The Frequency of Lexical Collocation and Grammatical Collocation Patterns in the Extracts of AL- Shehristani

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Abstract

Language is a means of communicating ideas, messages, and thoughts. To do an effective communication, we have to know not only individual words of that language, but also how they fit together. Both the grammatical and lexical words are of central importance to identify a word in question in a certain sense. The combination of words that co-occur together repeatedly is called collocation. Collocation is found in all natural languages. It is divided into two types: lexical and grammatical collocations. Lexical and grammatical collocations are used in English to enrich the language producing native-like written production.

Hibit AL-Din AL- Shehristani, who is a religious character and attempts to preserve Islam as it is, uses this phenomenon for various functions. Thus, this paper intends to identify the different categories of lexical collocations and grammatical collocations used in his articles and to find out which category of lexical collocation and grammatical collocation is the most frequent. Moreover, it shows the importance of using each category. The data which involve different extracts taken from the articles of AL- Shehristani are analyzed using a model of Lewis' s (2002) categories of lexical and grammatical collocations.

The study reveals that the translated extracts of Al-Shehristani exploit the most dominant categories of lexical and grammatical collocation but with different frequencies depending on what he wants to convey to his readers. It also reveals that these categories enrich his speech creating native- like articles and interest in reading wherever the reader is.

Keywords : Collocation , types of collocation, translated extracts.

27

الملخص

تعد اللغة وسيلة اتصال ونقل الأفكار والمشاعر، ولجعل هذه الوسيلة مؤثرة يجب علينا أن نعرف كيف تندمج الكلمات الواحدة مع الأخرى، وليس الكلمة المفردة فقط.

تسمى ظاهرة اندماج الكلمات بتكرار المتلازمات وتوجد هذه الظاهرة في كل اللغات مثل اللغة العربية واللغة الإنكليزية وتنقسم على نوعين:

الأول: متلازمات معجمية

الثاني: متلازمات نحوية

ويستعمل كلا النوعين في اللغة الإنكليزية لإغناء اللغة، منتجًا كتابات شبيهة بما موجود في لغته.

استعمل السيد هبة الدين الشهرستاني – وهو شخصية دينية– هذه الظاهرة لوظائف مختلفة، لذلك نحاول في هذه الدراسة معرفة الأنواع المختلفة من هذه المتلازمات المستعملة في مقالات مترجمة للسيد، وأي نوع من هذه المتلازمات أكثر تكرارًا من غيرها.

إضافة إلى ذلك تبين هذه الدراسة أهمية استعمال كل نوع من هذه المتلازمات، وحلّلت هذه الكتابات المترجمة باستعمال نموذج يعود إلى لويس.

أظهرت الدراسة استعمال السيد الشهرستاني في مقالاته معظم الأنواع من المتلازمات ولكن بنسب مختلفة اعتمادًا على ما يريد نقله للقارئ إضافة إلى ذلك أغنت هذه المتلازمات كتابات السيد منتجًا مقالات شبيهة بمقالات الأجانب والتي تحقق المتعة لكل قارئ لها ولاسيما في الغرب.

0.1. Introduction

The tendency for certain words to occur together regularly in a given language is called collocation. Collocation is found in all texts types whether religious, scientific, or philosophical. They are" important combinations that endow the language with natural sounding speech and writing"[1].They reveal the difference between native and non- native writers. Native writers intuitively use correct collocations because a huge number of such chunks are stored in his/her mental lexicon. Lewis confirms that" within the mental lexicon, collocation is the most powerful force in the creation and comprehension of all naturally occurring text" [2]. Non-native writers ,on the other hand, use individual words to express their thoughts and this indicates their limited repertoire. They may form odd combinations though they maintain grammar correctness. Thus, their writings lack collocation and they will not be native-like. They will not be read by target readers especially in the case of religious texts.

Hibit Al-Din Al-Shehristani is one of the religious characters in Iraq who has written many articles about different topics. Generally he is known as a reformer who claims to reform people. Since he is a preacher, he knows how to convey his ideas and he intends to make his writings to be understandable by a great number of people even those who are in the West through translation. According to Hleil, translation " is the process to transfer written or spoken source language texts to equivalent written or spoken target language texts "[3].

It is expected that AL- Shahristani's translated texts exhibit an important feature called collocation which helps a lot in making them native-like, clear and stimulating. James stresses this point when he says "adherence to the col-

locational conventions of a foreign language contributes greatly to one's idiomacity and native-likeness, and not doing so announces one's foreignness"[4].

