

Investigating Patterns of Reciprocal English-Persian Translation of Collocations by Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—This study investigated patterns of reciprocal English-Persian translation of collocations by Iranian EFL learners. The participants of the study were 20 intermediate and advanced level students at different private language schools in Tehran city. The instruments used in the study was a researcher-made questionnaires used for translating collocations and involved 60 items including ten collocation types. The questionnaire was translated into Persian. Then, the English and Persian versions were given to the participants to complete. The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS software. The results showed that there were meaningful differences between the two translations in ‘verb + noun’; ‘prepositions of time, place and manner; ‘verb + adverb’; and ‘adjective + preposition’ correlations. The most frequently used strategy used for translation of collocations in English-Persian and also in Persian-English translations was literal translation which is a type of direct translation. These findings indicate that collocational differences between Persian and English bring about errors in the production of Iranian EFL learners and a good number of errors in translations of collocational errors are directly caused by interference of learners’ mother tongue.

Index Terms—collocations, translation, interference, mother tongue, Iranian EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Transfer happening between languages is considered a main reason of most second language learning problems (Mahmoud, 2005; Falahi & Moinzadeh, 2012). In fact, one of the areas vulnerable to transfer between languages is collocation, especially when the collocational patterns of the first language are not similar to those of the target language. As Sadeghi (2009) properly indicated, a significant number of syntactic and semantic errors made by EFL learners could be produced by a difference between collocational patterns in the first language and the target language they are trying to learn. For example, in English they ‘are late’ and ‘make photocopies’ but in Persian they ‘do late’ and ‘take photocopies’.

Similarities and differences between languages regarding collocations as a possible aspect of difference has not been thoroughly studied. Although collocation is an important element of proper language production, it is a challenging aspect of L2 learning which has not received adequate attention in research (Shei & Pain, 2000; Nesselhauf, 2003). Differences between collocational patterns and idiomatic expressions of first and target language are the cause of a large number of syntactic and semantic errors by language learners (Nesselhauf, 2003; Ketabi & Sadeghi, 2013). Although some studies on comparative analysis of collocations between some languages have been conducted, little has been reported for problems of language learners regarding the collocational differences between English and Persian and no proper pattern has been identified for errors resulting from these differences.

In view of that, this study is an attempt to find out patterns and sources of errors in using collocations expressions in English using a two-way translation from English into Persian and vice versa. In other words, this study tries to determine the amount of collocational errors that directly result from L1 interference. The significance of this study is that the accurate use of collocations is important in successful communication. Also, one source of inaccuracy and sometimes a source of misunderstanding in EFL context, is inability in understanding and using collocations. In this regard, five research questions were formulated for this purpose.

- ▶ To what extent do collocational differences between Persian and English cause errors in the communication of Iranian EFL learners?
- ▶ What are the most problematic types of collocations for Iranian EFL learners?
- ▶ What percent of collocational errors are directly caused by interference from mother tongue?

► What strategies should be applied in translation collocation to be matched with Vinay and Darbelnet's model (1995) of translation?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Collocations

Collocation studies in Greece can be tracked back to more than two thousand years ago. The Greeks believed that words cannot be existed in isolation and they can be different in line with the collocation in which they are used (Robin, 1967). Based on Niaxing's (2002) interpretation, "a collection is an ordinary syntagmatic association of a string of rhetorical items, that coexist, in a grammatical constructed with bilateral expectancy greater than chance as recognition of non-idiomatic meaning in texts" (p.100). According Mitchell's viewpoint (1975, as cited in Nofal, 2012), collocation is a union of roots or potential rhetorical meanings rather than actual words. A linguistic item or class of items is meaningful by means of properties of its own but due to the contrastive or differential relationships it develops with other items or classes. Interpretation is much less in the name than in the network of related differential relationship. Howarth (1996) pointed out following specifications for collocation:

- Collocations are prevalent instances that play an important role in language production.
- Among several reasons for collocation, one is that these combinations are employed as rhetorical units.
- Generally, rhetorical collocation is referred to as combination of two or more words so that they are used by the native speakers regularly as other language components.

