Missing n Compilation:
How much English is there in an Arabic-English Dictionary

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Abstract: *When searching for the unfamiliar English equivalent of an Arabic word or expression, the Arab translator usually resorts to an Arabic-English dictionary. This tool, however, is inadequate for many reasons: 1) The overall coverage of English lexical items is neither thorough nor systematic 2) Little use is made of vital lexical relations such as collocations and multi-word units 3) Senses are not always accurate: some are incomplete, wrong or obsolete 4) The metaphorical potential and spoken expressions are rarely represented or explicitly expressed 5) A fairly large number of English words with affixes are overlooked. For all these reasons, a modified methodology of dictionary compilation should be considered and sources other than the Arabic-English dictionary should be consulted.*

1. Introduction

Although the majority of texts the Arab translator is called upon to translate are English, Arabic texts of various genres are encountered almost regularly. And in this the Arab translator is not alone; "Translations", says Varantola, "are often done into one's L2 , particularly from a less well-known language to a world language such as from Finnish to English, but also, between such languages as Chinese and English." (1997). The fact that the translator is required to work with source texts in his own language tends to make the task of translation into L2 more challenging not only at the pragmatic, stylistic and syntactic levels but also at the more basic lexical, collocational and phrasal levels.

When an unfamiliar English word or expression is encountered, the translator's immediate and typical reaction is to scurry to an Arabic-English dictionary in search of equivalence. But for the more experienced professional translator, the Arabic-English dictionary only establishes equivalence at a very general and uncertain level since usually little information, if any, is given at this stage apart from isolated sets of words and phrases. The following examples cited from *Al-Mawrid*: A Modern Arabic-English Dictionary (1988) are fairly representative:

ابْتِدائي : *elementary; primary; preparatory, preliminary; initial, first, original; primitive, rudimentary, primeval, primordial; incipient, inchoate, embryonic*

حُكْم : *rule; government, administration, management; direction; running, leading, leadership; control, command, dominion, authority, power, sway, reign*

Once the range of equivalence for a given lexical item is found, the next step would be to consult a (general or specialized) monolingual English dictionary and probably to enlist the help of lexical resources available on the internet to confirm the best candidate for the Arabic item or expression in question. It is at this level that several aspects of the word are

determined: syntactic peculiarities (e.g. use not with abide in the sense of tolerate; trepidation occurs with some most of the time), collocational restrictions (e.g. vastly and enormously comfortably collocate with popular; sheer is a better collocant with ignorance than total or absolute) and lexical and grammatical variations at the phrasal level (e.g. Is the Pope Catholic never tolerates any changes while come to light may appear in the simple past, simple present, past perfect and present perfect. Similes formed with the help of the adjective thin permit (even encourage) lexical variation: as thin as a rake/ a rail/ a bean-pole/ a pikestaff / a stork/ a stick/ a stick insect/ a ruler/ a burnt-out stick/ a willow wand, etc). But inadequate and tentative as the information in the bilingual dictionary is, and however experienced the translator might be, one has to admit that even for the most adept of translators, the Arabic-English dictionary remains an indispensable tool in rendering an Arabic text into English.

2. Arabic-English Dictionaries

Despite the fact that the Arab culture boasts one of the richest lexicographic traditions in the world, Arabic-English lexicography is still a nascent discipline. The number of commonly used and/or reliable dictionaries in this area that merit consideration is limited to three: F. Steingass's *A Learner's Arabic-English Dictionary* (1984), Hans Werh's *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (1974) and R. Baalbaki's *Al-Mawrid: A Modern Arabic-English Dictionary* (1988). These dictionaries display differences in the nature of the Arabic language varieties covered, the arrangement of lexical entries, the depth of coverage and their phrasal content – phrasal verbs, collocations, and multi-word units in Arabic and English. And since the primary objective of this paper is to consider the adequacy (or inadequacy) of the Arabic-English dictionary for the task of translation into L2 rather than to compare and contrast these dictionaries, the author has decided to limit the discussion to Baalbaki (1988) (henceforth *Al-Mawrid*).

Published for the first time in 1988, this dictionary has been republished several times since then and is immensely popular amongst translators and language learners. It contains over 1300 pages and deals with Modern Arabic and, to a lesser extent, Classical Arabic. The major advantages this dictionary enjoys over Wehr's and Steingass' are manifold: 1) Unlike Steingass' and Wehr's, the dictionary lists words alphabetically, a method that saves the user a great deal of time and effort. 2) It is much more comprehensive in its coverage of both Arabic and English. 3) It differentiates between the senses of polysemous words in Arabic and lists a fairly large number of compounds, collocations and multi-word units from the two languages. 4) It is the most commonly used dictionary by translators, translation students and language learners. For these reasons, our discussion below will be based on this dictionary rather than on the

other two. This discussion, it must be noted, should not be construed as belittling in any manner the great scholarly effort demonstrated by the compiler or detracting from the impressive contribution it has made to the field of lexicography and translation: in fact it is because of the superiority of this lexicographical work that it has been chosen for our analysis.

3. How much English is there in an Arabic-English Dictionary?

Bilingual dictionaries are directional; they take the lexis of the source language as their major area of interest and attempt to find equivalents for its members in the target language. Therefore, in the case of the Arabic-English dictionary, it is only natural to expect that the entire dictionary would focus on Arabic lexical entries; single lexical items, collocations, compound words and multi-word units. In dealing with the English language, the lexicographer is expected to cover its lexical items to the extent that such items serve the purpose of equivalence for the Arabic dictionary entries. No attempt is usually made to cater for the lexical oddities of the English language. This makes sense; for in what type of Arabic text is the dictionary user likely to encounter expressions such as the terms current in American football (*bump-and-run, dead all, drop kick*), baseball (*at bats, strike out, hit by pitch*), rugby (*scrum, trie, drop goal*), cricket (*cover drive, double century, googly*), only to mention a few sport-related terms? The only two places for such terms would be a monolingual English dictionary or an English-Arabic dictionary. That is why the few examples of distinctively English entries which *Al-Mawrid* lists (*indivisible:* غير قابل للتجزئة أو القسمة, *manifest:* بيان حمولة (*1*) هربت الفتاة بقصد الزواج من غير موافقة اهلها (*2*), *elope:* الطائرة أو السفينة أو اسماء ركابها, *scrambled eggs:* بيض مقلي ممزوج صفاره ببياضه , هربت المرأة من بيت زوجها مع عشيق لها *it never rains, it pours:* المصاعب لا تأتي فرادى and *a cock crows on his own hill:* كل ديك على مزبلته صياح) are to be viewed as a lapse in methodology or aberrations rather than a systematic and deliberate effort to deal with the English vocabulary. Yet, as an English language teacher, translator and translator trainer, this author has often wondered: how much of the English language that CAN and SHOULD be included is in fact available in an Arabic-English dictionary? How creative are lexicographers in finding equivalents, and do the English equivalents represent the maximum utilization of the English lexical resources when such equivalents are selected? And if the Arabic-English dictionary fails to fulfil the needs and expectations of the translator, could the failure to include certain classes of English words in the dictionary be a major underlying reason for that failure? In order to find answers to these questions, the author took the first ten pages in *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995) (henceforth *Longman*), identified certain lexical phenomena and compared their occurrence in both this dictionary and *Al-Mawrid*. The areas considered were as follows: (i) overall coverage; (ii) multi-word units ; (iii) strong collocations; (iv) equivalence ; (v) metaphors ; (vi) spoken expressions; and (vii) affixation. In certain cases, the nature of the phenomenon under investigation necessitated that we consult other parts of *Longman*, and this will be indicated in its proper place.