Many researchers have tackled the topic of collocation used by EFLs in their written production or translation of lexical collocations. However, no previous study has investigated the use of collocations in translated religious texts written by an Iraqi preacher. Thus, the present paper explores the use of collocation in an Iraqi translated religious texts and AL-Shahristani is selected as a sample for this study.It attempts to answer the following questions:

1- To what extent collocation is used in AL-Shahristani's translated religious texts?

2- Which category of lexical and grammatical collocations is the most frequent?

3- What is the importance of using each category in the texts ?

In relation to the questions above, the paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

1- identifying the categories of lexical and grammatical collocations used in AL-Shahirstani's translated religious texts.

2- pointing out the importance of using each category of lexical and grammatical collocations in the texts.

1-2 The Concept of Collocation

It is a fact that language is formulaic in nature and that the use of formulaic expressions is an indication of fluent, competent, and natural language use. One of these expressions that are used in spoken and written texts is called collocation. The term collocation was first introduced into linguistics by the British linguist Firth to refer to" the habitual co-occurrence of lexical items"[5].It comes from the verb collocate meaning "to typically occur in close proximity with"[6]. That is collocation means" an occurrence of one word in close proximity with another" [7](ibid) For example, to have a lunch or extremely happy .

Kjellmer says that collocation is" a sequence of words that occurs more than once in identical form and is grammatically well-structured"[8].

Sinclair observes that the collocation's structure is made up of a node that represents the word studied and a collocate standing for the word collocating with the node.[9]

According to Barnwell , collocation" is concerned with the co-occurrence of words; with what other words does a word usually occur? With what other words may it acceptably occur?"[10]

Another definition which was the most famous one was the firthian definition when he argued that" You shall know a word by the company it keeps"[11]. Thus, one word can have different meanings and this is determined by its collocation such as develop an area, develop a film, and develop a disease. This means that this keeping company is part of the meaning of key-word.

Palumba refers to another point when he defines collocation as" the tendency of certain words to occur in regular combinations and can be seen as a

cohesive device in that it contributes to textuality and generates expectations in hearers l readers"[12]

Two approaches are distinguished to study collocations. These approaches are:

1- The phraseological approach: It focuses on establishing the semantic relationship between two (or more) words and the degree of noncompositionality of their meaning. Halliday (1966) propounds the expression strong tea. Though this expression has the same meaning as powerful tea, the latter is considered awkward by native English speakers whereas the expression powerful computer is used and not strong computer.

2- The frequency- based approach : It draws on quantitative evidence about word co- occurrence in the texts, which is tackled in this paper.

0.2. Types of collocations

Collocations are classified into different categories. According to Lewis , collocations can be lexical or grammatical. Lexical collocation is made up of two content words which include nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs. It is divided into six types. These are

1- Verb+ Noun   conduct research

2- Adjective+ Noun   verbal communication

3- Noun+ Noun   job market

4- Verb+ Adverb   examine thoroughly

5- Adverb+ Adjective   mentally disabled

6- Noun+ Verb   The fog closed in[13]

Grammatical collocations contain one open class word, i.e, noun, verb, or adjective and one closed class word which is mainly a preposition. They can be

Adjective+ Preposition   aware of

Verb+ Preposition   step into

Noun+ Preposition   an increase in[14]

KARBALA HERITAGE

33

0.3. The Importance of Collocations in the Language

Most linguists such as Nation (2003), Pawley and Syder (1983) agree that the importance of collocations in language is paramount. Collocation plays a vital role in language. One of these roles is the generation of natural texts.[15]

When writers use collocations, they make their output sound natural and avoid what sound unnatural to native writers . According to the oxford collocations dictionary ," collocation is the way words combine in a language to natural sounding speech and writing"[16]. For example, smoking is strictly forbidden is more natural than smoking is strongly forbidden. Thus, collocations give the most natural way of saying something. In addition, it is one of the prerequisites for proficient language use Nation supports this when he says" All fluent and appropriate language use requires collocational knowledge"[17]. Moreover, Newmark considers collocations as" the nerves of the text----- and lexis is the flesh"[18]

Another role for collocations is that they make the text have a more precise meaning. This point is emphasized by the oxford collocation dictionary (cited in Sarikas, 2006:36)" language that is collocationally rich is also more precise"[19]

Collocations can be used to disambiguate polysymous words. Polysymous words have many senses but only one sense is selected in a given collocation. For example, the verb run has many senses but in the collocation run a company it has the meaning of manage. Thus, collocation removes the ambiguity of the polysymous word.

Baker mentions another significant role for collocations. He says that the co-occurrence of words can tell much about the culture that produced them.