Classification of Collocations

According to Smadja (1993, cited in McKeown & Radev, 2000), collocations have different forms. They are in a large variety of forms, the number of words to be used and the way they are used can differ widely. Some collocations are fixed, whereas others are not so, For instance, a collocation to kink "to make" and "decision" can be said "to make an decision", "decision to be made", "mad an important decision", and so on. On the contrary, a collocation like "The New York Stock Exchange" just can be in one form; it is very rigid collocation, an unchanged expression.

Based on the traditional perspective, collocations can be divided into two major groups (Howarth, 1996):

1. Verbal: like, breaching, cancel the appointment, eating
2. Nonverbal: like, Flawless flower, last memories, Islam prophet, Islamic revolution, and fast cooker.

Any of these two groups are divided into two subgroups: Open and Free collocations. (Nosratzadeh & Jalilzadeh, 2011). Howarth (1996) offers three classes of free collocation:

- Collocations that are used to meet an immediate need
- Certain collections those are predictable to make a language system
- Fixed idioms that are not limited by semantics and collocation specifications

Cowie and Mackin (1975) categorized idioms and collocations into four categories based on idiomaticity from the most to the least fixed: pure idioms, figurative idioms, restricted collocations and open collocations. Restricted collocations relate to clusters that are fixed or like idioms, for instance to kick the pocket, to rain cats and dogs and so forth. Open collocations relate to nodes that can be classified along with other a big variety of other words such as a red car, a small car, an expensive car, and so on.

Palmer (1981) classified collocations based on the restrictions on words and offered three sorts of collocational restrictions as below:

- 1) There are some restriction that are completely depended on the meaning of the item, like *green cow*.
- 2) There are some restrictions that are dependent on the range- a word can be used alongside a whole set of a group of words that have some semantic characteristics in common. So it explains the unlikeliness of the *pretty boy* (pretty should be used for describing females).
- 3) There some collocations that are limited to the strictest sense, "they deal with neither meaning nor range, for example *added with eggs and brains*" (p.79).

The model for translation by Vinay and Darbelnet

Some researchers offered different models for translating. One of them is the model by Vinay and Darbelnet. Many scholars are in favor of the model, they see it as a famous and comprehensive model. Thus, it has been used as the theoretical basis for translating of collocation in the study. The model consists of two methods to cover seven procedures as below:

1. Direct translating that covers:

1.1. Borrowing: It is a form of straightforward translation that involves the transfer of ST word into the TT, for instance *tequila* or *tortilla* from Mexican Spanish or DVD, CD-ROM and so forth in the world of information technology which are understood worldwide. This can be used to fill a gap or to make the TT more interesting (Munday, 2009). The straightforward transfer of words such as computer, television, mobile and so on from English to Persian is some cases of borrowing.

1.2. Calque: "It is a special sort of borrowing in which a language borrows an expression from another language, but each or its elements is translated literally each of its elements" (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, as cited in Munday, 2009, p.171) For instance, English *skyscraper* to Persian 'ا : sema : nqær□a : f'.

1.3. Literal translating: It is “a word for word translation that uses the same number of TL words in the form of established equivalents besides the same word order and word classes, like, *English, my cat is hungry*, in German ‘*meine Kat zeist hungrig*’ (Munday, 2009, p. 182), and English *Slow down a bit*, in Persian ‘*je qorde yā va : f kūn*’ (Eftekhari, 2008).

2. Oblique translation, that covers:

2.1. Transposition: “It deals with grammatical shift like word class changes” (Munday, 2009, p.212). For Example, in English *you are wanted*, in Persian ‘*ka : ret da : rān*’ (Eftekhari, 2008).

