

Strategies in Translating Collocations in Political Texts: Case study of the Beirut Port Explosion 2020

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Abstract: The present study examines the strategies used by Saudi undergraduate students when translating adjective plus noun collocations and verb plus object collocations in political texts from English into Arabic. An English proficiency test, along with a translation test, were conducted to evaluate the performance of the students. The translation test consisted of 10 English collocations selected from 53 random extracts from two online articles on the BBC and The Guardian websites, focusing on the Beirut port explosions in August 2020. The results show that the literal translation technique was highly dominant in translating both types of classification. This indicates that students encounter some obstacles when it comes to determining the correct equivalents in Arabic. However, the data show that sometimes literal translation can sometimes be adequate in translating the political collocations in both types. The data also reveal that a synonymy strategy was adopted more frequently in translating the verb + object than the noun + adjective. This is mainly because the frequency of (un)restrictedness of collocation errors may be limited in political texts because the structure of political texts is different from that of other texts, in the sense that it has a limited number of culture-specific collocations that are frequently translated, and therefore an equivalent can easily be found in the target language.

Keywords: collocations, Newmark (1988), political texts, translation strategies

1. Introduction

Collocation is the way words combine in a language more frequently than would happen by chance (Oxford Collocations Dictionary, 2020). The combination of such words is instantly recognizable to native speakers of a language, but pose some difficulties for second language learners when it comes to comprehending and using them properly. Hence, the knowledge of collocations plays a vital role and is deemed indispensable for translators. However, translating collocations is a problematic area even for the most professional of translators (Baker 1992; Brashi 2005; Dewik and Abu Shakra 2011). Hatim and Mason (2014:204) say that ‘...there is always a danger that, even for experienced translators, SL interference will occasionally escape unnoticed and an unnatural collocation will flaw the TT’.

As for political contexts, Newmark (1991) argues that political language contains many abstract concepts that cause a number of challenges and raise some obstacles making them difficult to translate. Each culture or country has its own political system. Consequently, political language is not always easily translated (see also Hamdan, Naser and Hamdan 2021). More specifically, in political collocations, Al Ghazali (2006) claims that correctly translating collocations in

political text tend to raise some problems for Arab translators and interpreters. He argues that due to the lack of exposure to such expressions, not all word combinations can easily be justified since collocations may contain metaphorical language. Accordingly, translators should adopt certain translation strategies in such a way as to benefit the conveyance of the exact meaning in the target language. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the strategies that were adopted by Saudi BA students when translating collocations in political texts from English into Arabic.

1.1 Justification of the study

In this study, the researcher focuses on the different strategies utilized by Saudi BA students when translating political collocations from English into Arabic involving 53 randomly-selected collocations from online articles on the BBC and *The Guardian* websites. These extracts discuss extensively the issue of the Beirut port explosions in August 2020. The researcher chose this topic specifically as it related to a devastating blast that hit Beirut on August 4, 2020. It had an effect, not only on the Lebanese people, but also on the whole world. Over 178 people were killed, 6,500 were injured, and more than 300,000 people were left homeless (BBC News 2020).

1.2 Statement of the problem and objective of the study

Translating political text from one language into another tends to pose a challenge for novice translators, more specifically when it comes to translating collocations. In practice, novice translators tend to resort to translating political collocations literally, or sometimes omit some expressions to eliminate the burden they face. In addition, they may struggle to find the exact equivalent due to the fact that they may use strategies which could result in a poor or incomprehensible translation. To overcome this difficulty, the translators who aim to render the selected collocations are expected to employ particular translation strategies that would allow them to translate the collocations appropriately. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the strategies that were adopted by Saudi BA students when translating collocations in political texts from English into Arabic.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study contributes to the field of political translation generally, and more specifically to the field of translating collocations. Most previous studies have examined the difficulties that students encounter while rendering collocations (Brashi 2005; Abdul-Fattah 2011; Ibrahim 2003). The present study follows two previous studies carried out by Shraideh and Mahadin (2015) and Qishta (2018) in that it deals with strategies of political collocations. However, this study is different in that the political collocations are classified into two main categories: adjective + verb and verb + object, whereas the previous studies rendered the collocations without taking into consideration any such classification. In addition, this study can be beneficial for novice translators and new researchers as it discusses recent studies dealing with the translation of political collocations

regarding the Beirut port explosion in August 2020. The results of this study are expected to help students to familiarize themselves with the procedures and strategies that can be employed in translating collocations.

2. Literature review

2.1 The concept of collocation

Collocation is simply defined as a group of two or more words that usually go together. Firth (1968:182) defines it as “the organization that words stay with” or “actual words in on-going”. Halliday (1966) formed the idea of collocations although he didn’t agree with Firth’s concept of a collocation as an independent level. According to Halliday’s hypothesis, lexis and syntax are two different fields. However, Halliday argues that these fields are related to each other in terms of semantic structure. This is because each field possesses syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships such as punctuation, grammar, and lexical collocations.

Researchers in the literature above have classified collocations into several types (Firth 1968; Newmark 1981; Benson et al. 1986; Carter 1998). This study follows Newmark’s (1988:212) classification of collocations: (1) verb + object, (2) adjective + noun, and (3) noun + noun. These three types of collocations are the most common (Newmark 1988; Ghazala 1992). In this study, only two types are considered: verb + object and adjective + noun.

2.2 Translation strategies

Translating English collocations into Arabic poses some difficulties due to the linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic (Baker 1992; Ghazala 1995). To successfully cope with this challenge, translators tend to seek different translation strategies as presented by well-known theorists. The researcher examines a number of strategies that are relevant to analyzing the data gathered from novice translators. These strategies are as follows:

- Synonymy
- Literal translation
- Paraphrasing
- Elaboration and explication/ addition
- Omission

2.2.1 Synonyms

Synonymy is a translation strategy that involves the use of lexical items that are synonymous with others in the TL (Brashi 2005). Newmark uses “the word ‘synonym’ in the sense of a near TL equivalent to an SL word in a context, where an identical equivalent may or may not exist” (1988: 84). Farghal and Obiedat (1995) claim that Arabic EFL learners often replace a word with its synonym. This strategy leads them to ungrammatical collocations in English. Brashi (2005) utilizes different types of strategies to translate collocations from Arabic into English. He uses the synonymy strategy with a verb plus object collocation as follows: “to waste time” "ahdara waqtan" "اهدر وقتاً". Dweik and Shakra (2011),

render the noun plus adjective collocation, "عابسي الوجوه" "a:bsi: al-wuju:h" as "gloomy faces" or "furious faces". The synonym strategy is acceptable since it may find an equivalent in the TL which makes the translation natural, fluent, and eloquent.