3.1 Overall coverage:

The words surveyed for this study start with the letter *A* and end with the word *acerbity*, totaling 228 headwords. Of this total, as well as from the individual senses given to each headword, the following words and/or senses were not listed in *Al-Mawrid*:

a-: / سابقة تفيد الظرفية / a-: سابقة تعني بدون / as in amoral, apolitical / A-1: بصحّة جيدة / AA: دبلوم
فنون / Abandon: حَماسة / abandoned: مْنطلق / abashed: مرْتبك / abed: في السرير / abet: أعانَ أو
ارتدّ عنْ, abjure: (فشل) ذريع / abject: (abject failure): مقيت / abhorrent: ساعَدَ على فعْل الشرّ
able- / لاحقة تفيد القدرة على فعل / able-: متوهج / ablaze: تجنّب, وعد بالتخلي عن (مذْهب, عقيدة)
(صفة الطقس) رديء / abominable: ابْطالي: من ينادي بابطال الرقّ / abolitionist: السفينة
أحد السكان / aboriginal: اصلي, أرومي / aborigine: الانْسان الثلجي / abominable snowman:
عشْبة / absinth: ذاهِلٌ / absent: (رحلة, انطلاق الصاروخ) ألغى / abort: الأصليين (في استراليا مثلا)
absorb: not clear if it وقد لها فرصة عمل) / absorb: أسْتوْعَب (العمالة الفائضة): فهمَ (2) / (1) اسْتوْعب
is used metaphorically as in absorb the impact: امْتصّ الصّدْمة / or absorb light امْتصّ الضّوء / absorbing:
معْتدل (في الطّعام والشراب), غير مسْرف / abstemious: (كتاب) ممْتع جداً / abysmal:
مطْبق / abyss: (بين الفقراء والأغْنياء) / academia: العالم الأكاديمي / academic: لا قيمة أو
access: التسارع (في الموسيقى) / accelerando: as in: the issue is purely academic. / أهميّة له
(1) تكيّفَ مع / acclimatize: سهل الوصول اليه / accessible: وسيلة الوصول / access: حرية الوصول
مجامل / accommodating: (بيئة جديدة, محيط جديد) (2) كيّفَ (مع بيئة جديدة, محيط جديد)
اعْتماد / accreditation: مسْتلزمات (نشاط) / accoutrements: (فنّان, كاتب) ضليع / accomplished:
فظّ / acerbic: (طيار, لاعب) ممتاز / ace: (جامعة, كلية, قسم) مُعْتمد / accredited: (قسْم, جامعة, كلية)

A quick glance at these senses which have been excluded from *Al-Mawrid* will reveal that they cover all sorts of lexical areas. There are single words that should have found a place for themselves as equivalents of Arabic words: *acclimatize*: تكيّفَ (2) , كيّفَ (1) , *accomplished (artist)*: (فنّان) ضليع , *abhorrent*: مَقيت , *abominable*: (الطقس) رديء , etc. Other words would form excellent collocations when used in an English text: *abject (poverty)*: مدقع (فقر) , *accredited (university)*: (جامعة) مُعْترف بها , *abort (a mission)*: (رحلة) ألغى , *abysmal (ignorance)*: (جَهْل) مطْبق etc. Compound words in Arabic which may tempt the translator or mislead him into incorrect translations can be expressed through single English words such as على (access), وسيلة الوصول (access), حرية الوصول متن(aboard) and لا قيمة أو أهمية له (academic). Some of the senses reflect the metaphorical potential of the English language, a feature that would add creativity and freshness to the translated text: *abort*: (رحلة, انطلاق الصاروخ) ألغى , *abyss*: (بين الفقراء والأغنياء) فجْوة هائلة and *acerbic*: فظّ (ملاحظة) , etc. The wide range of examples and the huge number of words that must have met a similar fate in the Arabic-English dictionary shows how much the translator would lose if he relies solely on an Arabic-English dictionary.

3.2. Multi-word units

As their designation suggests, these are basically phrases that are characterized by varying degrees of fixedness and semantic opacity. They are complex lexico-syntactic entities which occur with a high frequency in the English language and lend nativelike quality to discourse. Therefore, their absence from the target text

marks it as "non-idiomatic", "foreign" or even "unnatural." (Cowie 1998; Moon 1998; Carter 2000 and Abu-Ssaydeh (a) and (c) forthcoming). The first ten pages of *Longman* list fifty-six multi-word units of which only 12 appear in *Al-Mawrid*. Statistically, this forms less than one-fourth of the total number cited in *Longman*, which is a very alarming statistic: the failure to include such units would not only reduce the idiomaticity of the translator's language but would also give a distorted picture of the English lexis of which multi-word units form an essential component. To save space, the multi-word units cited in the *Al-Mawrid* are given in bold face:

> *from A to Z, from A to B, be taken aback, aid and abet, can't abide, to the best of my ability, all aboard, of no fixed abode, all about, how/what about, be quick about it, while you're about it, there is a lot of it about,* **just about**, *that's about all/it, not to be, about to do sth, out and about, above and beyond,* **above all (else)**, *get above yourself, open and above board, keep abreast of, absence makes the heart grow fonder, conspicuous by his absence,* **in absentia**, *in the abstract,* **by accident**, *a chapter of accidents, accidents will happen, have an accident, accidentally on purpose,* **of his own accord**, *be in accord with, in perfect/ total accord, speak with one accord,* **in accordance with, give an account, take account of, take it into account, on account of,** *by/from all accounts, on his account, on his own account, on no account, not on any account, by your own account, on that/this account, give a good/poor account of himself,* **bring/call to account, put/turn to good account**, *of no/little account, there's no accounting for tastes, have an ace up his sleeve, hold all the aces, be/come within an ace of, an ace in the hole.*

In addition, Arabic has, over the years, absorbed a fairly large number of English multi-word units such as *carrot and stick (policy)* (سياسة) العصا والجزرة), *show his hand:* كشف أوراقه, *have all the cards:* في يده كلّ الأوراق, etc. Such multi-word units are important to the translator for two reasons; firstly, they represent shared lexical areas in Arabic and English, and this facilitates the process of translation and solves the issue of equivalence in a very neat manner. Secondly, these units can provide the translator with English multi-word units which he can use for equivalence instead of resorting to single words to express a given complex unit of meaning. *Al-Mawrid* recognizes some of these units and lists them:

