (2017) characterized it as the frequent association of words, such as "up" and "down" or "left" and "right," and its significance lies in creating strong linguistic connections.

In the domain of EFL/ESL teaching and learning, the significance of collocation has received particular attention (Darvishi, 2011:52). Indeed, numerous studies have shed light on the proclivity of EFL/ESL learners to commit collocation errors due to their lack of appropriate knowledge and the pervasive influence of their native languages (Metwally et al., 2023). In this essence, Bahardoust and Moeini (2012) stated that deficient knowledge of the nature and definition of collocation can obstruct SL acquisition and impede the learning process. It is crucial to acknowledge that collocations remain an ambiguous concept, and they lack firm criteria or rules governing word co-occurrence (Bahumaid, 2006). Additionally, it is worth noting that collocations can be categorized in various ways, ranging from habitual combinations governed by selection criteria to fixed expressions encompassing idioms and set phrases. This complexity highlights the importance of a systematic approach to teaching and learning collocations in the EFL/ESL context.

2.2. Categorizations of Collocations:

2.2.1 Collocations in English:

Regarding the classifications of collocations, some scholars attempted to provide comprehensive categorizations, such as Benson (1986) and Lewis (2000). Collocations are classified into two types, namely grammatical and lexical. While the former involves the combination of content words with function words, typically prepositions. It can be classified into three distinct patterns of lexical collocations that consist of two or more content words (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) and can be further subdivided into distinct subcategories. This differentiation serves the purpose of providing a comprehensive understanding of how words naturally combine in language usage.

In detail, grammatical collocations are combinations that adhere to specific syntactic rules and conventions within a given language. These collocations feature words that depend on each other to form grammatically correct sentences or phrases. Benson (1986) classified grammatical collocations in English into eight categories, including verb-noun collocations, adjective-noun collocations, adverb-adjective collocations, and preposition-noun collocations. The first pattern involves verb + noun collocations, which include specific verbs and certain nouns, as in "open a door."

Consequently, selecting the appropriate noun following the verb is essential for conveying the intended meaning accurately. In the case of adjective + noun collocations, distinct combinations of adjectives and nouns that naturally co-occur in a specific manner, such as "heavy rain," are highlighted. Selecting the proper accenting word, such as an adjective to a noun, is extremely important for precise natural descriptions. Furthermore, adverb + adjective collocations are the use of particular adverbs together with certain adjectives, as in "greatly feared," which

modifies the meaning of the adjective. Finally, prepositions and noun collocations pertain to certain prepositions and nouns that go together, for example, 'in view.' Every collocation needs the correct preposition because these structures demonstrate the relationships and differences among the words. A description of the different types of grammatical collocations based on Benson et al. (1997) has been summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Benson's et al. (1997) Grammatical Categorization of Collocations in English:

Grammatical Combination		Example	Acceptable Translation
Noun + preposition		Despite her <u>apathy towards</u> politics, she decided to vote in the upcoming election.	اللامبالاة تجاه
Noun + to infinitive		It was <u>a pleasure to</u> meet you at the conference last week.	من دواعي سروري أن
Noun + that clause		He <u>made a promise</u> to always stand by her side, no matter what challenges they faced.	وعد
Preposition + noun		I found the rare book <u>by accident</u> while browsing through the dusty shelves of the old bookstore.	بالصدفة
Adjective + preposition		He was <u>angry at</u> himself for forgetting such an important anniversary.	غاضب من
Adjective + to infinitive		With bags packed and tickets in hand, they were finally <u>ready to go</u> on their long-awaited vacation.	مستعد للذهاب
Adjective + that clause		It is <u>vital that</u> we address climate change to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.	من الأهمية بمكان
Verb collocations	Verb + preposition	My friend <u>came by</u> my house after work to return the borrowed book.	جاء إلى
	Verb + to + Infinitive	She <u>continued to</u> practice the piano diligently, aiming for perfection in every piece.	واصلت
	Verb + bare infinitive	With the storm approaching, we <u>had better go</u> before it gets too windy and rainy.	الأفضل أن نذهب
	Verb + V-ing	They <u>enjoy watching</u> TV.	استمتعوا بمشاهدة
	Verb + Object + to Infinitive	The urgent situation <u>forced them to reconsider</u> their initial decision and take immediate action.	أجبرتهم على إعادة النظر
	Verb + that clause	The doctor <u>suggests me that</u> I take Vitamins.	أوصاني

On the other hand, lexical collocations correspond to the specific words or phrases being put together in a certain habitual way to form meaningful units that have distinct meanings or stimulate particular meanings. McArthur (1992) illustrates that lexical collocations include nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. Like all collocations, classes undergo variations, some observing set forms while others present more room for movement. The former type of collocation is idiosyncratic, which is not always derived from individual words that make up the expression. On the other hand, the words that accompany the central word are freer, and therefore more meanings can be formed from the specific words chosen. These combinations of words, unlike grammatical pairs, stem from the bond that one particular word is related to a particular concept or idea.

Benson et al. (1997) specifically categorized lexical collocations under six subcategories, as shown in Table 2. Their categorization was based on verbs and nouns, verbs and adverbs, and adjective and noun combinations in lexical collocations. This categorization is a handy tool for translators, as it enables them to make their translations more accurate and effective. It also offers translators a strategic means of making their work richer and achieving improved communication.