2.2.2 Literal translation

"Literal, or word for word, translation is the direct transfer of an SL text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL text" (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995: 33). Newmark (1988) argues that literal translation occurs when the translator transfers the grammatical constructions of the SL into their nearest TL equivalent. However, lexical words may again be translated singly, out of context. In their study, Zinel'aabdin and Ahmad (2017) conducted a literal translation. They found that the verb+ object collocation "to run a company" should not be translated literally as "يجري بالشركة" "yajri: bi al-shrikah". Instead, this collocation should be translated as "يدير شركة" "yudi:r shrikah". Another study is that of Shammās (2013) who adopts a literal translation. She maintains that the noun + adjective collocation "controversial issues" should not be translated literally as "مسائل عالفة" "msa:i?l 'aliqah". Rather, it should be translated as "قضايا اخلاقية" "qaḍaya: akhla:qyah". As shown in the above examples, a literal translation strategy provides an incorrect collocation because L1 interference indicates a level of unnatural collocation in the L2.

2.3.3 Paraphrasing

Newmark defines a paraphrase as an "amplification or explanation of the meaning of a segment of the text which is used in an 'anonymous' text when it is poorly written or has important implications and omissions" (1988: 90). Qishta (2018) states that a paraphrasing strategy is manifested where the translator cannot find an adequate equivalent in the TL, and starts using a paraphrasing technique by using his/her own words. In her study, she claims that the strategy of paraphrasing is inadequate when it comes to translating difficult collocations. Habtoor and Al-Swaidan (2019), who utilized this strategy in their study, discovered that it was the least employed strategy; for example, the verb+ object collocation "realized his potential" was rendered as "حتى يمكنه تحقيق التقدم في وظيفته" "ḥata ymknhu taḥqiq attaḡdum fi waṭḥift-hu" instead of, "تحقيق كامل امكانيته" "taḥqiq ka:mil imkanithu". In Brashi's study (2005), some of the respondents deliver the noun+ adjective collocation "serious consequences" as "عواقب لاتسر صديق", "awaqib la: tasru Sadi:q", instead of "عواقب وخيمة", "awaqib wa khimah".

2.3.4 Elaboration and explication/ addition

Explication is a term for a translation procedure coined by Vinay and Darbelnet. They define the term as "A stylistic translation technique which consists of making explicit in the target language what remains implicit in the source language because it is apparent from the context" (1995:324). Dickins et al. (2017) use a concept similar to explication, which is "translation by addition". This means that "something is added to the TT that is not found in the ST" (p. 21). Mahdin and

Shraideh (2015) asked the participants in their study to translate the verb + object collocation “seized control” which the students translated into Arabic as “استولى على وسيطر” instead of “سيطرت”. A study by Qishta (2018) used an elaboration and explication strategy, which was the least-often used technique utilized by the participants compared to other translation strategies. Some of the translators conveyed the adjective+ noun collocation “historic low” as “currently at a historic low” as “تشهد العلاقات بين غزة ورام الله تازماً غير مسبوق في تاريخ العلاقات الفلسطينية الداخلية”, tshhd al-‘alaga:t bina ghzah wa ra:m alah tazumun ghir masbu:q fi ta:ri:kh ‘alalqa:t alflistinyah aldakhlyah”, instead of “وصلت الى ادنى مستوى في التاريخ” waSlat ala: adna: mstwa: fi: al-ta:ri:kh”.

2.3.5 Omission

An omission or deletion translation strategy is defined as the dropping of words that usually occur when there (are) no equivalents in the TL. This procedure could be the product of the cultural differences between the SL and the TL, and it often occurs while translating texts from English into Arabic (Ibrahim 2003). In this strategy, the translator deletes those words which do not have equivalents in the TL. Using such a strategy, learners “tend to abandon large units of the message in the SL as a result of the incomprehensibility of semantic units” (Dweik and Abu Shakra 2011, p. 20). A study conducted by Habtoor and Al-Swaidan (2019), uses the omission strategy to translate collocations from English to Arabic. Some translators utilize the omission technique, including the translation of the noun + adjective collocation “sheer luxury” into “الرخاء”, “alrkha:” instead of “رفاهية باذخة”, “rfa:hiah ba:dhikhah”. In their study, Mahdin and Shraideh (2015) focused on the omission strategy. The translators rendered the verb + object collocation “to exert pressure” into Arabic as “تهدف للضغط على”, “thduf lidghṭ ‘ala”, instead of “تهدف الى ممارسة الضغط على”, “تهدف الى ممارسة الضغط على”.

2.4 Translation of political texts

Politics has played an important daily role in human life in recent years (Shraideh and Mahadin 2015). The translation of political texts is deemed to be one of the most problematic areas in the field of translation. Rendering political text from one language into another poses some difficulties for translators because there are cultural differences between languages. Consequently, the translator should be aware of cultural differences between the SL and the TL in order to produce an adequate translation.

Media plays a significant role in "disseminating politics and in mediating between politicians and the public" (Schaffner 2004: 118). In the past few years, mass media has had an influential role in broadcasting the messages and the political views of particular political groups or parties. In translating political discourse, political collocations are massively adopted in the media and in speeches of officials and agencies. Qishta (2018) argues that the collocation “carry out” was utilized frequently on the CNN channel to represent the attacks done by ISIS. She maintains also that with regard to the political discourse that covered the event of the Paris Terrorist Attack in 2015, the lexical collocation "attack", and its

set was used many times as part of political collocations such as "recent attacks", "terrorist attacks", and "attack sites".

2.5 Empirical studies

Different scholars have examined collocations empirically from various perspectives including Biskup (1992: 87); Lennon (1996:23–36); Bahns and Eldaw (1993: 102); Abdul-Fattah (2011:12); Abdul-Fattah and Zughoul (2003: 14), Brashi (2005: 13), and Abu Naba^h and Al-Shara^h (2011).