2.2. Modulation: The procedure deals with a change the form of message that is made by a change in the point of view” (Venuti, 2000, p. 89). “The change can be advocated when, although a literal, or even permuted, results of translation in a grammatically correct utterance, improper, unidiomatic or incompetent in the TL” (Hatim & Munday, 2004, p. 150). English *I’m listening*, in Persian ‘*befā rma : i : d*’ (Eftekhari, 2008).

2.3. Equivalence: “It relates to cases where languages explain the same situation by different style and structure as means” (Munday, 2009, p. 58). For instance, cry in pain in French would be said as ‘*Aie!*’, but, it would be interpreted as *Ouch* in English. English *you are not a local*, in Persian ‘*ā hle i : n tā rā fō ke ni : sti : ?*’ (Eftekhari, 2008).

2.4. Adaptation: It is considered the changing of the cultural reference when there is a situation in the source culture that does not have any equivalent in the target culture (Munday, 2009). For instance, for most Germans, “the traditional turkey dinners served at Christmas by British are still unknown” (Munday, 2009, p. 212) or ‘*offering*’ to show courtesy in Persian (Eftekhari, 2008).

Practical Works

Mahmoud (2005), examined collocational errors made by Arab learners of English, and found negative transfer from the first language as a major source of collocational errors in the writings of Arab EFL learners. Also, negative transfer from Arabic was accountable for about 61 percent of the incorrect word combinations. Koosha and Jafarpour (2006) investigated the influence of Iranian EFL learners’ L1 on the collocational awareness of prepositions. They decided that first language interference was a significant source of error in the production of prepositional collocations. Fan (2009), in a comparative corpus-based study, investigated collocational use by ESL learners compared to that by native students. The data for this study came from written productions of 60 Hong Kong students and 60 native students of English. The corpora analysis revealed that the first group’s collocational use was adversely affected by their L1. Sadeghi (2009) compared Persian and English collocations with respect to lexis and grammar. The results indicated that when the negative transfer of linguistic knowledge of L1 to L2 happen the learners highly likely to face difficulties. The outcome of two translation assignments were compared by Gorgis and Al-Kharasheh (2009) they found out that the limitation of students’ ability for translating Arabic contextualized collocations properly.

III. METHOD

Participants and sampling

Twenty EFL learners (12 males and 8 females) in private English institutes in Tehran City took part in this study. They aged between 20 and 40 years. They were selected based on random sampling from various language schools around Tehran City. The EFL learners were at intermediate and advanced levels. The participants had passed at least ten levels in speaking programs and were considered intermediate or advanced level based on the standards of the language institutes. In addition, a proficiency test (the intermediate and advanced levels of Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), Quick Placement Test Version 2, 2001) was also given to assure the level of the participants. The participants were of varied social and cultural backgrounds.

Instruments

This study used two instruments, a proficiency test and a translation tests for translating collocations. UCLES (Quick Placement Test Version 2, 2001) was employed to estimate the similarity of students regarding their knowledge of general English. The test has different sections for grammar, vocabulary and reading.

The collocation questionnaire were developed by the researchers based on the collocations collected from second edition of famous Top Notch book series by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher. The series have been taught all over the world as well as in Iran for several years. The researcher had a considerable experience in teaching conversation courses, especially in teaching Top Notch book series and was quite familiar with collocations. The data were selected from various elementary, intermediate and advanced proficiency levels, i.e. from all 12 books of the series. Various types of collocations were selected based on classifications of collocations by Cowie and Mackin (1975) and Palmer (1981). To be sure of the selected collocations, they were checked against Oxford Collocations Dictionaries. The content validity of the instrument was confirmed through expert judgment by two PhDs in Linguistics and TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language).

The collocation questionnaire comprised of 60 items which were classified based on ten types of collocations, i.e. every 6 items covered one particular type of collocation arranged from easy to difficult based on the level of the Top Notch book series from which the collocations were extracted. The instrument was checked for content validity by two PhDs, i.e. the supervisor and the advisor of this thesis, but was not checked for reliability.