Table 2: Benson's et al. (1997) Categorization of Lexical Collocations in English

Lexical Combination	Example	Acceptable Translation
Verb + noun	To launch a rally	يدشن حملة
Verb + adverb	Recommend highly	يوصي بشدة
Noun + verb	Economy boom	نهوض اقتصادي
Noun + noun	State university	جامعة حكومية
Adverb + adjective	Fully aware of	على دراية تامة
Adjective + noun	Lukewarm reception	استقبال فاتر

2.2.2 Collocations in Arabic:

Like English, Arabic is full of language collocations. According to Husamaddin (1985), collocation in Arabic is defined as the specific pairing of words based on restricted, meaningful patterns, encompassing association agreement, collocational range, and co-occurrence. The association agreement demands alignment between collocated words, a harmony only achievable through the inherent meaning conveyed. For instance, "رجل وسيم" (Rajulun wasiym) can be aptly translated into "a handsome man," and "سيدة جميلة" (saydah jamylah) to "a beautiful lady," but not vice versa. The second constraint pertains to the number of collocations a word can form. For instance, the verb "نفذ" "nafatha"(run out) collocates with several words, including "المال" "alma'al"(money) and "الصبر" "assabr"(patience). Lastly, co-occurrence denotes the regular pairing of certain words. In this context, Hafiz (2002) endeavored to propose a comprehensive framework, illustrated in Table 3, which is acknowledged as a valuable tool for translating Arabic collocations into English. The classification involves the combination of verbs and nouns, such as "هدأ الموج" (he pitched the tent) and "استشاط غضب" (he was inflamed with rage). It also includes verbs with phrases like "استقال من العمل" (he resigned from work) and joining verbs in phrases like "طار وحلق" (he flew and soared). The categorization also includes noun-adjective pairs, such as "قوة عظمى" (a supreme, mighty, or ultimate power). In short, Hafiz's (2002) categorization makes important contributions to the complex meanings of Arabic words and provides a model for studying Arabic collocations.

Table 3: Arabic Collocations based on Hafiz (2002, cited in Brashi, 2005: 44-45)

Type of Collocation	Arabic Collocation	Translation
Verb + noun	نصب الخيمة	He pitched the tent.
Verb + prepositional noun phrase	استقال من عمله	He resigned from work.
Verb + prepositional noun phrase (adverb)	تم تطبيقه بدقة	It was precisely implemented .
Verb + noun phrase	حجزت موعدا	She made an appointment.
Verb + conjunction + verb (antonym)	أعطى و منع	To give and prevent
Verb + relative pronoun + verb	اعذر من أنذر	He who warns is excused.
Noun + noun (annexation)	شروق الشمس	Sunrise
Noun + conjunction + noun	الخير والشر	Good and evil
Noun + adjective	قولٌ صائب	A right saying
Noun + prepositional noun phrase	في غاية الأدب	Extremely polite
Adjective + noun	حسن الأخلاق	High morals
Adjective + adverbial phrase	مستنكرا بشدة	Strongly condemns

2.3 Previous Studies:

Several studies highlighted various issues that confront students. These studies emphasized the need to take linguistic, cultural, and contextual elements into consideration to translate correctly. Some of these studies conducted on university EFL students aimed at exploring the critical issues faced by students when translating collocations. The findings indicated that the difficulties are the result of students' excessive reliance on literal translation and limited linguistic and cultural knowledge in both the SL and TL (Youcef et al., 2024; Abdelhamid, 2021; Al-Jarf, 2022; Al Shehab, 2016; and Dweik and Suleiman, 2013).

For example, Jabak et al. (2019) explored challenges encountered by Saudi students in translating collocations. To achieve this purpose, the researcher conducted a quiz on collocation at King Saud University to assess the translation capabilities in rendering the exact intended meaning of 15 Arabic sentences. The findings showed that students faced difficulties in translating collocations due to different factors like relying on literal translation, frequently using bilingual

dictionaries, and having a limited understanding of collocations in both languages. However, the findings of the study are deemed incomprehensive due to the limited number of collocations given to students as well as assessing Arabic collocations only without considering English collocations. Moreover, the study did not provide a qualitative analysis of the underlying causes of the current issue nor the potential strategies to overcome this problem.

Similarly, a study conducted by Bahumaied (2006) addressed this perspective by examining only one type of collocation: word + preposition collocations. The findings of the study highlighted some of the problematic issues related to this area, including inadequate competence in Arabic and the misuse of prepositions. However, these studies did not pay considerable attention to demonstrating the correlative relationship between specific types of collocations on one hand and the level of difficulty on the other. Therefore, a broader exploration of specific collocations is needed.

On the other hand, other studies have concentrated on the methods of translation used in translating collocations (Alqaddari, 2022; Saeed, 2023; Alrashidi, 2023; Almjlad, 2024). For instance, in a very recent study conducted by Almjlad (2024) at the Northern Border University, Saudi Arabia, to assess the translational abilities among Saudi male students when translating English collocations into Arabic. However, the study provided a limited and small test to achieve its purpose, including only 10 English collocations. Additionally, the study reported that many of the EFL Saudi learners struggle to find the accurate translation for the given sentences. Moreover, the study noted that students depend mainly on literal translation and paraphrasing to tackle the test.

Thus, it is evident that many of the recent studies have not addressed nor covered the different aspects of the current phenomenon, as some of them only highlighted familiar causes that led to the insufficient translation of collocations, such as the

reliance on literal translation and finding the closest equivalence. Nevertheless, these studies did not establish a connection between the strategies employed by students and the pedagogical methods instructors use to train them. Moreover, many of the studies paid attention to one aspect of the problem and uncovered the other one. Consequently, the attention towards Arabic-English and English-Arabic collocational equivalents is still under-researched, inviting further studies to explore the issue from various perspectives. These studies can assist students in acquiring better awareness and usage of different types of collocations for translation purposes. Equally significant is the exploration of more effective pedagogical methods employed by instructors during the training process.

Hence, the primary objective of this study is to systematically recognize the distinct issues faced by FEL Jordanian students when translating a predefined set of collocations across various types, both from English to Arabic and vice versa. Furthermore, the study endeavors to explore potential strategies that could be effectively employed within Jordanian universities to mitigate the challenges students encounter in navigating the linguistic and cultural particulars inherent in the fixed expressions of collocations in both languages.