Few studies have investigated the translation of collocations in political texts from English into Arabic and vice versa. A study done by Shraideh and Mahadin (2015) investigated the difficulties and strategies used with regard to rendering collocations from English into Arabic in the case of BBC political texts. A questionnaire consisting of 20 collocations selected from BBC political texts was given to 80 BA or MA students from two universities. The results showed that the students used synonymy and literal translation as their first strategies in translating collocations, followed by paraphrasing and transposition respectively. Omission, approximation, and elaboration and explication were the least-commonly used. The findings also revealed that many MA students have a good knowledge of collocations compared with BA students, who show a low level of collocational knowledge. The study also showed that there is a significant difference between the participants' responses in terms of the strategies they utilized in translating the collocations.

Qishta (2018) studied the difficulties encountered by Palestinian professional translators and the strategies used when translating collocations in political texts taken from four British news channels. A translation test consisting of 58 English collocations was taken from 55 random extracts selected from British newspapers and broadcasting websites. The extracts focused on the coverage of Palestinian news, specifically the AlAqsa Intifada (2017). The results of this study agreed with most previous results in which professional translators faced problems while translating collocations. Qishta claims that the reasons for these problems are related either to cultural differences or to the lack of knowledge of collocations. The findings also show that the translators used the synonymy strategy as their first strategy, followed by literal translation, approximation, omission, paraphrasing, and elaboration and explication.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 20 female Saudi EFL undergraduate students at Taibah University, Saudi Arabia whose ages ranged between 23 and 25. All the students were in the seventh level in the Department of English in the first semester of the academic year 2021/ 2022. All of them were Saudi nationals and had no experience of translation.

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 A placement test

A placement test was designed to determine the participants' English proficiency level. The test was conducted for the following reasons; first, to ensure homogeneity and equality among the participants. Second, to place the respondents at the appropriate level and also to test their general language ability. The researcher used the Telegram application to send the test to the students. The test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions (see Appendix). The researcher intended to exclude all those participants who scored less than B1 (the intermediate level). However, all the subjects were found to be at the intermediate level (B1).

3.2.2 The online translation test

The test consisted of 10 English collocations selected from 50 extracts that discuss extensively and exclusively the Beirut port explosions of August 2020. The extracts were randomly chosen from two political texts which were taken from two British online articles from *The Guardian* and the BBC News websites. The collocations are based on Newmark's (1988) classification of collocations: adjective + noun and verb + object. Therefore, the researcher divided the test into two main tasks: the translation of adjective + noun and the translation of verb + object. The translation test was sent to the students via the Telegram application. In selecting the texts, the following criteria were used:

- a. The news articles are about the Beirut port explosion that happened on 12 August 2020.
- b. The news articles have no political biases in dealing with the Beirut port blast in August 2020.
- c. The selection of these extracts was random, provided that each selected text contained at least one collocation which is regularly used in British online news articles.

3.3 The rater's assessment

In assessing the acceptability of the collocations in the translated texts, the researcher used a professional translator's model translation to check the appropriateness of the collocations. The professional translator is an assistant professor of translation at Taibah University with long experience in teaching translation. The rater has also worked as a professional translator for some local and international organizations. The model was used as a yardstick in rendering the political collocations. The researcher used the model of translation to assess the students' performance.

3.4 Data analysis

As noted earlier, Newmark (1988) has classified collocation into three categories: Adjective + noun, noun + noun, and verb + object. In this study, the researcher classified the 10 collocations based on two types: (1) adjective + noun (5 collocations). (2) verb + object (5 collocations). This study is based on two studies conducted by Shraideh and Mahadin (2015) and Qishta (2018) with regard to

analysing the translation strategies that were adopted by the undergraduate Saudi students when translating collocations in political texts. This study considered the five main strategies in view of these two previous studies: (1) synonymy, (2) literal translation, (3) paraphrasing (4), elaboration and explication, and (5) omission.

The researcher applied a descriptive analysis method to analyze the selected collocations. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The study attempted to achieve an assessment of independent and dependent variables. The independent variable was the students' performance with regard to the translation of collocations in political texts. The dependent variables were the strategies used to render the selected collocations. The second dependent variable was the students' responses which were collected in an Excel worksheet. The researcher used the professional translator's assessment as a model of translation to analyze the intended collocations as discussed above. The researcher used EXCEL statistical analysis software to analyze the selected collocations. Percentages were used to quantify the total number of Saudi undergraduate students answering the collocations in the test. The frequencies of the strategies used for the selected collocations were represented as ratios.

4. Results

4.1 Translating English collocations adj + noun into Arabic

Table 1. Frequencies of strategies used in Translating English adj + noun collocations into Arabic

No	English Collocations adj+ noun	Synonymy	Literal Trans.	Paraphrasing	Explication & Elaboration	Omission
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %
1	"the high pressure "	5 (25%)	9 (45%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)
2	"deepest sympathy"	3 (15%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
3	"an urgent appeal"	5 (25%)	7 (35%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)
4	"a large blast"	4 (20%)	8 40%	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	3 (15%)
5	"horrible tragedy"	4 (20%)	7 (35%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	4 (20%)
	The total number of 5 collocations for 20 undergraduate students (100)	21 (21%)	39 (39%)	21 (21%)	7 (7%)	12 (12%)

4.1.1 "High pressure"

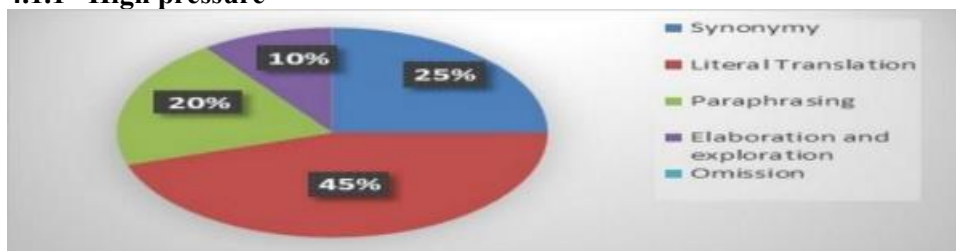


Figure 1. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "high pressure"

According to the data above, between them the participants utilized several strategies in rendering this collocation. It can be observed that five students (25%) translated the English collocation 'high pressure' by giving an Arabic equivalent 'ضغط شديد' " *dghṭ shadi:d*". Therefore, these respondents used the synonymy strategy in translating this collocation. However, almost 45% of the participants translated this collocation literally as, "ضغط عالي" " *dghṭ 'a:li:*". Nearly 20% of the answers offered by the participants offered an acceptable translation by using a paraphrasing strategy in the form of 'تحت ضغط مرتفع' " *taḥt dghṭ murtafia*" . Only two participants (10%) used an elaboration strategy in translating the English collocation 'high pressure' as "تحت ضغط الانفجار الرهيب" " *taḥt dghṭ al-infija:r al-rahi:b*". It can be noticed that none of the participants used the omission translation strategy when rendering the English collocation 'high pressure'. According to the translation model it was "ضغط شديد" " *dghṭ shadi:d*".