Procedure and data analysis

Sixty collocations expressions were extracted from the second edition of Top Notch book series by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher. The data were selected from all twelve books, i.e. from the fundamentals, lower intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced levels. To confirm that the selected expressions were collocations, they were checked against Oxford Collocations Dictionaries. The selected expressions were then classified according to the classification schemes of Cowie and Mackin (1975) and Palmer (1981) for collocations. The selected expressions were then translated into Persian. Next, both English and Persian versions were given to EFL students to translate the English expressions to Persian and vice versa. The answers were then combined and analyzed based on Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) model of translation to see what patterns were present in the students' errors and what were the main sources of difficulty. Experts were consulted regarding the types of translations based on the above-mentioned models. The translations were analyzed and coded for the type of strategy and also the acceptability of translations by the researcher and the coded data were analyzed using SPSS software application.

IV. RESULTS

Paired Samples T-Test

TABLE 1.
PAIRED SAMPLES CORRELATION BETWEEN ENGLISH-PERSIAN AND PERSIAN-ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	E.F 1 & F.E 1	20	.318	.370
Pair 2	E.F 2 & F.E 2	20	-.113	.755
Pair 3	E.F 3 & F.E 3	20	.309	.385
Pair 4	E.F 4 & F.E 4	20	-.386	.271
Pair 5	E.F 5 & F.E 5	20	.389	.266
Pair 6	E.F 6 & F.E 6	20	.187	.605
Pair 7	E.F 7 & F.E 7	20	-.185	.610
Pair 8	E.F 8 & F.E 8	20	-.352	.318
Pair 9	E.F 9 & F.E 9	20	.500	.141
Pair 10	E.F 10 & F.E 10	20	.107	.768

Paired samples correlation between English-Persian and Persian-English translations in ten types of correlations as it was specified in the questionnaire is demonstrated in Table 1. As the table reveals, with the specified correlations and sig values, at $\alpha=.05$, there was no correlation between English-Persian and Persian-English translations in all categories.

TABLE 2.
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENGLISH-PERSIAN AND PERSIAN-ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	E.F 1 - F.E 1	-1.00000	.81650	.25820	-1.58409	-.41591	-3.873	9	.004
Pair 2	E.F 2 - F.E 2	.30000	1.33749	.42295	-.65679	1.25679	.709	9	.496
Pair 3	E.F 3 - F.E 3	-.50000	1.17851	.37268	-1.34306	.34306	-1.342	9	.213
Pair 4	E.F 4 - F.E 4	-2.60000	1.57762	.49889	-3.72856	-1.47144	-5.212	9	.001
Pair 5	E.F 5 - F.E 5	-.50000	2.17307	.68718	-2.05452	1.05452	-.728	9	.485
Pair 6	E.F 6 - F.E 6	-1.20000	1.93218	.61101	-2.58220	.18220	-1.964	9	.001
Pair 7	E.F 7 - F.E 7	-.40000	1.34990	.42687	-1.36566	.56566	-.937	9	.373
Pair 8	E.F 8 - F.E 8	-1.60000	2.06559	.65320	-3.07763	-.12237	-2.449	9	.037
Pair 9	E.F 9 - F.E 9	-.60000	1.17379	.37118	-1.43968	.23968	-1.616	9	.140
Pair 10	E.F 10 - F.E 10	-.90000	2.02485	.64031	-2.34849	.54849	-1.406	9	.193

Paired samples t-test of the differences between English-Persian and Persian-English translations in ten types of correlations is displayed in Table 2. The table shows meaningful differences between the two translations in 'verb + noun'; 'prepositions of time, place and manner'; 'verb + adverb'; and 'adjective + preposition' correlations. According to the mean differences, the most problematic correlations were, respectively, 'verb + noun'; 'prepositions of time, place and manner'; 'verb + adverb'; and 'adjective + preposition'.