> *burn his boats/ bridges:* نَسَفَ جسوره: قطع الطريق على كلّ امكانيات التراجع
> *crocodile tears:* دموع التماسيح
> *put the cart before the horse:* وضع العربة قبل الحصان
> *wolf in sheep's clothing:* ذئب في ثوْب حمل
> *to strike a sympathetic chord:* ضرب على الوتر الحساس
> *follow in his footsteps:* سار في خطاه

But the coverage of these calques, however, is not consistent. It is even perhaps safe to assume that the number of translated multi-word units that have been included in the dictionary is far less than those that have been left out. These include but are not limited to:

The ball is in his court: الكرة في ملعبه / *Winds of change:* رياح التغيير / *The calm before the storm:* الهدوء الذي يسبق العاصفة / *The last nail in his coffin:* المسمار الأخير في نعشه / *Play with fire:* لعب بالنار / *Show/ reveal his hand:* كشفَ أوراقه / *The light at the end of the tunnel:* دقّ اسفينًا / *Drive a wedge between them:* اللعبة انتهت / *The game is over:* الضّوء في نهاية النّفق / *With a stroke of the pen:* بينهم / *The tip of the iceberg:* طرفُ جَبَل الجَليد / *Baptism of fire:* تعميد بالنار / *With a stroke of the pen:* بجرّة قلم / *Lick his wounds:* لعق جراحه / *A thorn in the side:* شوكة في الخاصرة / *In cold blood:* بدم بارد *etc.*

In order to appreciate the difference the inclusion of a sufficient number of multi-word units makes to the lexical component of the translated text in English, observe the number and nature of the multi-word units that can be given to each of the Arabic senses in two dictionaries: *Al-Mawrid* and the author's forthcoming dictionary: *An Arabic-English Dictionary of English Multi-word Units*:

i) استشاط غضبًا

1) *Al-Mawrid*:

استشاط غَضبًا:

flame up with rage, flare up, fume, steam, seethe, boil, rage, storm, burst with anger, lose his temper, be or become inflamed or enraged or furious

2)   *Abu-Ssaydeh*

اسْتَشاط: استشاط غضبا, فقدَ أعْصابَه, ثار ثائره, هاج وماج, طار طائره

(1) lose his cool/rag/temper (2) blow his top (3) flip his lid/wig (4) his temper slips out of gear (5) go off the deep end; go postal; go through/hit the ceiling/roof; hit the roof (6) raise Cain (7) rant and rave (8) fly into a passion

ii) توفّي

1)   *Al-Mawrid*:

توفي:

die, expire, pass away, give up the ghost, breathe one's last, part with life

2)   *Abu-Ssaydeh*

توفّي: مات, لاقى وجه ربه, انتقل الى جوار ربه

(1) give up the ghost (2) hand in his accounts (3) cash his chips (4) pay the debt of nature (5) bite the dust/the big one (6) go west (7) kick the bucket (8) buy the farm (9) fall off his perch (10) turn up his toes

iii) ثمِل, سكْران

1)   *Al-Mawrid*

ثمِل: سكْران

drunk(en), intoxicated, inebriated, sottish, boozy, tipsy, in one's cups :

2)   *Abu-Ssaydeh*:

ثمِل: سكْران

(1) be pissed as a newt, pissed out of his head (spoken) (2) the worse for drink (3) three sheets to the wind (4) as drunk as a skunk (5) tie one on (6) in his cups (7) off his head; out of his head/ skull (8) out of his box

iv) طار فرحًا

1) *Al-Mawrid*:

طارَ فرحًا:

to rejoice, exult, take wing; be/become overjoyed, elated, ecstatic, transported or carried away with joy, beside oneself with joy, in seventh heaven, in high feather

2) Abu-*Ssaydeh*

طارَ فرحًا: سعيد جدّا, في غاية أو منتهى السّعادة, لا تسعه الدنيا لسعادته, يكاد يطير من السعادة

(1) on cloud nine (2) as pleased as a dog with a bone/ pie/ Punch (3) on top of the world (4) float/ walk on air (5) be in seventh heaven (6) as happy as the birds in spring/ a clam at high tide/ a groom on his wedding night/ a hog in mud/ a hungry cow in five feet of alfalfa/ a kid with a new toy / a king/ Larry/ a pig in muck/ his own sauce/ a sandboy

3.3. Strong collocations

Collocation is a lexical relationship between two or more words, and it usually indicates that the lexical items in question tend to demonstrate a rate of co-occurrence that is more than accidental. Collocations are essential in any dictionary since they sometimes help identify the lexical environment(s) in which a given word must occur (*heavy smoker, leave the door ajar, arms akimbo*) or indicate that a certain word is frequently encountered in the company of another (*raging sea, stormy meeting, sarcastic smile*). (See Abu-Ssaydeh (b), forthcoming) The phenomenon is so important to foreign language learners and translators that a number of dictionaries have been devoted exclusively to its coverage such as *the BBI Combinatory Dictionary* (1991), *LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations* (1998) and *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (2002). *Al-Mawrid*, on its part, occasionally provides collocations for the Arabic lexical entries: *موه (الرذائل) ; قطب (جبينه, حاجبيه, وجهه) ; صدر (الكتاب بمقدمة)* *هيكل (البناء, الخ) ; الإجرام)* . Due to the centrality of the notion in English lexicography, *Longman* frequently cites collocations as a regular feature of its methodology. Upon checking the first ten pages, the following strong collocations were found (See Appendix (I) below) . Collocations given in *Al-Mawrid* are, again, in bold face. This table demonstrates that out of sixty-three collocations given in *Longman*, only three are found in *Al-Mawrid*, i.e. less than ten percent. But to be fair, *Al-Mawrid* does give a number of English collocations in addition to those cited above for the same words:

مطلق : absolute regime, autocracy, dictatorship, despotism, totalitarianism
فقَدَ الأمل : hope: lose/ give up hope
تخلى عن : abdicate: abdicate a throne or a high office

Now, some might claim that if an adequate number of Arabic collocations is provided, this, on its own, should be sufficient to enable the translator to create correct English collocations. But the dictionary provides only an extremely limited number of collocations for the Arabic headwords: خلعَ (من منصب), رشّحَ (اصابعه) , فقع (المنصب, انتخاب). Secondly, such a claim would be highly debatable: the provision of Arabic collocations does not guarantee the creation of correct English collocations. I will illustrate this by examining the sense of the expressions جدًّا and تماماً. This illustration will also show how the use of collocation at large will enable the translator to select the best possible sense in English.