4.1.2 "Deepest sympathy"

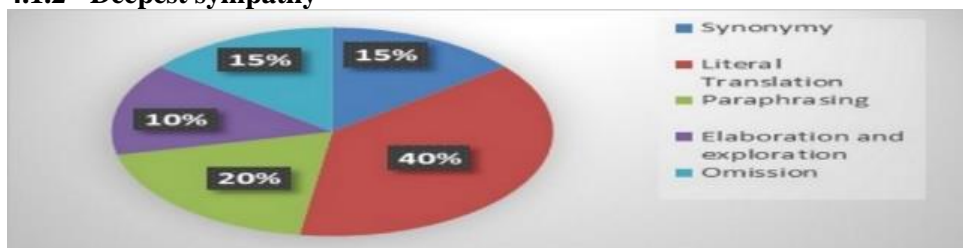


Figure 2. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "deepest sympathy"

Although the English collocation 'deepest sympathy' is a common collocation in political texts, only three (15%) of the participants translated it correctly by providing the Arabic equivalent "أحر التعازي" " *aḥar al-ta'a:zi:*". Eight participants (40%) appeared to have had some difficulty in translating this collocation, since they resorted to using a word by word or literal translation to produce 'شفقة عميقة' " *shfaqah 'amiqah*". Nearly four of the participants (20%) provided an acceptable answer by using paraphrasing strategy to end up with "خالص التعزية والمواساة" " *kha:lis ata'zyah wa al-musa:h*". The researcher noticed that only two participants (10%) utilized the elaboration and explication technique when they rendered this collocation as "أحر التعازي والمواساة للشعب اللبناني" " *aḥar al-taa'zi: wa al-mwas:ah li alshab al-lubna:ni:*". Finally, the omission outcome accounted for 15% of the responses. This strategy was used by three subjects when they translated the English collocation 'deepest sympathy' with the adjective omitted as in "قدم التعزية"

"qadama ata 'aziah". According to the model translation, this collocation is translated as 'احر التعازي' "ahar al-ta'a:zi:".

4.1.3 "An urgent appeal"

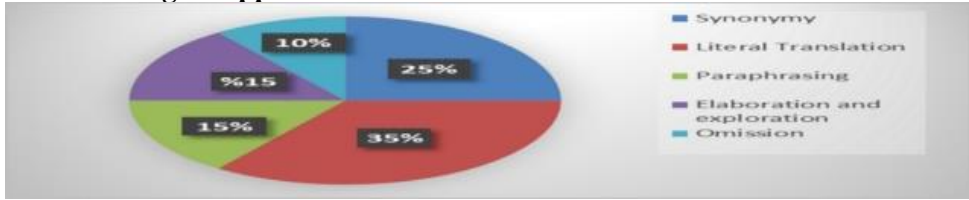


Figure 3. Frequencies of strategies used in translating the collocation "an urgent appeal"

In translating the English collocation 'an urgent appeal', nearly 25% of the participants used a synonym technique by providing an Arabic equivalent in the form of 'نداء عاجل' nida? 'a:gil ". However, nearly 35% of the responses offered by the participants used a word-for-word or literal translation technique in the form of "استئناف عاجل" " istiana:f 'a:gil ". Only three participants (15%) provided an acceptable answer by utilizing the paraphrasing strategy when rendering this collocation as 'اناشد الدول الصديقة بشكل عاجل' "un:ashid aldual aSadiqah bishkil 'a:gil". Similarly, three participants (15%) gave an appropriate answer by utilizing the elaboration and exploration technique, when they translated the English collocation 'an urgent appeal' as "اناشد واطالب بشكل عاجل" "una:shid wa autalib bishkil 'a:gil ". Two participants used the omission translation strategy by deleting the adjective to give "اناشد الدول الصديقة والمجاورة" "una:s d al-dual aSadiqah wa al-muja:wirah". According to the model translation, this collocation is translated as "نداء عاجل" 'nid? 'a:gil

4.1.4 "A large blast"

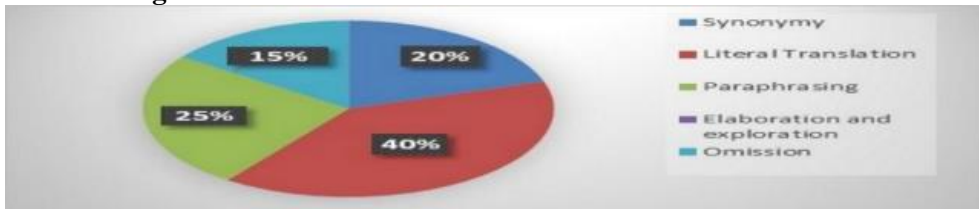


Figure 4. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "A large blast"

The analysis of the adjective + noun collocation 'a large blast' shows that only four participants (20%) succeeded in providing an equivalent or near equivalent collocation, with the students translating it as "انفجاراً مدوياً" "infiga:rn mudawin:". Almost half of the participants (40%) translated this collocation using a word-for-word translation, when they translated it as "انفجاراً كبيراً" "infiga:rn kabi:rn". However, 25% gave acceptable answers by paraphrasing the collocation with an answer such as "انفجار هائل ومدوياً يهز العاصمة بيروت" "infiga:rn ha:ʔiln wa mudawian yahuz al-aSimah beruit ". Some translators paraphrased this collocation by adding a word such as 'hit' ""yahuz" "يهز" which was not provided in the text. Although this translation strategy was considered acceptable, few participants utilized it. An elaboration and explication strategy was not presented in rendering the English adjective + noun collocation as 'large blast'. The omission outcome was utilized by only three participants (15%) in the form of "انفجاراً يضرب العاصمة بيروت" 'infiga:rn yuṣrib al-aSimah beruit'.

"infiga:rn yaḍrubu al-aSimah beruit " According to the translation model it was "انفجاراً مدوياً" infiga:ran mudawian".