Crosstabs

Crosstabs were applied to compare the performances of the students according to the strategies used in the two-way translations of collocations. Only the most frequently used strategies are shown here which are direct literal translation and indirect transposition translations. In all Tables 'E.F' in the rows stands for English- Farsi and 'F.E' in the column stands for Farsi- English.

TABLE 3.
CROSSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'VERB + NOUN' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: verb + noun * F.E: verb + noun Crosstabulation				
			F.E: verb + noun	
			Direct Literal	Total
E.F: verb + noun	Direct Literal	Count	18	18
		% within E.F: verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + noun	90.0%	90.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	2	2
		% within E.F: verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + noun	10.0%	10.0%
Total	Count	20	20	
	% within E.F: verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%	
	% within F.E: verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%	

The crosstab of the relationship between 'verb + noun' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are demonstrated in Table 3. The table illustrates that in English-Persian translations 100% of translations were direct literal but in Persian-English translations 90% used direct literal strategy for translation and 10% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 4.
CROSSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'PHRASAL VERB + NOUN' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: phrasal verb + noun * F.E: phrasal verb + noun Crosstabulation				
			F.E: phrasal verb + noun	
			Direct Literal	Total
E.F: phrasal verb + noun	Direct Literal	Count	16	16
		% within E.F: phrasal verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: phrasal verb + noun	80.0%	80.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	4	4
		% within E.F: phrasal verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: phrasal verb + noun	20.0%	20.0%
Total	Count	20	20	
	% within E.F: phrasal verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%	
	% within F.E: phrasal verb + noun	100.0%	100.0%	

The crosstab of the relationship between 'phrasal verb + noun' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are displayed in Table 4. In English-Persian translations 100% of translations were direct literal but in Persian-English translations 80% used direct literal strategy for translation and 20% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 5.
CROSSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'VERB + ADJECTIVE' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: verb + adjective * F.E: verb + adjective Crosstabulation					
			F.E: verb + adjective		Total
			Direct Literal	Indirect Transposition	
E.F: verb + adjective	Direct Literal	Count	10	2	12
		% within E.F: verb + adjective	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + adjective	62.5%	50.0%	60.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	6	2	8
		% within E.F: verb + adjective	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + adjective	37.5%	50.0%	40.0%
Total	Count	16	4	20	
	% within E.F: verb + adjective	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%	
	% within F.E: verb + adjective	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

The crosstab of the relationship between 'verb + adjective' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are presented in Table 5. The table indicates that in English-Persian translations 83.3% of translations were direct literal and 16.7% were indirect transposition. But in Persian-English translations, 62.5% used direct literal strategy for translation and 37.5% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 6.
CROSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'PREPOSITIONS OF TIME, PLACE, AND MANNER' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: preposition TPM * F.E: preposition PTM Crosstabulation				
			F.E: preposition PTM	Total
			Direct Literal	
E.F: Preposition TPM	Direct Literal	Count	20	20
		% within E.F: Preposition TPM	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: preposition PTM	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	20	20
		% within E.E: Preposition TPM	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: preposition PTM	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between 'prepositions of time, place, and manner' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are displayed in Table 6. The table shows that 100% of translations were direct literal in both English-Persian translations and Persian-English translations.

TABLE 7.
CROSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'VERB + EXPRESSIONS WITH PREP' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: verb + expressions with prep * F.E: verb + expressions with prep Crosstabulation				
			F.E: verb + expressions with prep	Total
			Direct Literal	
E.F: verb + expressions with prep	Direct Literal	Count	10	10
		% within E.F: verb + expressions with prep	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + expressions with prep	50.0%	50.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	10	10
		% within E.F: verb + expressions with prep	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	20	20
		% within E.F: verb + expressions with prep	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + expressions with prep	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between 'verb + expressions with prep' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are presented in Table 7. The table reveals that in English-Persian translations 100% of translations were direct literal. But in Persian-English translations, 50% used direct literal strategy for translation and the other 50% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 8.
CROSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'VERB + ADVERB' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: verb + adverb * F.E: verb + adverb Crosstabulation				
			F.E: verb + adverb	Total
			Direct Literal	
E.F: verb + adverb	Direct Literal	Count	20	20
		% within E.F: verb + adverb	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + adverb	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	20	20
		% within E.F: verb + adverb	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: verb + adverb	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between 'verb + adverb' collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations in Table 8. As the table displays, 100% of translations were direct literal in both English-Persian translations and Persian-English translations.