3.Methodology:

To achieve the goals of the research, the current study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative part of the current research entailed administering a diagnostic test of translation to a sample of EFL Jordanian students. The purpose of the diagnostic test was to assess the students' abilities in translating collocations and identify the problematic areas among the EFL Jordanian learners. Indeed, using such a technique is widely used by researchers to extract data and study it closely.

In a supplementary way, the qualitative method of the current research involved carrying out in-depth interviews with experienced EFL Jordanian instructors. By merging quantitative and qualitative methods, the research attempted to provide a comprehensive and descriptive description of the issues at hand.

3.1 Population and Sampling:

The study was conducted in the English language and literature department (ELL) at MU in Jordan during the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024. The English program at MU was chosen due to its high ranking, strong curriculum, and qualified faculty. Another notable factor is the ELL translation courses, which cover the theoretical and practical aspects of translation between English and Arabic. This emphasis on translation made MU a suitable choice for the study.

On the other hand, a total of 50 students participated in this study, comprising 35 female and 15 male students who were recruited through a systematic purposive sampling technique. That is, purposive criteria were set to select the appropriate participants for the study. Foremost, all participants were fourth-year students majoring in the ELL program. Another critical criterion was their successful completion of foundational courses, specifically Translation 1, Grammar, Writing 1, and other introductory Arabic courses, including Arabic 1 and Arabic 2. This was deemed essential as they were expected to possess significant translation knowledge in comparison to students at earlier program levels. Moreover, all participants were native Arabic speakers and shared common cultural features. Thus, it is evident that the present sample exhibits homogeneity in both cultural background and academic capabilities. Notably, all the participants ranged between 21 and 24 years old. Lastly, it is noteworthy that the chosen students were also required to take the diagnostic test on July 23rd, 2024.

As for the EFL instructors, four experienced translation instructors participated in this study. They were selected based on their experience in teaching translation

classes, where only instructors who have at least 5 years of experience are considered. As a result, the average years of experience ranged between 5 and 10 years in the field, constituting invaluable assets and information regarding various aspects of EFL instruction, e.g., practices, curriculum design, and assessment techniques.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis:

During the research on the current topic, this study employed two tools: a diagnostic test and interview methods.

A. Diagnostic Test:

In the process of responding to RQ.1, a test was specially designed to assess students' ability to effectively translate collocations from one language into the other. The test comprised two distinct sections. The first section was built based on Benson et al. (1997) description of collocations in English. The students were also asked to translate Arabic-English collocations, and the test had 18 parts with two sentences each. The second half of the test, which was pioneered by Hafiz's (2002) accounts of the Arabic collocations, consisted of 12 parts with two sentences each. The section was supposed to assess whether the students were capable of translating English to Arabic collocations and therefore provide an overall rating of their translation capacities in languages.

Following the test administration, students' responses were thoroughly read and analyzed by four translation instructors. The evaluation entailed a verification of both accuracy and errors in the translations. The results gathered then underwent computation through simple descriptive statistics to gain a quantitative representation of the performance of the students. The structure of the diagnostic test is detailed in Table 4.

More importantly, the test was conducted at Mu'tah University with the presence of two faculty members on August 13th, 2024. It is noteworthy to mention that the participants were asked to translate the whole given chunks of language, phrases, and sentences within 60 minutes. Additionally, students were provided with access to the Oxford dictionary to ease their tasks. They were also fully informed about the importance of the study and the need to tackle the task accurately. Finally, the students were assured that their data and responses were kept anonymous.

Table 4: The Structure of the Diagnostic Test:

Section	Type of Combination	Task
Section 1	Noun + preposition	<u>Apathy towards.</u>
	Noun + to infinitive	It was a <u>pleasure to do</u> it.
	Noun + that clause	She <u>made a promise</u> that she would do her best.
	Preposition + noun	<u>By accident</u> , in advance.
	Adjective + preposition	<u>Be angry at</u> , be keen on.
	Adjective + to infinitive	<u>Ready to go</u> , heavy to lift.
	Adjective + that clause	It is <u>vital that</u> you have a <u>positive attitude to</u> life.
	Verb + preposition	They <u>came by</u> train.
	Verb + to + Infinitive / bare infinitive	She <u>continued to</u> work.
	Verb + V-ing	They <u>enjoy watching</u> TV.
	Verb + Object + to Infinitive	We <u>forced them to</u> leave.
	Verb + that clause	The doctor <u>suggests me that</u> I take Vitamins.
	Verb + noun	<u>To launch a rally</u>
	Verb + adverb	<u>Recommend highly</u>
	Noun + verb	<u>Economy boom</u>
	Noun + noun	<u>State university</u>
	Adverb + adjective	<u>Fully aware of</u>
	Adjective + noun	<u>Lukewarm reception</u>
Section 2	Verb + noun	<u>نصب الخيمة</u>
	Verb + prepositional noun phrase	<u>استقال من عمله</u>
	Verb + prepositional noun phrase (adverb)	<u>تم تطبيقه بدقة</u>
	Verb + noun phrase	<u>حجزت موعدا</u>
	Verb + conjunction + verb (antonym)	<u>أعطى و منع</u>
	Verb + relative pronoun + verb	<u>أعذر من أنذر</u>
	Noun + noun (annexation)	<u>شروق الشمس</u>

Noun + conjunction + noun	الخير والشر
Noun + adjective	قول صائب
Noun + prepositional noun phrase	في غاية الأدب
Adjective + noun	حسن الأخلاق
Adjective + adverbial phrase	مستنكرا بشدة

As shown in Table 4, which provides a deep insight into the given test, the test consists of 30 different chunks of language, including 18 English collocations and 12 Arabic collocations. In detail, the first section entails translating collocations from English into Arabic, such as noun + to infinitive, adjective + that clause, and verb + adverb, as provided by Benson et al. (1997). On the contrary, the second section covers translating collocations from Arabic into English, including the different aspects as described by Hafiz (2002), consisting of the different sets of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, such as verb + prepositional noun phrase, noun + conjunction + noun, and adjective + adverbial phrase.