4.1.5 “Horrible tragedy”

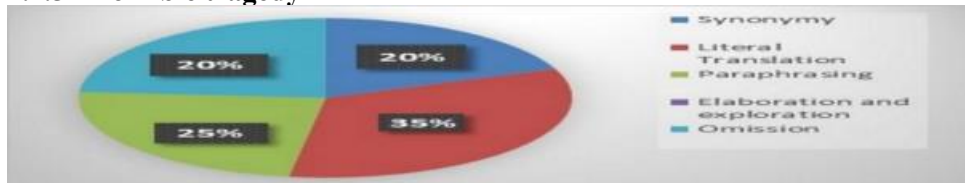


Figure 5. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "horrible tragedy" The outcome of the descriptive analysis of the English collocation ‘horrible tragedy’ shows that 20% of the participants provided correct answers by using an English equivalent such as "المأساة المروعة" al-masa:ah al-murawia‘h". On the other hand, 35% of the participants translated it literally by suggesting "تراجيدي مخيف" "tragidi: mukhi:f". Only 5 of the participants (25%) paraphrased this collocation as "حادثة مأساوية مريعة" "ḥadithh masa:wiyah muri:a‘h". The explication and elaboration strategy was not used by any of the participants with regard to this collocation. In addition, four of the participants (20%) used the omission technique by deleting the adjective in rendering this collocation, and translated it as "تلك المأساة" "tilka al-masa:h". According to the model translation, this collocation is best translated as "المأساة المروعة" " al-masa:h al-mu:rawi‘ah.

4.2 Translating English collocations verb + object into Arabic

Table 2. The percentages of strategies utilized in Translating English collocations verb+object into Arabic

No	English Collocations Verb + object	Synonymy	Literal Trans	Paraphrasin g	Explication & Elaboration	Omission
		F %	F %	F %	F %	F %
1	"to remove the rubble"	6 (30%)	10 (50%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
2	"show smoke billowing"	7 (35%)	6 (30%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)
3	"reflected the chaos"	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
4	"to provide support"	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)
5	"reported dead bodies"	9 (45%)	6 (30%)	5 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	The total number of 5 collocations for 20 undergraduate students (100)	31 (31%)	32 (32%)	21 (21%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)

4.2.1 “To remove the rubble”

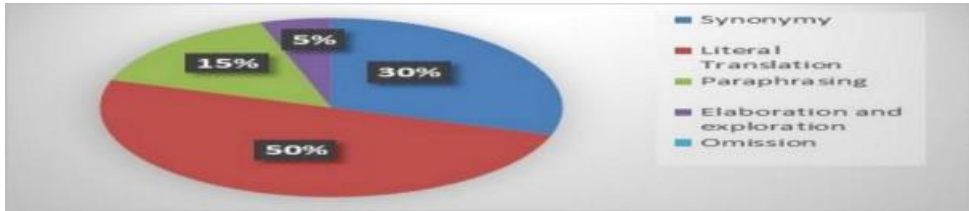


Figure 6. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "to remove the rubble". The collocation 'to remove the rubble' is an English verb + object collocation. According to the statistics above, six participants (30%) applied the synonym strategy in that they translated this collocation as 'الرفع الانقاص' "lirafi 'a al-inqa:d ". Meanwhile, nearly half of the participants (50%) utilized a literal translation in that they translated it as 'ازالة الانقاص' "iza:lat al- inqa:d ". Three of the participants (15%) used the paraphrasing strategy to suggest 'طلب عمليات رفع الانقاص' "ṭalab 'amalya:t rafa' al-inqa:d ". However, only one subject (5%) applied the exploration and elaboration technique in the form of 'عملية رفع وازالة الانقاص' "amalya:t rafi 'a wa iza:lat alinqa:d ". The omission approach was not utilized by any of the subjects in translating this collocation. According to the model translation, this collocation is translated as "الرفع الأنقاض" "lirafia al-inqa:d ".

4.2.2 “Show smoke billowing”

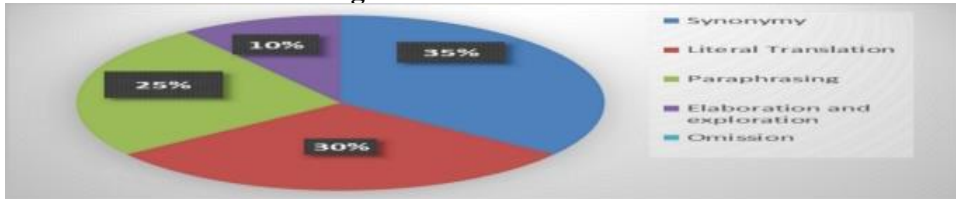


Figure 7. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "Show smoke billowing".

Concerning the collocation 'show smoke billowing', nearly 35% of the participants used the synonym strategy to suggest 'أظهرت الفيديوهات دخاناً متصاعداً' "aTHharat al-fidyuha:t dukhanan mutaSa:'aidan". In addition, six participants provided a literal translation strategy in that they translated it word-for-word as 'ظهر الدخان المتصاعد' "dahara al-dukha:n al-mutaSa:aid". Only two participants used the explication strategy to give "أظهرت الفيديوهات تصاعد الدخاخين الكثيفة" "aTHharat al-fidyuha:t taSa:aud al-dakha:khi:n al-kathifah". The omission strategy was not utilized in translating this collocation. According to the model translation, this collocation is best translated as 'أظهرت الفيديوهات دخاناً متصاعداً' "aTHharat al-fidyuha:t dukhanan mutaSa:aidan".