TABLE 9.
CROSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN 'ADVERB + ADJECTIVE' COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: adverb + adjective * F.E: adverb + adjective Crosstabulation				
			F.E: adverb + adjective	Total
			Direct Literal	
E.F: adverb + adjective	Direct Literal	Count	18	18
		% within E.F: adverb + adjective	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: adverb + adjective	90.0%	90.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	2	2
		% within E.F: adverb + adjective	100.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	20	20
		% within E.F: adverb + adjective	100.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: adverb + adjective	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between ‘adverb + adjective’ collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are displayed in Table 9. The table illustrates that in English-Persian translations 100% of translations were direct literal but in Persian-English translations 90% used direct literal strategy for translation and 10% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 10.
CROSSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ‘ADJECTIVE + PREPOSITION’ COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: adjective + preposition * F.E: adjective + preposition Crosstabulation					
			F.E: adjective + preposition		Total
			Direct Literal	Indirect Transposition	
E.F: adjective + preposition	Direct Literal	Count	10	2	12
		% within E.F: adjective + preposition	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	8	0	8
		% within E.F: adjective + preposition	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: adjective + preposition	55.6%	100.0%	60.0%
Total	Direct Literal	Count	18	2	20
		% within E.F: adjective + preposition	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	2	0	2
		% within E.F: adjective + preposition	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%
		% within F.E: adjective + preposition	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between ‘adjective + preposition’ collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are exhibited in Table 10. The table reveals that in English-Persian translations 83.3% of translations were direct literal and 16.7% were indirect transposition. But in Persian-English translations, 55.6% used direct literal strategy for translation and 44.4% used indirect transposition.

TABLE 11.
CROSSTABS OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ‘ADJECTIVE + NOUN’ COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: adjective + noun * F.E: adjective + noun Crosstabulation					
			F.E: adjective + noun		Total
			Direct Calque	Direct Literal	
E.F: adjective + noun	Direct Literal	Count	2	18	20
		% within E.F: adjective + noun	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: adjective + noun	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Direct Literal	Count	2	18	20
		% within E.F: adjective + noun	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: adjective + noun	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 11 illustrated the crosstab of the relationship between ‘adjective + noun’ collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations. The table reveals that in English-Persian translations 90% of translations were direct literal and 10% used direct calque strategy for translation. But in Persian-English translations, 100% used direct literal strategy for translation.

TABLE 12.
CROSSTAB OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ‘NOUN + NOUN’ COLLOCATIONS IN THE TWO TRANSLATIONS

E.F: noun + noun * F.E: noun + noun Crosstabulation					
			F.E: noun + noun		Total
			Direct Literal	Indirect Transposition	
E.F: noun + noun	Direct Literal	Count	14	4	18
		% within E.F: noun + noun	77.8%	22.2%	100.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	2	0	2
		% within E.F: noun + noun	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within F.E: noun + noun	87.5%	100.0%	90.0%
Total	Direct Literal	Count	16	4	20
		% within E.F: noun + noun	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Indirect Transposition	Count	4	0	4
		% within E.F: noun + noun	20.0%	0.0%	10.0%
		% within F.E: noun + noun	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The crosstab of the relationship between ‘noun + noun’ collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations are presented in Table 12. The table discloses that in English-Persian translations 77.8% of translations were direct literal and 22.2% were indirect transposition. But in Persian-English translations, 87.5% used direct literal strategy for translation and 12.5% used indirect transposition.