B. Semi-structured Interviews:

In response to RQ.2, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews between the 10th and 28th of September 2024. This method was chosen because it is adaptable and can be used to explore various strategies that can be used to address EFL students' challenges. The interviews were conducted online via Zoom with four instructors: three males and one female. Each instructor was given a set of predetermined questions, and the average interview time was about 20 minutes. The interview questions focused on the underlying causes of the current phenomenon and the possible strategies to enhance students' abilities in translating collocations.

Upon the completion of the interviews, the collected data underwent analysis using thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), which incorporates 6 levels, including closely reading the data, setting codes, identifying major themes,

reviewing and then defining and nominating themes, and finally, writing up narratives.

4. Findings and Discussion:

4.1 Challenges encountering the EFL Jordanian students in translating collocations effectively:

As shown in Figure 1, the study revealed that translating collocations from English into Arabic was challenging for the students. Specifically, it was found that only 56.28% of the translations were appropriate and precise. While this percentage represents a majority, it is imperative to highlight that 43.72% of the translations lacked the necessary precision, and some students were unable to complete the task successfully. In contrast, translating from Arabic into English was more challenging for them, where only 46.42% were accurate. However, the fact that 53.58% of these translations were inaccurate is particularly significant, especially when considering that the test used open-type collocations.

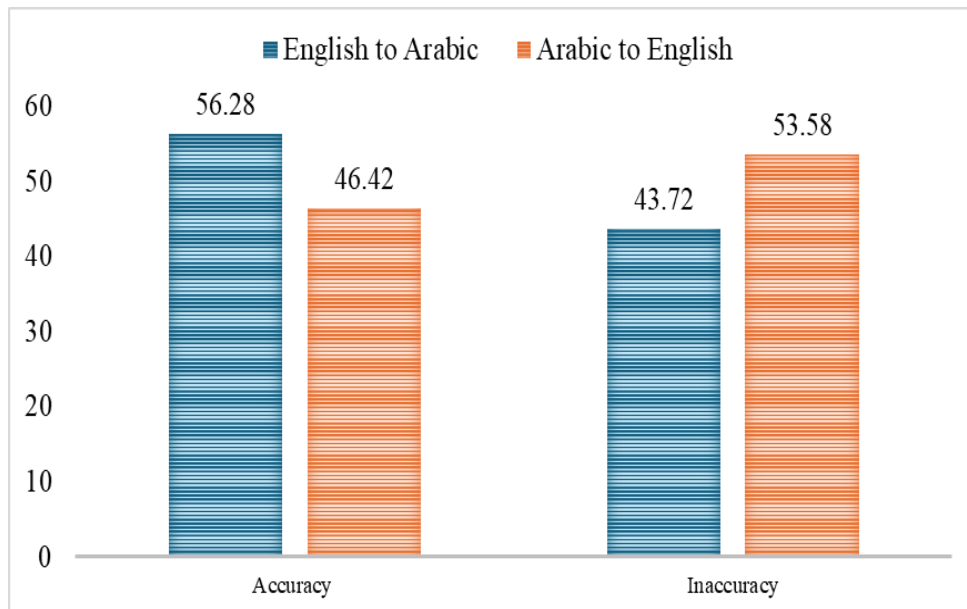


Figure 1. Students' Collocation Translation Performance: Arabic vs. English

4.2 Translating English Collocations:

Referring to Figure 2, the results of the students' translation of English collocations into Arabic indicated that while the accurate translations comprised only 56.28% of the total, the inaccurate ones were 43.72 %. In detail, the analysis revealed distinct challenges across various types of collocations. Firstly, verb-based collocations showed difficulties that resulted in 32.37% of inaccuracies. However, a 67.63% accuracy rate was achieved by the sample students. Secondly, translating noun-based collocations revealed substantial obstacles that the students encountered. It shows that 58.12% of the translations were accurate, while 41.88% were incorrect translations. Thirdly, adjectives posed considerable difficulties, with only 37.69% accurately translated and a substantial 62.31% resulting in inaccuracies. Finally, adverb-based collocations also presented great difficulties, with only 40.1% being accurate while 59.9% of the translations were inaccurate.

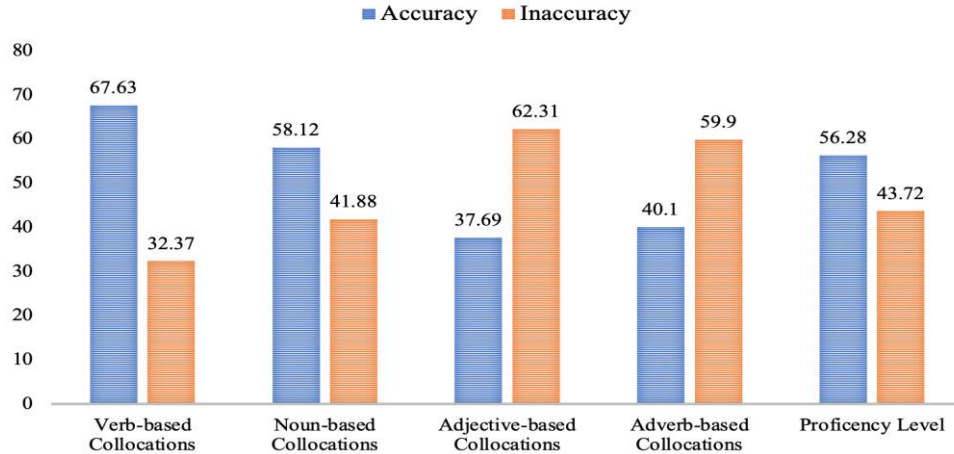


Figure 2. The Results of Translating English Collocations to Arabic

4.2.1 Verb-Based Collocations

The accuracy of students' translations for verb-based collocations was the highest, reaching 67.63%, while 32.37% were inaccurately translated. Yet, the results emphasized a notable problem where students were not able to identify the correct verb match in Arabic due to their lack of proficiency in English as well as their limited training in translating collocations from English into Arabic.