4.2.3 “Reflected the chaos”

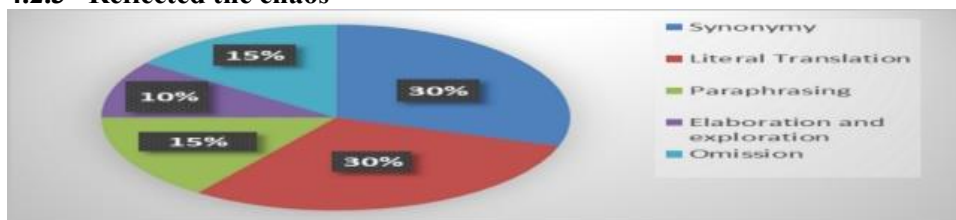


Figure 8. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "reflected the chaos" As the Figure 8 indicates, six participants (30%) translated this collocation effectively by giving the English equivalent. Therefore, the students used the synonym strategy to render the collocation as 'تتعاكس حالة من الفوضى' "tan'akis ḥalah min al-fawḍa". However, a majority of participants (30%) used word-for-word translation since they appeared to know the collocation pattern. They translated "reflected the chaos" collocation as "تتعاكس الفوضى" "tan'akis al-fawḍa". However, 15% gave acceptable answers by paraphrasing the statement - "تجلت مظاهر الفوضى" "Tajalat maṬHa:hir al-fawḍa?". Two of the participants elaborated this collaboration to provide "سوى انعكاس لحاله من الفوضى والشتات" "siwa in'aika:s liḥalah min al-fawḍa wa ashta:t" by using the elaboration and exploration technique. On the other hand, three participants (15%) utilized the omission strategy in that they deleted the verb 'reflect' and substituted for it with the verb 'has' as in 'لديها حاله' "ladyha: ḥalah min al-fawḍa?". According to the model translation, this collocation is translated as "تتعاكس حالة من الفوضى" "tanakis ḥalah min al-fawḍa".

4.2.4 “To provide support”

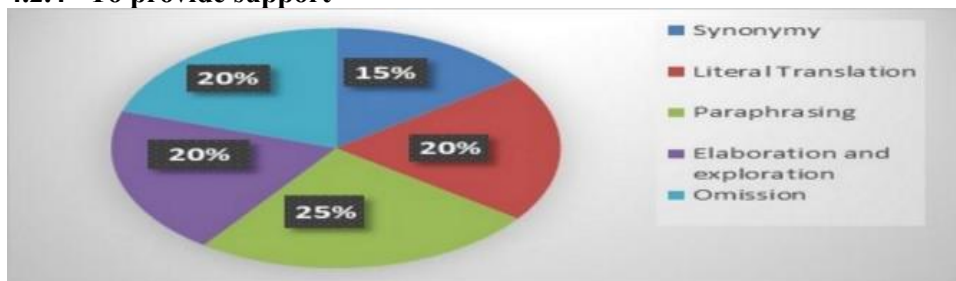


Figure 9. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "to provide support" In translating this collocation, the researcher noticed that three of the participants (15%) succeeded in using the English equivalent. They translated this collocation as "التقديم الدعم" "litaqdi:m al-d'aim". In addition, four participants (20%) utilized a literal translation to give "تقديم المساعدة" "taqdi:m almusa:adah". Five participants restated this collocation by using the paraphrasing technique to offer 'تقديم كل ما' "taqdi:m kulu ma: biwisiha: min d'aim". The explication technique was utilized by four participants (20%) as they elaborated two words with the same meaning with different lexemes. They translated it as 'تقديم المساعدات والدعم لشعب' "taqdi:m al-musa:ada:t wa d'aim lish'ab al-lubn:ani: al-lubnani". Meanwhile, four participants utilized the omission translation in that they deleted the verb 'provide' and substituted for it with another word which is not part of the intended collocation. The participants rendered the collocation as "جاهزين لمساعدة" "ja:hizi:n

limus‘adah" instead of "جاهزين لتقديم المساعدة" ja:hizi:n litaqdi:m al-mus‘adah". According to the translation model, this collocation is translated as 'التقديم الدعم' litaqdi:m al-d‘am".

4.2.5 “Reported dead bodies”

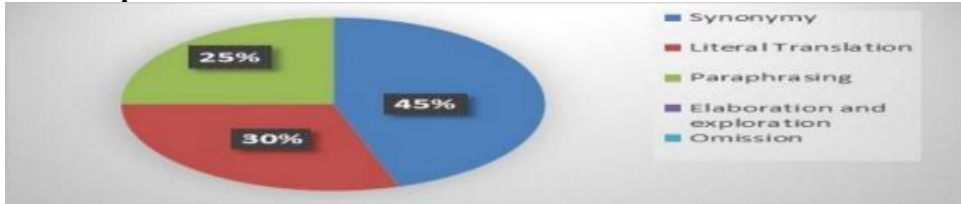


Figure 10. Frequency of strategies used in translating the collocation "reported dead bodies" The analysis of this collocation shows that the majority of the participants succeeded in providing an Arabic equivalent. Nine participants (45%) translated this collocation correctly 'افاد بوجود جثث' "afa:d biwgu:d juthath". However, six participants (30%) used a literal translation such as "اخبر عن جثث ميتة" "akhbara ‘an juthath mitah". Five of the participants (25%) furnished acceptable answers by using the paraphrasing technique. They translated the verb plus object collocation "reported dead bodies" as "افاد مراسل بي بي سي في مكان الحادث عن جثث" "afa:da mura:sil bi bi si fi: maka:n alhadth ‘an juthath". Both the omission technique and the elaboration technique were not applied in translating this collocation. According to the translation model, this collocation is translated as 'افاد بوجود جثث' "afa:d biwgu:d juthath".

5. Discussion

5.1 Translation strategy

The data analysis above shows five different translation outcomes applied by 20 Saudi undergraduate students when translating five English adjective + noun collocations and verb + object collocations in political texts from English to Arabic. Two of these strategies are considered to provide acceptable translations - synonymy and paraphrasing - while literal translation, explication and elaboration, and omission, are not considered acceptable. Each strategy will be further discussed in detail in the following section.

5.1.1 Synonymy

The synonymy strategy is the second-ranked strategy utilized by the BA students in their attempt to render the English collocations in both categories: adjective + noun and object + verb. According to the data above, there are several equivalents in Arabic to the same English synonym. For instance, the Saudi BA students translated the adjective + noun collocation "horrible tragedy" using two Arabic equivalents "المأساة الرهيبة" almasa:h al-rahibah" and "المأساة المروعة" "al-masa:h al-murwia:h'. In these collocations, we can see that the adjective "horrible" suggested multiple synonyms such as 'رهيبة' and 'مروعة'. Similarly, the verb + object collocation "reported dead bodies" has some equivalents in the form of 'اخبر عن وجود جثث' akhbara: biwgu:d juəə" and 'افاد بوجود جثث' 'afa:da biwgu:d juəə". The verb 'reported' has several equivalents in Arabic such as "افاد", "afa:da" and "اخبر",

“akhbra”. The participants utilized the synonymy strategy in rendering both categories of collocation. This strategy was used in 21% and 31% of the cases respectively. Although the study indicated a low score overall, a good number of the participants were able to achieve the proper Arabic equivalents. Such a strategy indicates that the students have a good knowledge of translation practice owing to a considerable exposure to it, which leads to successful performance in terms of being able to find the exact equivalent in Arabic.