The first of these two words جدًّا is given the following equivalents in *Al-Mawrid*: *very, much, very much, so, extremely, exceedingly, greatly, enormously, tremendously, considerably, highly, by far, quite* . This list of equivalents ignores the fact that the meaning of جدًّا is, more often than not, context-sensitive: many other meanings are also possible depending on its lexical environment. For

example, it does not indicate that the most commonly used adverb with the adjective *clear* would be *abundantly* (*abundantly clear*) rather any of those given in the list. To make things worse, this particular sense is not even included in the list, leaving the translator at a loss for what term he should use. The same sense of intensification can also be expressed through similes and other multi-word units, though the English equivalent is primarily determined on the basis of the Arabic verb or adjective with which the word جداً combines. Observe the following examples taken from Abu-Ssaydeh (forthcoming) (Some examples are taken from the British National Corpus)

آلم جداً : *burn like fire/ hell*

أذهل جداً : *make him jump out of his skin*

أضجر جداً : *bore to death/ tears, bore him out of his mind, bore the pants of*

أخرق جداً : *(1) all (fingers and) thumbs (informal) (2) be like an elephant learning to knit (3) clumsy as an ox*

متوتر جداً : *have/ be on a short fuse; like a bomb with a short fuse*

طويل جداً : *as tall as a tree*

قويّ جداً : *as strong as a horse*

The Arabic intensifier تماماً, on the other hand, is translatable by a host of context-sensitive equivalents in the target language: *Al-Mawrid* mentions the following: *completely, entirely, wholly, fully, in full, totally, in toto, altogether absolutely, utterly, thoroughly, quite, perfectly*. But the same range of equivalence can also be achieved through strong collocations as the following examples demonstrate:

عار تماما: كما ولدته أمه : *stark naked*

أصمّ تماما : *stone deaf*

مرهق تماما : *dead tired*

ثمل تماما : *blind/ stone drunk*

These are very strong collocations that standard English dictionaries usually list. In other words, they are very limited and are, therefore, easy to account for and include. Unfortunately, none of them appears in *Al-Mawrid*. This problem is not limited to this class of collocations; careful research would demonstrate that other English collocation-based equivalents can be found for the word تماما and can indeed be of great help in rendering idiomatic translations into English. Look at the following examples with the English verb *collapse* and see how the noun it collocates with determines the best English simile-based expression:

انهار تماما :

(1) *(an arrangement, hopes, resistance, accusations, an argument, evidence, hopes) collapse like a house of cards;*

(2) *(a building) collapse like a pack of cards;*

(3) *(expectations, hopes) collapse like a deflated balloon;*

(4) *(a person) collapse like a chimney stack/ a wet parchment/ a glove puppet when the hand is drawn/ a pack of cards*

The identification of the Arabic collocational environment is equally important since it will determine which, of several equivalents, is also the correct translation. Look at the following examples taken from Abu-Ssaydeh (forthcoming):

تماماً

(الساعة التاسعة وخمْس دقائق) تَماماً

- (*It is five past nine*) on the nose, on the dot

(انتهى, فنّد, قهَر) تماماً well and truly:

- *The entire episode is well and truly buried now.* ; *Their forces were well and truly bogged down in the conflict.*

(ضجر, امتلأ) تماماً (*chilled, full, gorge oneself, packed, sick*) to the gills

(لاءم الوصف) تماماً to a T:

- *It fits the description to a T. ; It suits his personality to a T.*

(مصرّي) تماماً, بالكامل, قلباً وقالباً through and through:

- *I am a London man through and through. |He is Irish through and through.*

تماماً, بالضّبط bang/ spot on (*informal*):

- *He was bang on course to become a millionaire.*

آمن تماما ب: صدّق بلا أدنى شك take as gospel truth:

- *He believed what his leader told him as gospel truth.*

(اختفى تماما: كأن الأرض انشقت وابتلعته, تلاشى, تبخر

(1) disappear/ vanish without a trace; vanish off the face of the earth (2) disappear into thin air; disappear/ melt/ vanish into thin air: *baggage, a company, kidnappers, the money disappear into thin air* (3) evaporate like liquid left in the sun/ mist before the sun/ snow on a hotplate (4) go out of the window (*informal*)

أشبه تماما: "الخالق الناطق" be the spitting image of:

- *She is the spitting image of her aunt Hilda.*

أمر مختلف تماما: a horse of another color:

- *That was embezzlement. This is a horse of another color.*

If we go back to general collocations, we shall also find that the list of equivalents in *Al-Mawrid* can be enriched if some of the collocations are added: for example, in addition to *abort*, the Arabic word أُجْهَضَ, the collocation *have an abortion* can be listed. The same principle applies to the phrase *alcohol/drug abuse* which one would have expected to appear with the Arabic compounds ادمان ادمان المخدرات and المسكرات, ادمان على الكحول. The collocation *hurl abuse at* should also appear along with *to heap abuse(s)* as an equivalent to the Arabic Verb+Noun collocation كال له الشتائم. Equally, the nouns *trust* and *confidence* collocate with the verb *abuse* rather than with any of the verbs *Al-Mawrid* lists as equivalents to the Arabic verb خان (الأمانة, الثقة) : *betray, sell out, be disloyal or faithless, act treacherously or perfidiously toward, to be unfaithful to. Blow-by-blow* is an excellent adjective to collocate with *detail* (وصف مفصل, مسهب, مطنب). The phrase نادى به ملكا acclaim sb king/ queen, etc should appear next to *proclaim* and *announce*. (As a matter of fact, *acclaim* is a much more accurate equivalent and a collocationally better choice than *announce*). To the senses of تعوّد of which *be accustomed to* is a member, the compiler should have added *grow/ get/ become accustomed to*.

3.4. The issue of equivalence

Equivalence across languages may take the form of one to one or one to many. A single word in English may be translatable by one word in Arabic: *qualification* : مؤهَل *; console:* عزى*; paradise:* جنـة. The word may also be translatable by a phrase whose nature may vary from one lexical entry to another:

a) A compound noun: *udder:* ثدي الحيوان, *nadir:* نظير السمت; *cake:* قالب حلوى; *sharpness:* حدّة الذهن;

b) An adjective plus a noun: *affiliate:* مؤسسة فرعية; *saloon:* منتدى أدبي; *kite:* طائرة ورقية;

c) A verb/ adjective plus a preposition: *catch:* قبض على; *endanger:* غرّر ب; *concede:* سلّم ب; *exceed:* خرج عن;

d) verb plus noun: *die:* فارق الحياة; *resurrect:* بعثَ من الموْت;

e) a clause: *deliver:* وزّع الرسائل البريدية; *shoot:* ضربَ بالسلاح الناري; *survive:* بقي على قيْد الحياة; *incur:* جلب على نفسِه الحياة;