Multiple Frequencies

Multiple Frequencies of Strategies Used in Translation of Collocation

TABLE 13.
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE CORRECT AND INCORRECT TRANSLATIONS OF COLLOCATIONS
IN ENGLISH-PERSIAN AND PERSIAN-ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

English to Farsi Frequencies				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
English to Farsi	RIGHT	878	73.2%	4390.0%
	WRONG	178	14.8%	890.0%
	No Answer	144	12.0%	720.0%
Total		1200	100.0%	6000.0%
Farsi to English	RIGHT	776	64.7%	3880.0%
	WRONG	350	29.2%	1750.0%
	No Answer	74	6.2%	370.0%
Total		1200	100.0%	6000.0%

The frequency distribution of the correct and incorrect (acceptable or unacceptable) translations of collocations in English-Persian and Persian-English translations is depicted in Table 13. As the table elucidates, in English-Persian translations, 73.2% of the translations were correct, 14.8% were incorrect and 12% were not able to answer. In Persian-English translations, however, 64.7% of the translations were correct, 29.2 were incorrect and 6.2% were not able to answer.

TABLE 14.
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE STRATEGIES USED ACCORDING TO ACCURACY OF TRANSLATIONS

English to Farsi Frequencies				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
English to Farsi	Borrowing Correct	4	0.4%	20.0%
	Calque Correct	22	2.1%	110.0%
	Calque Incorrect	2	0.2%	10.0%
	Literal Correct	572	54.5%	2870.0%
	Literal Incorrect	138	13.1%	690.0%
	Transposition Correct	264	25.0%	1320.0%
	Transposition Incorrect	36	3.4%	180.0%
	Modulation Correct	12	1.1%	60.0%
	Modulation Incorrect	2	0.2%	10.0%
	No Answer	46	3.8%	230.0%
Total		1200	100.0%	5270.0%

Frequency distribution of the strategies used in English-Persian translations of collocations according to accuracy of translations based on each strategy is presented in Table 14. As the table indicates, the most frequently used strategy used for translation of collocations from English into Persian was literal translation which is a type of direct translation and was used in 67.6% (54.5% correct and 13.1% incorrect). The second most frequently used strategy was transposition which is an indirect translation and was used in 28.4% (25% correct and 3.4% incorrect). The least frequently used strategies, however, was borrowing which is a direct strategy and was used in 0.4% of the cases.

TABLE 15.
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE STRATEGIES USED IN TRANSLATIONS OF COLLOCATIONS
ACCORDING TO ACCURACY OF TRANSLATION

Farsi to English Frequencies				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Farsi to English	Borrowing Correct	12	1.1%	60.0%
	Calque Correct	2	0.2%	10.0%
	Calque Incorrect	8	0.7%	40.0%
	Literal Correct	622	55.3%	3110.0%
	Literal Incorrect	322	28.6%	1610.0%
	Transposition Correct	124	11.0%	620.0%
	Transposition Incorrect	10	0.9%	50.0%
	Modulation Correct	14	1.2%	70.0%
	Modulation Incorrect	6	0.5%	30.0%
	Adaptation Incorrect	4	0.4%	20.0%
	No Answer	66	3.0%	330.0%
Total		1200	100.0%	5620.0%

Frequency of the strategies used in Persian-English translations of collocations together with frequencies of accuracy of translation based on each strategy is appeared in Table 15. As the table reveals, the most frequently used strategy used for translation of collocations from Persian into English was literal translation which is a type of direct translation and was used in 83.9% (55.3% correct and 28.6% incorrect). The second most frequently used strategy was

transposition which is an indirect translation and was used in 11.9% (11% correct and 0.9% incorrect). The least frequently used strategies, however, were adaptation which is a direct strategy and was used in 0.4% cases; and calque which is a direct strategy and was used in 1.3% cases in all.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was aimed at investigating patterns of reciprocal English-Persian translation of collocations by Iranian EFL learners. In other words, this study aimed at investigating the EFL learners' problems of using collocations expressions through examining reciprocal translations of English-Persian and Persian-English.