In detail, the translation accuracy of "the doctor suggests to me that I take vitamins" was 47.91%, as shown in Figure 3, due to students' understanding of the collocation within its context and their treatment of collocations as chunks.

However, several students translated this as "الطبيب يقترح علي أن آخذ"

"فيتامينات", opting for a literal translation of "suggests" to "يقترح". Conversely, this choice neglects the contextual collocational meaning when the verb collocates with "doctor" where "يوصي" (i.e., "recommend") would be a more appropriate choice both semantically and pragmatically. In another example, the accuracy of translating "to launch a rally" as "يطلق حملة" was 57.1%. This was due to the students converting the verb "launch" into a noun in their translation, thereby overlooking the sense of urgency and action inherent in the original verb.

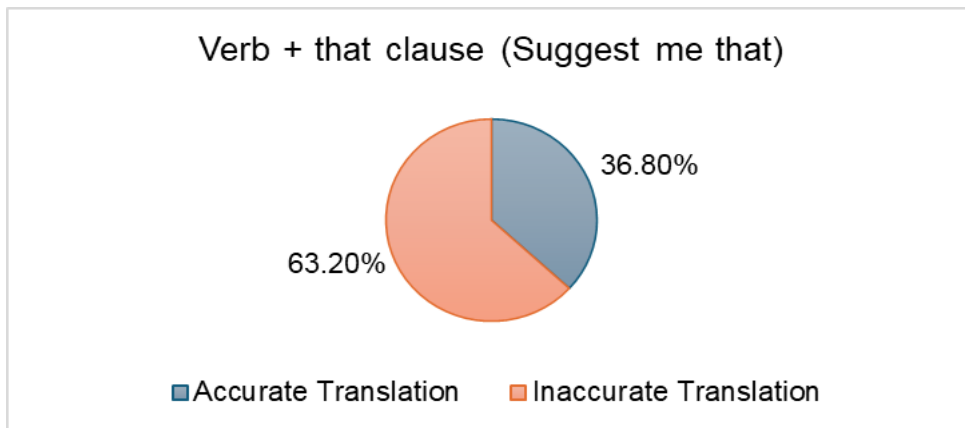


Figure 3. Verb + that clause (Suggest me that)

Those mistranslations can be attributed to two main reasons: the inability to comprehend lexical and semantic chunks and the use of inefficient translation techniques like word-for-word or unit shifts without considering the in-built function of verbs. Therefore, students' problems in the efficient translation of verb-based collocations in specific contexts are rooted in linguistic complexities and pedagogical approaches. This is linguistically due to the difficult nature of collocational relationships, as the words will form customary use as pairs due to subtle sense. Students struggle to come up with the precise verb that best fits a specific context, as seen in the misinterpretation of "suggests" as "يقترح" instead of the more appropriate "يوصي". Pedagogically, conventional language instruction methods might prove to be insufficient in highlighting the instruction of collocations as a whole unit, so students wind up being insensitive or untrained to spot these subtle linguistic patterns.

4.2.2 Noun-Based Collocations:

The students' translations of noun-based collocations ranked second in achieving accuracy, which stood at 58.12%. However, this type of collocation posed significant challenges, resulting in incorrect translations with a percentage of 41.88%. For example, the accuracy of translating the phrase "apathy towards" was 43.82%, as displayed in Figure 4. In this context, the appropriate translations of this phrase to "لامبالاة تجاه" capture the deep sense of indifference. However, translations such as "عدم اكتراث نحو" or "عدم محبة تجاه" convey a mere lack of interest and miss the intense meaning of indifference. In another example, the percentage of inaccurately translated "economy boom" as "ازدهار اقتصادي" was 40.09%. This reflects a deficiency in understanding collocation, where the meaning of a word should be contextualized with other associated words in the collocation unit. Consequently,

some students translated "boom" as "قنبلة" ("bomb"). Indeed, they did not pay attention to the meaning constraint imposed by the collocation chunk.

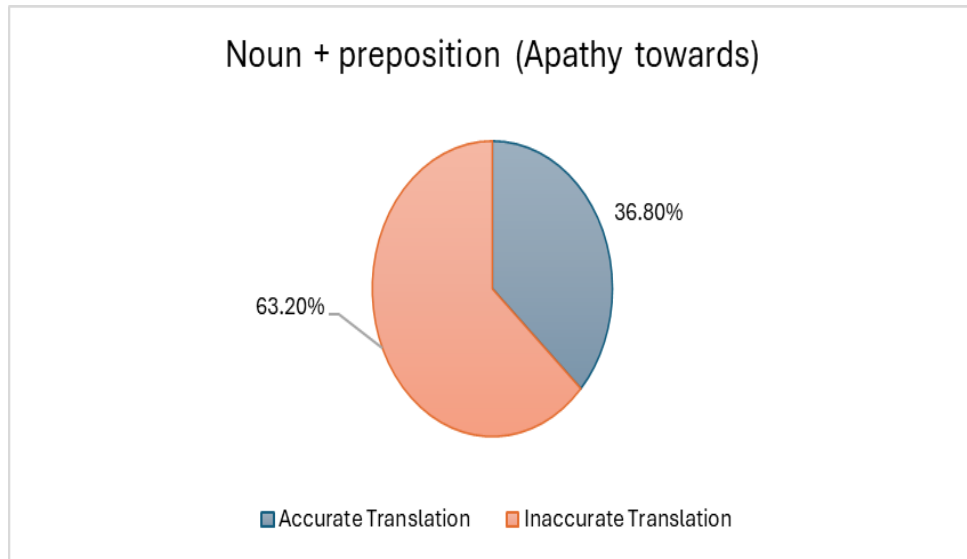


Figure 4. Noun + Preposition (Apathy towards)

Accordingly, the process of translating noun-based collocations is complex for various reasons. This includes the cultural and situational details the collocations carry as well as the language change over time. Additionally, accurately understanding phrases like "apathy towards" or "boom" presents significant challenges. Thus, it is essential to understand them beyond literal meanings, considering how they are used, their hidden or different senses and shades of meaning in different contexts, and the cultural ideas they express. This also points to the requirement of having good language skills and cultural awareness.