In compiling an Arabic-English dictionary, these complex patterns of meaning have to be preserved in the dictionary since any deletion or omission would render the sense either incomplete or wrong. Of the words listed between the letter *A* and the word *acerbity* in *Longman*, it was found that *Al-Mawrid* fails to list Arabic phrases as senses for the following English words (14 in all):

accessible: يسهّل الحديث اليه	academic: لا أهمية له	abrogate: الغى رسمياً
accessible: يسهّل فهمه	acclaim: امتدح علنًا	abolish: الغى رسميا
abstracted: شارد الذهن	abstention: امتناع عن	abomination: أمرٌ بغيض جدا
accommodate: منَحَ مهلة للتسديد	abstention: امتناع عن التصويت	abstention: امتّناع عن التصويت
	access: امكانية الوصول	accessible: يمكن الوصول اليه
	abdicate: تنازَل عن العرْش	

The failure of the lexicographer to take into account such complex lexical units gives rise to three problems. Firstly, the Arabic equivalents given will represent only a part of the English word. In the words *abrogate* and *abolish*, the fact that a certain decision is taken officially, possibly by the government or an official body, is an integral part of the senses of both words. It is indeed this semantic component that sets these two words apart from other synonymous words such as *make null and void, make invalid, negate, repeal, revoke, rescind, nullify, annul* and *void*. It is not sufficient, therefore, to enter the Arabic word ألغى · as an equivalent of either word. Secondly, this practice might create confusion in the mind of the dictionary user: when the lexicographer lists *abdicate* as one of the senses of تنازَل and follows the English equivalent with *(a throne, or high office)*, this bracketed information may lead the user to think that these two nouns are strong collocants of the verb *abdicate* whereas they are in fact inherent in the sense of the verb itself. Another example cited above is the word *abstention* which includes as part of its sense *refusing to take a stance in regard with a given issue*. Collins Cobuild (1987) lists two separate senses for this lexical entry: 1) *an abstention is a formal act by someone of not voting either for or against a proposal 2) abstention from something enjoyable is the practice of deliberately not doing it* (page 6). It is in the second sense, and not the first, that the word *abstention* can benefit from some collocants such as *food, alcohol*, etc. Finally, failure to list such phrasal and clause-level equivalents would deprive the dictionary user from an important portion of the English lexis and encourage him to resort to faulty or non-idiomatic phrasal equivalence. For example, the sense of the word *accommodate* might be expressed in English as *give him an extra time to repay a debt*.

Two more points are felt to be in need of further investigation while we are still discussing the issue of equivalence: first, the question of the accuracy of certain English equivalents and, secondly, the age of some others cited in *Al-Mawrid*. When one deals with an Arabic-English dictionary that targets the general user and makes no claims to the historical dimension of the English lexis, one would expect the dictionary to deal exclusively with current English vocabulary. It is, furthermore, only logical to expect the dictionary to enable the user to distinguish between different related senses and words where shades of meaning and different nuances are felt to occur. But more importantly, the language user wants the dictionary to be error-free when it comes to the matter of meaning. A cursory examination of some of the senses given in *Al-Mawrid*, though, reveals that some of the English meanings are simply erroneous. Here are a few representative examples in which we compare the sense of the word in two English dictionaries (*Longman* (1995) and *Collins Cobuild* (1987)) and *Al-Mawrid*. Some information is occasionally given on the history of the word as documented in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2000):

1) plangent
a) Longman: (of a sound) loud and deep and sounds sad
b) Collins: Not cited
c) Al-Mawrid: متلاطم الأمواج *(of the sea: choppy)*
2) ebullient:
a)   Longman: very happy and excited.
b)   Collins: very happy and excited
c)   Al-Mawrid: غال: في حالة غليان *(boiling, bubbling). OED cites the year 1842 as the last time the word was used in this sense)*
3)   gloaming: غسق: *described as poetic and literary by Longman and Collins respectively, in which case the sense would be fairly uncommon.*
4)   opulence:
a)   Longman: great wealth (ثراء فاحش)
b)   Collins: great wealth: (ثراء فاحش)
c)   Al-Mawrid: غزارة *(abundance)*
5) adventure: Not cited as a verb in Longman or Collins but given the verbal sense of غامَرَ *in Al-Mawrid*
6) falsify:
a)   Longman: to change figures, records so that they contain false information (the sense in Arabic being (زَوَّرَ (وثائق, جواز سفر, السجلات))*
b)   Collins: change or add details to something that are not true or misrepresent it in order to deceive people (the Arabic meaning being identical with that given for the word in Longman)
c)   Al-Mawrid: شوه . *(distort). (OED indicates that all senses close to the Arabic equivalent are outdated)*

Some of the English words used in *Al-Mawrid* are outdated or obsolete: OED (2000), the mother of all dictionaries, states that *gascon* in the sense of *braggart* was last used around 1867. *Waggery* is an item that also belongs to the nineteenth century. *Euphuistic* dates back to the same period as does *conglobated*, the latest citation of the latter being in 1814 . *Aureate* was used in the mid-thirties of the last century. The word *canicular*, given as an English

equivalent to قائظ *(very hot)*, is also outdated, with the last citation dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century. (In support of their status, my spellchecker has actually failed to recognize five of these words). Moreover, the English meanings given to the Arabic active participle (اسم الفاعل) also provide the researcher with food for thought. In many instances, the compiler has cited *–er* and *–or*-based forms in English that neither *Longman* (1995) nor Collins (1987) gives as modern English words. Note the following examples that are mentioned in neither dictionary. I have also given the year in which, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2000), these words made an appearance in documented English for the last time:

scatterer: ناثر (OED 1872)	kneader: عاجن (OED 1894)
scorner: محتقر (OED 1847)	arranger: منظّم (OED 1879)
pavior: مبلّط (OED 1845)	maintainer: صائن (OED 1875)
feigner: مدَّع (OED1863)	desolator: مدمّر (OED 1894)
remonstrator: محتجّ (OED 1693)	devastator: مدمّر (OED 1855)

A more careful analysis of the dictionary would provide the researcher with more examples.

3.5. Metaphors or semantic extensions

Metaphors are ubiquitous in language, and through metaphorization, language users push back the semantic frontiers of the word, lend discourse freshness and force the word to create new collocational ranges. For the translator, metaphors pose a challenge on two fronts: firstly, most of the time, it will be difficult for the translator to predict the new lexical environments in which the metaphor will occur. Secondly, though metaphorization is a universal phenomenon, metaphors tend to be language-specific: languages do not have the same metaphorical potential for the same word. (Abu-Ssaydeh 2004, forthcoming and Abu-Ssaydeh (d) 2003). But metaphorization remains largely a lexical potential rather than a documented phenomenon, and a vast number of words which undergo this process do so on the spot. Some words, however, manage to establish a metaphorical sense for themselves which gains currency amongst the native speakers and eventually finds its way into the dictionary (lexicalized metaphors). Lexicographers sometimes recognize this fact by specifically indicating that a given word is being used in a figurative sense or designating it as *literary*. This tradition has virtually disappeared from recent lexicographic works, and metaphorical senses are simply listed as other related senses of the word (ibid). The data surveyed in *Longman* lists four cases of metaphors:

a) *ablaze with*: 2 filled with a lot of bright light or color 3 ablaze with anger/ enthusiasm/ excitement etc: very angry, excited about something
b) *abrasive*: seeming rude or unkind in the way you behave towards people because you say what you think very directly
c) *absorb*: become part of
d) *abyss*: 2 a very dangerous or frightening situation 3 a great difference which separates two people or groups.