34

That is , some collocations are" a direct reflection of the material, social, or moral environment in which they occur" [20]. For example, law and order is a common English collocation whereas law and convention is more common in Arabic. This means that what collocates in one language is different from another.

0.4. Collocation and register

The use of language changes according to the situation that we are in . It may be formal, informal, or characteristic of a certain professional field (e.g. legal or journalistic)[21]. The type of language that is used in a specific situation is called register. Matthews (1997 :314) defines register as" a set of features of speech or writing characteristic of a particular type of linguistic activity or a particular group when engaging in it "[22]. Baker refers to the importance of register awareness in order to understand, use ,or translate collocations in different contexts successfully.

Register is strongly connected to collocations because it specifies the types of collocations that are used. That is, each field of science and technology has specific collocations. For example, the collocation forensic medicine is used in the medical field[23].

0.5. Methodology

1.6.1 Method

The researcher uses a descriptive quantitative method in her research to analyze the data. She categorizes the data using the taxonomy of Lewis (2000) in order to find the frequency and percentage of each category of lexical and grammatical collocations in the data. Finally she shows the significance of the use of each category of lexical and grammatical collocations in translated articles, particularly of Al-shehirstani's articles.

1.6.2 Data

The data of this paper consist of eight extracts taken from the articles written by Hibat Al- Din Al- Shehristani. He talks about different topics such as Ramadan and what does it represent, obligation for literary reform, reformers who are pioneers of the Renaissance, method of spiritual reform, and the issue of transferring funerals from remote areas to Al-Najaf. These articles originally are written in Arabic and then they are translated into English to be analyzed.

1.6.3 Model

As mentioned above, the model proposed for the analysis of the employment of lexical and grammatical collocations in Al- Shehristans articles is that of Lewis (2000) since it is a new one and suitable to these articles.

0.6. Results and Discussions

1.7.1 Lexical Collocations in the Translated Extracts of Al- Shehristani

Lexical Collocation	Frequency	Percentage
Verb+ Noun	8	32%
Adjective + Noun	15	60%
Noun + Noun	2	8%
Noun + Verb	0	0%
Verb + Adverb	0	0%
Adverb + Adjective	0	0%
Total	25	100%

Table (1) Lexical Collocation Patterns in the Translated Extracts of AL-Shehristani.

The table above reveals that Al- Shehristani's translated religious texts have the most dominant types of lexical collocations as they are called by Witten and Franken to achieve various functions[24]. These are(Adjective + Noun, Verb + Noun, and Noun + Noun) which are unequally distributed. The most frequent category of lexical collocations is Adjective + Noun as it has the frequency of 15 times with a percentage of 60%. The reason behind this rate of recurrence may be due to the fact he intends to provide his readers with the messages conveyed in a more persuasive manner. Thus he modifies the nouns attached with the adjectives giving more attributes to these nouns.

KARBALA HERITAGE

37

Consider the following examples containing illustrative (Adjective + Noun) lexical collocations:

1- A great damage is caused to the health of the people of Iraq from the receipt of these remains and decaying corpses

2- Any nation that takes the corrupt as a leader

3- This is an imminent threat to every nation if it is not challenged by agitators, reformers

The second frequent category of lexical collocations is Verb + Noun. It has the frequency of occurrence of 8 times representing 32% percentage. Possibly Al-Shehristani resorts to this construction as it is also considered one of the dominant collocation types[25]. Another reason for the use of this construction is that it enables him to convey the most important information. This point is emphasized by Altenberg who says this construction is often employed to" form the communicative core of utterances where the most important information is placed"[26]. Consider the following examples

4- How many advantages does this month have in religion and history.

5- The resort to destroy the wounds of illusions and superstitions is one of the most important tasks of the messengers and prophets

6- if the government evaluated the benefit of its fees and estimated the damage to the Iraqi nation from diseases and epidemics.

The lexical collocation category N + N is also used in the extracts selected but less than the aforementioned constructions. It is used only 2 times representing 8% percentage. This may be related to the point that this construction is not connected with the main themes of these messages. This is an example

7- Those who knew the history of mankind, the mystery of religions and their history

Table 2: Grammatical Collocations in the Translated Extracts of Al-Shehristani

Grammatical Collocation	Frequency	Percentage
Verb + Preposition	6	54%
Noun + Preposition	4	36%
Adjective + Preposition	1	9%
Total	11	100%

The table reveals that the three categories of grammatical collocation are used but with different percentages. The category(Verb + Preposition) is the most frequent one as it has the frequency of 6 times representing 54% . The category (Noun + Preposition) is utilized 4 times representing 36% percentage and the category (Adjective + Preposition) is less used as it has the frequency of occurrence of 1 time representing the percentage of 9%. The use of grammatical collocations and lexical collocations enriches the extracts taken from the articles written by the non-native preacher Hibit Al-Din Al-Shehristani. This enrichment is important because it creates a native-like written productions. Al- Shehristani wants native and non-native readers to be indulged in reading his articles. He wants them to hear his voice and know how do we treat people and things in our religion.