4.2.3 Adjective-Based Collocations:

The study shows that translating adjectives had the lowest accuracy level, which was 37.69 %. Considering students' translations of adjective + that-clause collocations, vital that' as in 'it is vital that you must have a positive attitude to life,'

held an accuracy rate of merely 36.8 %, as demonstrated in Figure 5. Some particular linguistic problems occurred because of the overwhelming absolute necessity encapsulated in 'vital.' Thus, translations like "من الواضح" or "من المنطقي" do not achieve the essence of 'vital.' Rather, some students interpreted 'vital' as 'من الجيد' (it is good to) or 'من الغريب' (strange not to), deviating from the emphasis that 'vital' is intended to have. It must be noted, though, that the correct translation is من الضروري أو من الأساسي. These examples illustrate the difficulties students have in capturing the precise meanings that the words carry.

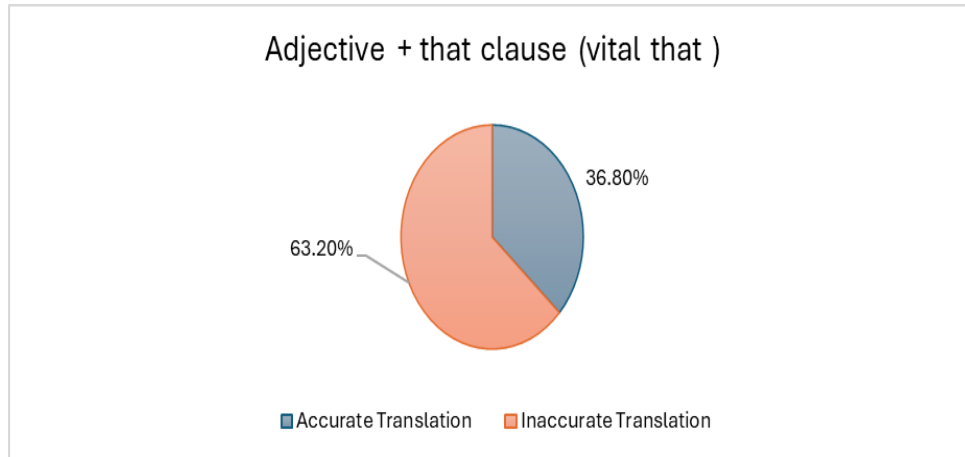


Figure 5. Adjective + that clause (Vital that)

To incorporate additional categories of difficulty, idiomatic expressions characterized by figurative meanings present even more significant obstacles. For example, the fidelity of the translation of "lukewarm reception" as "استقبال فاتر" was merely 5%. This circumstance was particularly due to their inability to interpret the adjective, which led to inaccurate translations such as "ضعيف الاحتمال" ("uncertain") and "غير متحمس" ("unenthusiastic").

Consequently, the difficulties encountered in the translation of adjective-based collocations have unveiled several critical factors, including the inherent

complexities associated with comprehending and accurately rendering collocations. Lexical items such as "vital" possess connotations that transcend their mere definitions, thereby increasing the likelihood of misinterpretation. In a similar vein, expressions such as "lukewarm reception" underscore the importance of grasping contextual nuances and implied significances when coupled with particular words intended to convey specific meanings. Nevertheless, these challenges necessitate an increased focus on pedagogical strategies that prioritize contextual understanding and connotative implications.

4.2.4 Adverb-Based Collocations:

Lastly, in the study of the translation of the adverb-based collocations by the students, it was found that the percentage of correct translations was 40.1%, while incorrect answers constituted 59.9% of the total. For instance, the phrase "fully aware of", which scored 40.1% accuracy, "واعٍ تمامًا ب/ل" captures the fullness and depth of awareness. Yet, translations such as "احساس كلي ل" or "يعرف عن", while not incorrect, tend to move towards knowledge rather than the profound realization implied by "aware". Nevertheless, some other translations indicated the poor diction of the students attempting "قلق بشدة" "extremely worried" drifting to an entirely different meaning.

These findings highlight the students' weaknesses in two crucial areas. Firstly, there is a struggle to comprehend collocations as idiomatic units. Secondly, there is a notable lack of knowledge among students regarding the cultural aspects and natural flow of language. This requires proficiency at the lexical, semantic, and contextual levels to ensure the appropriateness and effectiveness of language use. Additionally, students should be exposed to TL culture and society through a range of teaching strategies.

4.3 Translating Arabic Collocations:

The translation of collocations from Arabic to English revealed various challenges across different types, as depicted in Figure 5. Firstly, correct noun-based translations were about 63.17%, while 36.83% were deemed inaccurate. Secondly, while 37.32% of the verb-based collocations were accurate, 62.68% were inaccurate. Thirdly, the accuracy level for adjective-based collocations was only 40.25%, and 59.75% were considered inaccurate. Overall, around 46.42% represented appropriate translations, whereas 53.58% were considered inaccurate.