Of the four words, only *abyss* is listed in *Al-Mawrid*, and even then, there is no indication whatsoever as to its metaphorical potential in English or in Arabic or, if such a potential exists in either language, whether it is the same in the other. In fact *Al-Mawrid* does not pay much attention to this important aspect of the English lexicon. It does not tell the translator if *wave (موجة)*, *summit (قمة)*, *beast (حيوان)*, *crucify (صلب)*, *hell (جحيم)* , *stormy (عاصف)* and hundreds of similar words have the same metaphorical potential in Arabic and English. It also fails to identify which metaphorical senses Arabic has borrowed from English; from the list given, the author has a feeling that *wave, summit* and *stormy* were borrowings since they demonstrate parallel collocational patterns in both languages. For this reason, a systematic analysis of the English language to isolate not only the words that have established metaphorical senses but also those English words whose metaphorical senses have been borrowed into Arabic would enrich the dictionary considerably. (For a much more detailed analysis of metaphors and similes in Arabic and English, see Abu-Ssaydeh (d) 2003)

3.6. Spoken expressions

The citation (or absence) of spoken expressions from dictionaries usually reflects the status such expressions enjoy in the language. English linguists at large and lexicographers in particular treat spoken English as a legitimate variety that deserves to be analyzed and described in lexicographic works. No stigma is attached to such a variety vis-a-vis Modern Standard English, with the primary difference being that the first serves a set of purposes which are normally more casual that those for which Standard English is reserved. This status is reflected in the works of English (and of course American) lexicographers. Hence, *Longman* abounds in spoken expressions; the first ten pages list the following expressions (totaling seven):

absolutely	*all aboard*
absolutely not	*what/ how about*
there's a lot/ not much of that	*be quick about it*
	while you're about it

Many Arab linguists and most lexicographers adopt a very different attitude towards the spoken varieties in the Arab World; such varieties are usually viewed as sub-standard and corrupt forms of Modern Standard Arabic. As such, these varieties do not merit any serious consideration, let alone any lexicographic effort, hence the rarity of colloquial dictionaries in Arabic.

This is the first aspect of the problem. The other aspect concerns the Arabic texts the translator needs to render into English; apart from (primarily Egyptian) movies, texts that are worth translating into English are normally written in Modern Standard Arabic and belong, by their very nature, to the formal variety that requires a formal version of the English lexis. Thus the question that arises would be: does the translator need the spoken expressions in Arabic or their counterparts in English since he would be primarily concerned with formal Arabic? The situation is further complicated by the fact that English soap operas, series and films are always translated through formal Arabic: the

nature of the lexis and the syntactic patterns chosen for the translation are those typical of Modern Standard Arabic. (This author has noted with great dissatisfaction how rigid and lifeless Arabic subtitles are when very slangy and very colorful American expressions, for examples, are rendered into Modern Standard Arabic).

But Arab translators do need to use spoken English: they do occasionally translate spoken Arabic texts such as Arabic movies into English, and this requires a good grasp of the English spoken expressions. In addition, spoken expressions form an integral part of the English language that needs to be mastered by the Arab translator as part of his lexical and phrasal competence. Thirdly, spoken expressions tend to be mostly opaque; without learning their meanings, erroneous translations are bound to occur. And it is in this context that spoken English expressions and their pragmatic functions must be identified and learned. Finally, if Arab lexicographers choose to ignore their less formal words and expressions, they still should accord spoken English expressions the status and respect accorded to them by English lexicographers.

There is another more crucial reason for the inclusion of English spoken expressions in an Arabic-English dictionary; Modern Standard Arabic contains thousands of expressions that, in spite of their apparently formal nature, are pragmatically equivalent to or are translatable by spoken English expressions. It is this author's belief that every single expression in Modern Standard Arabic that translates an English spoken expression falls within this category. Consider the following examples:

كيف الحال : *how are you, what's happening (greeting)*

يرحمكم الله : *bless you (when you sneeze)*

أهلا وسهلا : *welcome (to welcome a guest or a visitor)*

إخرس : *put a sock in it, zip your lip*

سأدق عنقه : *I will break/ wring his neck*

غير معقول : *I'll be damned*

(ذلك) اختيار مناسب أو حكيم : *you cannot go wrong with (x)*

(ما الذي تفعله) بحق السماء : *what the hell/ devil/ blazes/ in God's name/ heaven's name (are you doing)?*

هذا يكفي : *enough said*

عفوا على الإزعاج : *I hate to ask (but)*

ما الذي جرى له (حتى يتصرّف على هذا النحو؟) : *what's got into him?* etc.

How does *Al-Mawrid*, as an example of a very good Arabic-English dictionary, deal with English spoken expressions? Let us take some examples. To start with, the spoken expressions cited in *Longman* above are NOT listed in *Al-Mawrid*. On the other hand, for the word *good* alone, *Longman* lists twenty-one spoken expressions. These expressions display an amazing range of senses and pragmatic functions. Consider the following examples which we cite here along with their Arabic meanings:

Oh, good: جميل, رائع, ممتاز (عند سَماع أخبار جديدة طيّبة)

What a good girl: احسنتِ التصرّف (تقال للطفل الصغير أو الفتاة الصغيرة)

Good idea/point/question: فكرة طيّبة, نقطة جيّدة, سؤال وجيه (لرد على اقتراح أو سؤال تستحسنه)

That's no good: غير مقبول, لا ينفع (لرفض وضع معين)

That's not good enough: كافٍ غير أو مقبول غير هذا (معين وضع لرفض)

Good luck to him : سيفشل بأنه أعتقد (ولكني النجاح له أتمنى (والتشاؤم النية حُسْن لإظهار)

Good for you: برافو, أجلك من سعيد أنا (الغير أجل من سعادتك عن للتعبير)

It's a good thing that: حدث (أمرا أن حسن

Be a good laugh: مسلٍ, ممتع

Be good for a laugh: منه ترتجى فائدة لا ولكنْ مسلٌ أو ممتع

All in good time: الأوان يحينُ حين (يستعجلك من على للرد), *etc.*(*Longman*, p.614)

The word *good* also enters in other combinations:

a) Think of an angry Englishman who wants someone to leave his office by uttering the expression: *Good day to you sir*! which is a suitable equivalent for the (Palestinian) spoken expression "مطّرود غير من أفضلُ" . (Inverted comas are used to indicate spoken Arabic expressions).

b) Or the expression *would you be good enough to* which is used as a form of request ("بحياتك", فضلك مِنْ, سمحْت لو, هلا).

c) Or the spoken English equivalent of the Arabic expression "برافو", "أحسنت :" (jolly) *good show*.

d) Or the following spoken meanings of the Arabic expressions "معقول مش", إلهي يا which express surprise, anger, frustration, etc.: *good Lord; oh, Lord; good grief; God almighty; good god; good heavens; oh (my) God*!