KARBALA HERITAGE

39

0.7. Conclusion

In the light of the analysis of the translated texts, we can conclude that collocation is a vital phenomenon by which religious preacher succeed to approach the native-like written production ensuring perfect understanding in the world. Thus, all categories of lexical and grammatical collocations are used in his translated extracts but with different percenteges. The most frequent category of lexical collocation used in the extracts of AL-Shehristani is(Adjective + Noun). AL- Shehristani modifies the nouns used to give a true picture of what he says, thus, he uses this type. AL- Shehristani also uses the category(Verb+ Noun) to give the most important information. The category (Noun+ Noun) is also used though less than the others.

Different categories of grammatical collocations is also used but with different frequencies. The category(Verb+ Preposition) is used 6 times whereas(Noun+ Preposition) is used 4 times and only 1 time the category (Adjective+ Preposition) is used. According to this model, the importance of grammatical collocations lies in knowing which preposition is used with a specific noun, verb , or adjective

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44

Appendix

Translated Extracts of AL-Shehristani

When AL- Shehristani talks about Ramadan, he says

How many advantages does this month have in religion and history in which there was the sending down of the Koran , the constitution of Islam and the source of its science and guardian of its law. In that month , Muslims won the first battle, the great battle of Badr where their state has stabilized and strengthened their stubble. And they have become a nation who has authority and prestige. Before that they were emigrants who had been driven out of their homes without right, but to say our Lord God. Also in which there was the night of fate which is in the text of the Koran better than a thousand months.

In another article, he says

The resort to destroy the wounds of illusions and conflicting superstitions is one of the most important tasks of the messengers and prophets, and it is obliged deed upon those who have knowledge and capability in every doctrine and law, whether he was a scholar, a ruler, a writer, jurist, preacher, or preacher where everyone is held responsible for the Day of Judgment. The spirit of religion takes into consideration those who are able to reform his people but did not do it and blame them for their negligence and foregiveness.

In another one, he says

Don't appear from everyone who has a good taste that the works don't come to anyone unless he is walking towards them, directing towards them, has probability for everything, and fluctuating with them in all situations that stand in the way of seeking the intended outcome of those acts.

Al- Shehristani says about reformers who are pioneers of the Renaissance

Any nation that takes the corrupt as a leader and the traitor as a ruler and the ignorant scientist and the cowards soldiers and leaders is quickly extinct and must be extinct. This is an imminent threat to every nation if it is not challenged by agitators, reformers, serious scientists, and a true tongue that orders for what is good and forbids evil.

He also says

Those who knew the history of mankind, the mystery of religion ant its history acknowledged that the first renaissance was a movement arises by the axis of religion and that religion is the first engine of human society compared to its other engines, if we did not say that religion is above all. There is no hesitation in saying that the science was born from religion and brought up by his embraces in all the ages , but it may prevail in his life of neutrality, he is a supporter of religion if they agree and opposed to it if they disagree.

His attitude to the issue of transferring funerals from remote areas to AL-Najaf is the following

A severe damage is caused to the health of the people of Iraq from the receipt of these remains and decaying corpses, so that if the government evaluate the benefit of its fees, and estimated damage to the Iraqi nation from diseases, epidemics and delay in the health of the people, they will admit losing themselves in this deal.

When he talks about the spiritual reform aiming at reform in the scientific Hawza and the religious institutions, he says:

In Iraq, where the popular educational institution has based its sciences in the Hawza on the traditional curricula and its publications are difficult to comprehend. And it continued in the teaching methodology based on explaining the phrase and memorizing it and the use of old methods and tools without a

46

desire for reform and renewal.

He attempts to preserve Islam as it is and deny myths and heresies that penetrated in it

That mortal dangers do not vanish or die only by the development of science and generalizing the religious education and eliminating superstitions and myths from the Muslim's sheet.

He focused in his to be free from poverty and ignorance, thus, he says:

Since nation still experiences severe poverty and ignorance, its inevitably threatened by end

KARBALA HERITAGE

47