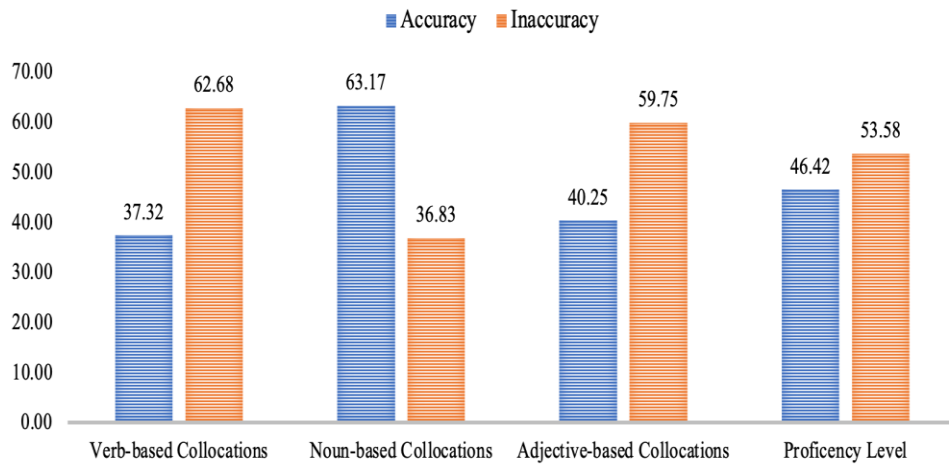


Figure 5. Proficiency Levels of EFL Students in Translating Arabic Collocations to English

4.3.1 Verb-based Collocations:

The results indicated that the translation accuracy of verb-based collocations from Arabic into English was notably low, with a 62.68% inaccuracy percentage. Only 37.32% of the collocations were translated accurately.

In this regard, students encountered several challenges that led to a variety of mistranslations. For example, when translating "أعطى و منع", students struggled to accurately render it as "to give and prevent." Consequently, some students relied on

direct translations, resulting in interpretations like "pass and withhold" or "offer and block." As a result, the overall precision of their translations was only 27.25%. This might be due to the syntactic differences between Arabic and English, where students may resort to the Arabic syntactic structure to avoid their inability to comprehend and transfer the accurate equivalence to the target language.

Moreover, the findings revealed that the cultural and idiomatic phrases bring forth additional translation challenges. Particularly, the culturally detailed phrase "أعذر من أنذر" can best be understood as "he who warns is excused". However, students who depended on literal translation produced translations such as "excuse who warns" and "forgive the one who alerted" resulting in a 13.5% accuracy.

Hence, students employed literal translation to compensate for their limited understanding and knowledge of various cultural and idiomatic phrases in English. It also implies that they resorted to simple strategies due to their limited familiarity with appropriate translation techniques and methods.

4.3.2 Noun-based Collocations:

The analysis of noun-based collocations revealed that 63.17% of translations were accurate, while 36.83% were inaccurate. Specifically, collocations such as "في غاية الأدب," best translated as "extremely polite," presented unique challenges for students, where some provided inaccurate translations such as "in the extreme of manners" and "in the greatest of politeness." Consequently, the percentage of accurate translations was 47.75%. Similarly, translations of "الخير والشر" varied, including phrases like "the goodness and the badness," "benefit and harm," and "kindness and wickedness," instead of "good and evil." Thus, the accuracy of students' translations was 59.39%.

EFL students' difficulties with translating Arabic noun-based collocations to English came due to cultural differences. For instance, literal translations of phrases like "في غاية الأدب" as "extremely polite" and "in the extreme of manners" underline

the difficulty in comprehending the idiomatic nature of these expressions. Ultimately, this indicates that these collocations carry deeper cultural aspects that might not be easily captured by direct translations. Hence, EFL learners mainly encounter obstacles in accurately conveying idiomatic and culture-specific meaning from Arabic into English.

4.3.3 Adjective-based Collocations:

Translating adjective-based collocations proved to be significantly challenging for the students, with an associated inaccuracy percentage of 59.75%. For example, the phrase "مستنكرا بشدة" can be translated as "strongly condemns." However, the students' literal translations exhibited variations, including "denying with strength," "refusing intensely," and "rejecting with force." As a result, the accuracy percentage was 28.7%. Likewise, the collocation "حسن الأخلاق" which means "high morals" came with a resulting percentage of accuracy 51.8%. In the details, this collocation was translated as: "ethics", "good manners", "good ethics", and "good morals" where students generally attempted to find the closest synonym of each word separately; the concept of chunk to chunk meaning as a fixed combination was absent.

Accordingly, the findings obtained highlighted the causes behind students' difficulties in translating collocations. Firstly, translating collocations between both Arabic and English is inherently sophisticated, and it specifically becomes more challenging when dealing with idiomatic and culture-specific phrases like adjective-based collocations. Indeed, translators find it more difficult to find the proper counterpart in the target language when a work is more culturally distant. (Newmark,1966). Dweik & Suleiman (2013) indicated that the linguistic and cultural differences between Arabic and English might be pivotal factors contributing to these difficulties.

Hence, students must possess a suitable level of cultural and contextual knowledge, as this significantly enhances their translations. Secondly, students possess a limited awareness of collocations in both Arabic and English. Therefore, they tend to adopt word-for-word translation or find the closest synonym to compensate for their lack of familiarity with collocations. This leads to potential misunderstandings of the inherent meaning of collocations and subsequent mistranslations of collocations. Accordingly, it is crucial for students to thoroughly study and acquire a proper understanding of the nature of collocations and their meanings within specific contexts.

4.4 Potential strategies to encounter students' inabilities in translating collocations effectively:

To tackle the challenges faced by students, four experienced Jordanian translation instructors offered valuable insights to enhance students' abilities in translating collocations, as follows:

4.4.1 Explicit Instruction

The interviewees emphasized that there is a need to teach collocations explicitly. Moreover, they clarified that a good understanding of collocations and correct usage are required to achieve precision and contextually correct translations (Alamri, 2025). They also noted that the explicit teaching of collocations means an orderly and structured pedagogical approach to teaching and practicing the most common collocations of a language.