Again, none of these senses is cited in *Al-Mawrid*. What about the Arabic expressions which have a variety of pragmatic functions and are easily translatable by English spoken expressions? Are they adequately accounted for in the said dictionary? Let us take the Arabic expression لله الحمد as an example. Against الحال؟ كيف, *Al-Mawrid* lists *how are you*, (but overlooks other expressions and their social significance: *how do you do* is a typically British expression which is used when you meet someone for the first time). In response to this greeting, an Arab would typically say بخير أنا (*I am good, fine*) or الحمد لله (lit. *praise the Lord,* but functionally *I am good/ fine, thank you*). The latter Arabic spoken expression has a wide range of senses as well including: a) When one is sick and in answer to a question about one's health, whatever one may be feeling. (Typically, an Englishman would tell you how he feels and where the pain is and if any improvement has been recorded in his condition). b) To express relief, in which case it would be functionally equivalent to the English expression *thank God*! *Finally you get it*! c) To declare that you have finished eating, that you are full and cannot eat any more: *I am full*. E) An expression said after one sneezes, with the closest English equivalent being *excuse me*. F) In response to condolences offered at the death of a loved one, which would be functionally equivalent to: *thank you for your sympathy* . Of all these, and other possible, senses, *Al-Mawrid* cites the literal senses *praised be the Lord, praise be to God* and *Thank God,* but without specifying their pragmatic functions in Arabic.

3.7. Affixation

Affixation in morphology defines a word-formation process through which prefixes and suffixes are added to a root to form new words: *nature: natural: unnatural*. (Abu-Ssaydeh (b), forthcoming) This process continues to constitute

one of the primary sources of new vocabulary in the English language. And although some affixed slang and spoken words remain largely unaccounted for in the standard dictionary (*sevenish, chocolaty*), lexical items formed in this way occupy a prominent place in mainstream English. To illustrate how *Al-Mawrid* deals with affixation, we shall examine two examples: the prefix *un-* which basically has a negative sense in English and the suffix *–able*, a primarily adjective-forming suffix. For this purpose, it was necessary to move outside the first ten pages of *Longman* which we have focussed on so far to other parts of the dictionary. To gauge the frequency of the prefix *un-*, we had to consult the letter U. However, due to the very large number of words that can combine with *un-*, we decided to restrict our survey to the words that start with the letter A and permit this prefix to be attached to them. The total number of such words was found to be 38 of which *Al-Mawrid* fails to list 32, an alarmingly low percentage of 84 percent:

- *Unabashed:* بلا وجل, غير وجل // *Unabated:* غير مضعف أو مخمد // *Unable:* غير قادر /بكامل قوّته, //
- *Unabridged:* (نصّ, رواية) كامل // *Unacceptable:* غير مقبول, مرفوض //
- *Unaccompanied:* (طفل) بلا مرافق (2) (موسيقا) غير مرافق (1) //
- *Unaccountable:* غير مسؤول (2) // *Unaccounted (for):* (1) غير معلل أو مفسر
- *Unaccustomed:* غير متعود (2) غير مألوف (1) //
- *Unacknowledged:* غير ملحوظ (2) غير معترف به (فضل, مساهمة) (1) //
- *Unadopted (road):* (طريق) تكلفة صيانتها على السكان وليس على المجلس البلدي
- *Unaffected:* غير متأثّر // *Unaffected:* غير متأثّر // *Unaided:* بلا عوْن
- *Unalloyed (happiness):* (سعادة) خالصة, لا تشويها شائبة
- *Unalterable:* راسخ, غير قابل للتغيير // *Un-American:* غير أمريكي
- *Unannounced:* دون أن يعْلم أحد // *Unanswerable:* (سؤال) لا جوابَ له
- *Unappealing:* غير جذاب // *Unapproachable:* يصعْبُ الحديثُ اليه
- *Unarguable:* لا جدال فيه // *Unashamed:* لا يحسّ بالخجل
- *Unasked:* (سؤال) لا يسأل أو يطرح (2) من تلقاء نفسه, دون أن يسأل (1)
- *Unassailable:* (حجة) مفحم, قاطع // *Unattached:* منفصل
- *Unattended (luggage):* (حقائب) لا أحد يحرسها
- *Unattractive:* غير جذاب // *Unauthorized:* غير مصرح له
- *Unavailable:* غير متاح أو متوفر // *Unavailing:* غير فعال
- *Unavoidable:* لا سبيل الى اجتنابه, حتْمي // *Unaware:* غير مدرك أو واع

Al-Mawrid, on its part, does not recognize the combination of غير and the noun (19 senses in all) or لا and the noun (9 in all) as legitimate headwords. This methodology, however, does not explain why the dictionary fails to list other kinds of senses as equivalents in the dictionary: *unabridged:* (نصّ, رواية) كامل ; *unacceptable:* مرفوض ; *unassailable:* (حجّة) مفحم, قاطع and *unattached:* منفصل.

Let us turn to the suffix *–able* now. Like the prefix *un-*, the suffix *–able* (and its variants *–ible* and *-ble*) combines with hundreds of words in English to produce words whose acquisition by the translator is just as important. The following formulae express the possible range of senses of this suffix in Arabic:

(1) A single word: enjoyable: ممتع, When the word with *–able* is equivalent to a single word, it is often given: *fashionable:* دارج ; *suitable:* ملائم ; *comfortable:* مريح ; *visible:* مرئي, *reasonable:* معقول ; *acceptable:* مقبول: قابل للقبول, يمكن قبوله ; *comprehensible:* مفهوم ; *tolerable:* محمول

(2) قادر على + المصدر : *adaptable:* قادر على التكيف

(3) قابل ل + المصدر: *divisible*: قابل للتجزئة أو التقسيم ; *convertible*: قابل للتحويل ; *adjustable*: قابل ; *actionable*: قابل للتعديل ; *believable*: قابل للتصديق ; *achievable, attainable*: قابل للتحقيق ; *corruptible*: قابل للفساد أو ; *reusable*: قابل للاستعمال مرة أخرى ; *alterable*: قابل للتحويل ; *للمقاضاة *expandable (attaché)*: (سيارة) قابل للقيادة ; *drivable (car)*: قابل للعلاج ; *curable*: الإفساد ; *foldable (seat)*: (حقيبة) قابل للتوسيع ; قابل للطيّ ; *edible*: صالح للأكل

(4) صالح ل + المصدر: *audible*: يمكن غسله ; *washable*: يمكنُ التنبؤ به ; *predictable*: يُمكنُ+المصدر(+ -ه/حرف جرّ) (5) ; *demonstrable (fact)*: يمْكنُ تسويقه ; *bankable (name, star)*: (حقيقة) يمكنُ إثباته ; يمكن سماعه *obtainable*: يمْكنُ الحصول عليه ; *defensible*: يمْكنُ الدفاع عنه ; *doable*: يمكن فعله أو القيام به

regrettable (incident) : يدعو للاعجاب ; *admirable* : يدعو ل+ المصدر, يثير +المصدر: (6) (حادث) يدعو للأسف