It was noticed that the synonymy strategy was used more frequently in rendering the verb + object than the noun + adjective (21% and 31% respectively). Generally speaking, this seems to indicate that the students found more Arabic equivalents in the case of verb + object than in the case of adjective + noun. The examples presented in the data above illustrate how easy it can be to translate English verb + object collocations into Arabic on a one-to-one basis. For example, in translating "reflected the chaos", the verb "reflected" is translated into Arabic using the equivalent verb "تنعكس", "Tanaakis", which literally means "is reflected", and the object "chaos" is rendered literally as "فوضى", "al-fawḍa". This is in line with Ghazala (1993b), who argues that the English verb + object can be relatively easily translated into Arabic since there is usually an equivalent in Arabic. However, this is contradicted by Bartan (2019), who suggests that students usually commit more errors in translating verb + object collocations than adjective + noun in literary texts. He indicates that different languages and different genres play an effective role in students' collocation production. For example, the frequency of (un)restrictedness of collocation errors in literary translation may be different from, for instance, translations of political texts. This, in turn, indicates that political texts which are nearly free of culture-specific collocations are usually easier to translate, and therefore translators can easily find identical equivalents in Arabic.

5.1.2 Literal translation

Literal translation ranks first among the strategies used in translating both classifications of English collocations. The strategy was used in 39% and 31% respectively in the case of adjective + noun and verb + object as shown in Tables (1) and (2). This strategy was commonly used on the part of the participants with regard to both categories. However, the respondents utilized this strategy when translating adjective + noun collocations more than when translating verb + object collocations. The difficulty that occurs here is the collocational competence of the translator in terms of finding an Arabic adjective that does not only convey the intended meaning of the English adjective, but also collocates properly with the Arabic noun. For instance, one of the students rendered the adjective + noun political collocation "horrible tragedy" as "التراجيدي المخيف", "al-tragidi al-mukhi:f"; the adjective "horrible", "makhi:f", does not collocate with the borrowed noun "tragedy".

The translation of collocations has long been a real challenge for translators not only in the translation of adjective + noun collocations but also in translating verb + object collocations. For example, rendering the verb + object

collocation “reported dead bodies” as “اخبار عن جثث ميته” “akhbar an juəəə myatah”. The participant used a word-for-word translation, unaware of the complete meaning of the collocation since it considered to be unacceptable translation outcomes. In some other cases, the meaning of the source collocation was distorted. The participants seem to have some problems when rendering political collocations in terms of both categories. Accordingly, they relied heavily on a literal translation strategy to avoid such problems. This result is evident from the fact that the participants have a lack of knowledge when it comes to translating collocations. This is mainly because students have a lack of extensive reading in the target language, more specifically with regard to political discourse. The difficulty also arises from the transfer from the mother tongue – Arabic - and misunderstanding of the meaning of the source language collocation. Moreover, problems arise with regard to the use of general-purpose bilingual dictionaries that provide the meaning of the word itself without taking into consideration a detailed explanation of the words or examples of collocations.

However, the findings of this study indicate that literal translation can sometimes be effective. For example, an English adjective + noun collocation can be translated literally into Arabic by reversing the Arabic word order if the Arabic has an equivalent collocation. For example, the adjective + noun collocation “large blast” can be translated literally as “انفجار كبير”, “Infija:r kabi:r similar to the verb + object collocation “انعكست الفوضى”, “inakasat al-fawḍa?”. The data show that the collocations in both categories are rendered into Arabic following the same grammatical structure if Arabic has the exact equivalent, while the literal meaning of the English collocation is the intended meaning. This is in line with Hassan (2014), who argues that literal translation is designed to translate the original text adequately, keeping the original message form and structure including the word order, image used in metaphor and so on, unchanged.

5.1.3 Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the third most commonly-adopted strategy in translating both categories of English collocation. The students using this strategy employed alternative versions of the translation to explain the definitions, examples, and descriptions, instead of providing an exact collocation in the TL. Interestingly, the Saudi BA students used this strategy in an equal percentage with regard to the adj + noun structure (21%), as with regard to the verb + object structure. The participants manipulated the syntactic structure of the collocation in the case of verb + object more than in the case of adjective + noun. This is in agreement with Barreiro (2008:23) who argues that “Different languages use different ways of expression, and present different syntactic-semantic behavior”. For example, in the case of the verb plus object collocation “reported dead bodies”, the translators rendered it as “افاد مراسل بي بي سي في مكان الحادث عن جثث”, “afada mura:sil bi bi si fi: maka:n alhadaə an juəəə. It can be noticed that the students tended to insert the subject between the verb and the object to avoid a literal translation, and to provide an adequate translation in the TL. Similarly, in translating the

adjective + subject collocation “an urgent appeal”, the students translated it as “اناشد الدول الصديقة بشكل عاجل” "un:āšid aldual aSadiqah biškāl a:gil". The novice translators tried to paraphrase the collocation by inserting the subject between the adjective and noun.

Paraphrasing a source language collocation is considered an acceptable translation strategy when used to overcome a shortage of equivalent target collocations. However, the paraphrasing technique is not highly recommended and therefore should not be used in rendering political collocations. Translators adopt the paraphrasing strategy when they have insufficient knowledge of collocations, and they therefore paraphrase the meaning of collocations using their own words. Another reason for applying this strategy is that students know that if they can't find the exact equivalent in the TL, they can paraphrase the collocations using their own explanation. Another possible reason is that the students tended to use it with difficult collocations. Using such a strategy in translating political collocations may not be the preferred approach among translators since it makes the sentence structure more complicated. This is because they may add more words in the SL to explain the same concept in the TL. Some previous studies such as those of Sharidah and Mahadain (2015) and Qishta (2018), indicate that translators prefer not to use paraphrasing in translating collocations found in a political text. However, this study found that paraphrasing is acceptable, since it involves an attempt to explain the meaning of the English collocation in Arabic without destroying its meaning. This is in line with Brashi (2005).