Furthermore, collocations have to be integrated into each language skill (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), since this ensures the right use in different contexts (Alraddadi et al., 2025).

Secondly, diverse, authentic reading texts of native speakers, like essays, novels, and blogs targeting various collocational patterns, should be given to students. Reading these texts would assist the students in translating the collocations

appropriately and enable them to correctly comprehend where and how collocations are applied.

In this context, it is important to note that corpus-based learning, grounded on large sets of authentic texts, enhances the performance of learners in translation. This approach exposes learners to rich language use and enables them to explore varied patterns of collocations. This would also improve the quality of translation as well as teach learners about utilizing collocations in specific contexts (Alshubaily et al., 2023; Assaf et al., 2020). Interestingly, this practice can be implemented by using a series of practical steps. To begin with, students need to be provided with access to large and relevant corpora containing diverse authentic texts. They also need to be guided on how to look for specific collocations and translate them. Additionally, teachers need to prepare translation exercises with corpus use incorporated so that students can identify and well-translate collocations.

The use of some interactive exercises focusing on collocations has another significant role in enhancing students' ability to translate collocations. The exercises not only engage students with live translation but also help them significantly. They ought to involve various strategies like contextual exercises, games, and group work. Indeed, they give students live practice, facilitate accurate translation, and enhance their ability to translate collocations. More importantly, learners need to receive constructive feedback about their translations. Most importantly, corpus-based learning, especially where word combinations are the center of attention, is an indispensable aid for learners.

Finally, instructors' work must be supported, with a special focus on collocations. Furthermore, teachers must be equipped with advanced technology tools and teaching applications related to teaching collocations. Additionally, workshops,

seminars, and language teaching and learning collocation forums can familiarize the teachers with the newest methods and research findings.

Through the implementation of these all-around approaches, EFL students will have the capacity to explicitly comprehend, identify, and apply collocations correctly. This would result in more effective and accurate translations.

4.4.2 Usage of Bilingual Dictionaries and AI Tools:

Another approach that could be proposed by the interviewees is applying bilingual glossaries and dictionaries. They provided that the two tools are important for students. Particularly, they have an important role to play in assisting the translation of the students because they bridge the two languages by providing them with meaningful information regarding the different patterns of collocations and idiomatic expressions (Al Qaisiya & Al-Khanji, 2019; Akki & Larouz, 2021). In addition, they are important in language learning and translation since they enable learners to develop and share a clear understanding of words meaning and uses (Issa et al., 2022). Above all, such resources extend beyond the translations, offering contextual usage, synonyms, antonyms, and illustrative examples.

The presence of AI-based tools has significantly enhanced such resources, as they now provide personalized collocations according to the learners' learning styles. Koudded & Cojocar (2024) highlighted the usefulness of dictionaries in print format as translation aids in the age of Chat-GPT, either in translation training or in professional translation practice. Moreover, such tools, like those presented in the Cambridge Dictionary and Collins Dictionary, give immediate assistance by providing appropriate explanations to students for collocations while they translate. For instance, the Cambridge Dictionary employs AI to provide explanations, examples, and collocations appropriate for learners. Additionally, it offers context clues that help you learn collocations correctly. Most notably, AI contributes to enhancing the students' competency and efficiency in translation (Ibrahim et al.,

2024). To be precise, students can learn accurate definitions of various collocations while translating, thereby bringing the confusion usually experienced while translating to an end. Additionally, this would ensure increased active participation in learning and translating activities. In addition, AI plays a major role in enhancing students' translation abilities and generating more precise and contextually relevant translations.

In conclusion, bilingual glossaries and dictionaries are important tools in the translation of collocations. They are also used to accurately translate collocations from both English and Arabic. Therefore, students and teachers are encouraged to employ efficient bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, especially the ones with AI incorporated.

From the rich information gathered from experienced Jordanian translation instructors and supported by many research studies, it is evident that effective measures in the development of EFL Jordanian students' capabilities in translating collocations are of great significance. In totality, these findings highlight the importance of integration of the strategies for instruction in EFL translation among Jordanian students to facilitate greater comprehension and application of collocations in the students' translation.

5.Limitations:

The study is confined by relying on self-reported data. In addition, the small size of the sample is considered as a limitation. Besides, the generalization of the findings rests on employing the same procedure.

6.Conclusion:

The study highlights the difficulties the EFL learners face in translating collocations due to limited knowledge of collocations in Arabic and English as well as limited exposure to authentic resources and instructions. To overcome such difficulties, a

comprehensive approach is most crucial. Practitioners need to recognize the significance of an equal balance of collocations across courses in the program. Translation instructors should also work on enhancing the students' command of collocations by providing sufficient authentic readings. Moreover, instructors and learners should have AI tools at hand to overcome the above challenges since they provide live support, like explanations for collocations, illustrations, and collocations tailored to students' needs. Finally, the study holds great importance for Jordanian practitioners. Indeed, it offers a road map to enrich translation through AI-driven tools as well as innovative teaching styles.

3. Recommendations:

The research identified several strategies that can be applied. First, instructors and curriculum planners should ensure a consistent inclusion of collocations across courses within English language programs in Jordan. Specifically, course specifications should be updated to ensure that the syllabi and lesson plans include collocations appropriately. Additionally, it is suggested that further research be performed in other contexts to determine whether the findings apply broadly, namely the use of AI in teaching translation. This study in particular suggests looking into this phenomenon by studying different populations across diverse locations and periods. It is also advised to consider some other social factors like age and gender. In addition, the present work has provided important results that can be built upon for future research in related areas.

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