(7) A verb in the passive voice : *advisable*: يُنصَحُ به

Of these formulae, *Al-Mawrid* focuses on (1), (3) and (4). All the Arabic single words given in (1) are listed. Of those cited in (3), only four are given:

combustible : قابل للإحتراق

renewable : قابل للتجديد

divisible, partible (?) : قابل للتجزئة أو القسمة

irrevocable (letter of credit) : كتاب (أو خطاب) اعتماد غير قابل للرجوع

Finally, of the words that are equivalent to صالح ل+ المصدر, *Al-Mawrid* cites only five: *navigable*: صالح للابحار ; *arable*: صالح للزراعة ; *edible, eatable*: صالح للأكل and *drinkable*: صالح للشرب.

A survey of the dictionary demonstrates that the other categories are either totally absent or grossly underrepresented. And that leaves probably hundreds, if not thousands, of English words out of the dictionary. Moreover, when items combining with –*able* attach other affixes to themselves (for example the prefix *in*-), they create words that are almost totally absent from the dictionary:

incorruptible (official): (مسؤول) غير قابل للافساد

indescribable (condition): (حالة) يجلّ عن الوصف

indefinable (quality): (صفة) يصعب وصفه أو شرحه

inexpressible (sorrow): (حزن) تعجز الكلمات عن وصفه

irresistible (charm): (سحر) لا يقاوَم

insufferable (arrogance): (غرور) لا يطاق

indefensible (position): (موقف) لا يُمْكنُ الدفاع عنه

incalculable (losses): (خسائر) لا يُمْكنُ تقديرها

inadmissible (evidence): (دفاع) غير مقبول

insurmountable (problem): (مشكلة) يصعُب تجاوزه

inadvisable (act): (عمل) لا ينصَحُ به

inapplicable (condition): (شرط) غير قابل للتطبيق

Other prefixes and suffixes do not seem to be any luckier in *Al-Mawrid*. A quick and random search of the words *impartial*: حيادي, موضوعي (the prefix *im*-), *illegal*: غير قانوني, مخالف للقانون (the prefix *il*-), *irresponsible*: ليس أهلا, غير مسؤول (the prefix *in*-) shows that none of these words is cited in the dictionary either. English words found opposite the Arabic word عديم and resulting from the addition of the suffix –*less* are, surprisingly, limited to three words only: *lifeless* (عديم الحياة), *odorless* (عديم الرائحة) and *colorless* (عديم اللون), though one is certain that there must be scores of this word type in the English language which merit listing once the lexicographer decides to include such a combination as a headword.

These findings are, in themselves, quite significant (and worrying) as they clearly demonstrate how much of the English vocabulary remains outside the Arabic-English dictionary. But we must caution that a fairer assessment of

the status of affixation in *Al-Mawrid* requires a much more thorough and systematic analysis of both the meanings of the English affixes and the actual contents of the dictionary.

4. Conclusion

If an Arabic-English dictionary chooses to focus on the English equivalents of the Arabic words without heeding culture-specific English words, such an approach would be understandable. However, if that dictionary is to serve the actual needs and fulfil the expectations of the translator, a number of demands will be made on such a dictionary: the methodology has to be consistent; spoken expressions must be cited and their pragmatic functions must be stated; the metaphorical potential of both languages must be thoroughly explored and documented and semantic areas common to both languages have to be fully and systematically dealt with. The coverage of the dictionary must not be limited to equivalence at the single word level but must go beyond it to cover collocations and multi-word units, and it is in this area that contrastive lexical research and lexicographical ingenuity can have immediate impact on the nature and range of equivalents given to a certain word or phrase in Arabic. If such guidelines are adhered to, they would ensure that the dictionary reflects the complex nature of the English lexis and helps the translator generate correct and sophisticated English equivalents.

Furthermore, certain modifications in Arabic lexicography have to be considered; for example, new headwords which so far have been overlooked should be candidates for inclusion. Expressions such as غير, لا, صالح etc are examples. This is required so that the dictionary can account for morphological processes that produce thousands of words in English. Otherwise, the number and range of words covered by the dictionary will fail to faithfully represent the English language. On the other hand, certain notions must be maximally used for sense enrichment; two particularly significant notions are collocations and multi-word units which can be used, for example, in cases of intensification. Half measures would result in the production of inadequate dictionaries, and failure to implement new methodologies will only lead to the exclusion of large portions of the English language.

To me, the choice is clear! Breaking with traditions is always difficult, but this author believes that lexicography should respond to the user's needs and should not be restricted to old modes of thinking or remain hostage to parochialism and intellectual servitude. Ingenuity is very much needed if we are to produce an Arabic-English dictionary that can claim to be as useful and as thorough as the lexical resources of the English language can permit. Equally important is the effort of the translator himself to maximally use the resources available to him and to enrich his command of the English lexis. Monolingual dictionaries, dictionaries of synonymy and exploitable lexical databases on the internet all form a wealthy source of lexical information and tools for sense disambiguation.

They can all combine to serve the ultimate purpose of the Arab translator: to produce English target texts that reflect a lexis that is accurate, varied and idiomatic.

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Appendix (I)

absent look/expression // absolute disgrace/ disaster/chaos // absolute nonsense/rubbish // absolute ruler/monarch // absolute terms // absurdly cheap/ difficult/ easy // abundantly clear // make something abundantly clear // open to abuse // alcohol/ drug abuse // a stream / torrent of abuse // shout/ scream/hurl abuse at // a term of abuse // abuse his trust/ confidence // get/ become abusive // accept blame/ responsibility // accept his apology // acceptable level/amount // a letter of acceptance // have easy/ good access // highly/ widely/universally acclaimed // critically acclaimed // get acclimatized // pay/ settle your account // hold sb accountable // make an accusation // face an accusation // wild/ unfounded accusation // stand accused of // grow/ get/ become accustomed to // ace pilot/

player/ skier // abandon hope // abandon ship // with gay/wild abandon // abdicate responsibility // of great/ exceptional ability // high/low/ average ability // mixed ability class // **abject poverty**/ misery // ablaze with anger/enthusiasm/ excitement // abnormally high/low/slow // have an abortion // **above suspicion**/ reproach // walk/ ride abreast // go abroad // abrupt halt // purely academic // strong/ broad accent // blow-by // blow account // broad accent // heavily accented // have access to // have access to a phone/a computer // gain/get access to // easily accessible // **accession to the throne** // an accessory after/ before the fact // have an accident // climbing/skiing/ riding accident // car/automobile/ traffic accident // bad/serious/nasty accident // an accident of birth/ nature/history // acclaim sb king/queen/leader