5.1.4 Elaboration and explication strategy

Explication can indicate a translator's decision to add one word or more to the collocation. Explication is used to make implicit information in the ST explicit in the TT. Klaudy calls this “amplification” (2001:81). In this study, few participants adopted the elaboration and explication strategy in rendering the two different types of collocation. This strategy was rarely used by the students with regard to both categories, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. The explication and elaboration technique was used by 7% when it came to translating adjective + noun, and 9% in translating the object + verb political collocation. For example, the strategy of explication and elaboration was employed in translating the adjective + noun collocation “deep sympathy” as “احر التعازي والمواساة”, “ahar al-taa:zi: wa al-mwas:ah”, instead of “احر التعازي”, “ahar al-taa:zi:”. The translators here elaborated the noun by using two different words with the same meaning. Similarly, in translating a verb + object collocation such as “reflected the chaos”, “سوى انعكاس حاله من الفوضى والاضطراب”, “siwa inaika:s ḥalah min al-fawḍa wa al-iḏṭra:b” was suggested instead of “انعكاس حاله من الفوضى”, “in9ikas Ḥalah min alfawḍa?”. The students elaborated the object by using two words with an identical meaning “فوضى”, “اضطراب”, “fawḍa? and “al-iḏṭra:b”.

This strategy is not acceptable in translating political collocations of both types for several reasons. The participants may have applied this strategy because they

lacked the ability to find the appropriate equivalent collocation in Arabic. This strategy implies a lack of professionalism on the part of the translator to some degree, since it leaves the reader puzzled, in that they expect a greater degree of professionalism. This study is in agreement with some previous studies (Sharidah and Mahadain 2015; Brashi 2005) which argue that the use of an explication strategy is not a good choice when it comes to translating collocations.

5.1.5 Omission strategy

Omission refers to cases in which one or more elements of the target collocation were deleted. This strategy is sometimes referred to as a deletion strategy. In this study, the omission technique is another strategy used by the Saudi BA students when translating the English adjective + noun and verb + object collocations. Omitting was applied in a few cases with regard to both types. The omitting translation strategy occurred in 12% for the instances in the adjective + noun, and 7% in the case of verb + object. The participants omitted the adjective in translating adjective + noun collocations as shown in Table (1). For example, the collocation “deep sympathy” was translated as “قدم التعزية”, "qadama ataaziah".” instead of “احر التعازي”, "ahar al-taa:zi:". As shown here, the translator manipulated the grammatical structure of the collocation in TL and didn't convey the entire message of the collocation, since he, to some extent, distorted the meaning of the collocation in the TL. The omission method is an acceptable strategy in translation and is used and acknowledged since a number of translators use it to avoid repetition. It can be a good choice when it comes to translating the verb+ object collocation when it is not necessary to mention certain information. As previously mentioned, for example, in translating the verb + object collocation “reported dead bodies”, the translator employed the omission technique in “اخبر عن جثث”, "akhbra an juəə”. It can be seen from this example that the translator omitted the adjective “dead” because the meaning of the collocation is already known to the Arabic native speakers.

The Saudi BA students used this strategy as they were probably in a hurry and unwilling to continue translating the collocations in both classifications. It might also be due to a failure to comprehend the SL collocation due to a lack of background knowledge in both languages. This agrees with Dweik and Abu Shakra (2011) who claim that learners “tend to abandon large units of the message in the SL as a result of incomprehensibility of semantic units” (p.20). It can be argued also that the students may have thought that this information was not important, and are already familiar with the reader's background, so they may have felt that there is no need to render it. Schäffner (2004) argues that sometimes when the readers are geographically and culturally remote, it is unnecessary to translate certain details. However, the translator may not take into consideration certain necessary information that affects the whole message of the target text in the TL. According to the data, the omission strategy was not commonly utilized among the BA participants in rendering the political collocations in the two different types. This was mainly due to the limited number of words in the constructed collocations. As a result, the translator had no space to apply the omission strategy,

and also because of the normal style of collocation cannot be divided into words to be rendered.

6. Conclusion

The current study investigates the strategies used by a sample of Saudi undergraduate students when translating adjective + noun collocations and verb + object collocations in political texts from English into Arabic. The findings reveal that the BA Saudi students employed a variety of translation strategies in translating adj + noun, i.e. literal translation, synonymy, paraphrasing, elaboration and explication, and omission or deletion. In translating verb + object however, the BA students used literal translation, synonymy, paraphrasing, elaboration and explication, and omission. Literal translation is the most common technique used by students in translating both types. This is considered strong evidence that novice translators tend to face a number of difficulties when they render the suitable equivalents into Arabic. The Saudi BA students tend to lack the necessary knowledge when it comes to translating political collocations. Therefore, the students found some difficulty in terms of rendering an accurate equivalence of the collocations used. Consequently, the best choice for them was to translate the collocations literally. However, the findings revealed that, to some extent, literal translation can sometimes be fruitful when it comes to rendering the English collocations in political text in both categories.

In contrast, the participants using the synonymy strategy with regard to both classifications did not encounter many difficulties in their knowledge when it came to determining the correct translation. However, the synonymy strategy was utilized in both classifications to a limited extent. The data also revealed that the synonymy strategy was adopted more frequently in translating verb + object compared with noun + adjective. This is mainly because the frequency of the (un)restrictedness of collocation errors may be limited in political texts as compared to other texts. It would seem that political texts that have a limited number of culture-specific collocations are frequently translated, and therefore can more easily find an equivalent in the TL.

6.1 Recommendations

Based on the results, the researcher offers the following recommendations: Firstly, students should be aware of the main features of political terms, texts, and expressions. This knowledge plays an important role in rendering political collocations more effectively. Thus, Arab universities in general, and those in Saudi Arabia in particular, need to concentrate more on specific fields of translation such as political translation. Secondly, it is recommended that specialized dictionaries for translating political collocations be published to overcome the obstacles that may arise in translating political collocations. Novice translators should be trained to use good dictionaries specializing in collocations. Finally, the researcher suggests that collocations should be considered more in second language courses in the departments of English and Translation at Saudi

universities in order to provide sufficient training and practice. It can also enhance the quality of translation by building a good knowledge of collocations.

6.2 Limitations

In the current study, the researcher didn't pay a great deal of attention to the difficulties that students face when translating the collocations, although he did mention the reasons why the students utilized particular techniques. In addition, the results of the study may not be generalized beyond the data used in this study. The researcher selected only twelve collocations from online articles from the BBC News and The Guardian websites. This study was conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021, and related to Saudi BA students at Taibah University.

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Appendix

Dear students, kindly answer the following questions:

https://www.englishtag.com/tests_with_answers/level_test_elementary_A1.asp

Your time, participation and efforts are highly appreciated.