The first research question inquired the extent to which collocational differences between Farsi and English bring about errors in the production of Iranian EFL learners. The results of Paired Samples T-Test showed that there were meaningful differences between the two translations in 'verb + noun'; 'prepositions of time, place and manner; 'verb + adverb'; and 'adjective + preposition' correlations. Also, based on the mean differences showed these four types of collocations were most problematic for the students. According to the results, the most frequently used strategy used for translation of collocations from English into Persian was literal translation. The most frequently used strategy used for translation of collocations from Persian into English was literal translation. These findings show that the collocational differences between Farsi and English bring about most of errors in the production of Iranian EFL learners in terms of both collocations and vowels; since in most of the cases the students were not able to find a proper equivalent and instead used literal, I.e. word for word strategy for translation of collocations.

The second research question asked about the most problematic types of collocations for Iranian EFL learners. According to the Paired Samples T-Test, the most problematic types of collocations were 'verb + noun'; 'prepositions of time, place and manner; 'verb + adverb'; and 'adjective + preposition' correlations. In other words, most of the problems of the students occurred in the translation of these expressions which might be explained by the differences in the collocation patterns of English and Persian. For example most of the students have used 'take' with Photocopy, since in Persian they 'take' copy, while in English the verb 'make' is used with the 'noun' photocopy. As another example, most students translated this expression into English as preposition 'call me *with* my first name', while the correct English use is 'by' rather than 'with'. In addition, a lot of students have translated the Persian expression into English as 'I proud to you' or 'I pride to you', since in Persian the word /*eftekhar*/ (honor or pride) is a noun rather than an adjective, so the differences in the structural patterns of the two languages had made such errors.

The third research question queried the percent of collocational errors that are directly caused by interference of mother tongue. The results of crosstabs showed in English-Persian translations, in a large number of the cases direct literal translation was used and only in almost a little percent indirect transposition was used. In Persian to English translations, likewise, the most frequently used strategy was direct literal translation. In addition, the results showed that in English-Persian translations, more than 70 percent of the translations were acceptable. In Persian-English translations, however, almost 65% of the translations were acceptable. These findings show that in almost 80% or more of the cases literal translation was used for collocations both in English-Persian and also in Persian-English translations. Thus, it can be decided that a great deal of the errors in production of Iranian EFL learners result from interference of their mother tongue.

The fourth research question inquired about the strategies applied in translating collocations according to Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) model of translation. The results showed that all strategies, including three direct strategies of borrowing, calque and literal translation, and also three indirect strategies of transposition, modulation and adaptation introduced in the model were found in the translations of idioms; however, the most frequently used strategy was literal translation. Transposition was the second most frequently strategy with a vast difference with literal translation; and the other cases were used very infrequently.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of previous studies by Wolter (2006) and Rustipa (2011) who emphasize that studying errors of EFL learners are useful to gain ideas about what they learn and diagnose the places of their weaknesses. Nesselhauf (2003) asserted that "an L1-based approach to the teaching of collocations seems highly desirable" (p. 240). Also these findings confirm previous studies by Nesselhauf (2003), Sadeghi (2009), Xiao & McEnery, 2006, who emphasize the importance of teaching and learning collocations in language learning and particularly focus on production of collocation. According to Nesselhauf (2003), comprehension of collocations does not normally produce problems for learners so that identifying learners' problems "must mean analyzing their production of collocation" (p. 224).

According to Sadeghi (2009), differences in collocational patterns between two languages may lead to difficulties in the use of L2 collocations and the amount of L1 interference in this process. The major findings are that collocational differences between the first and the target languages produce challenges for language learners (Wolter, 2006). Also, the findings of this study are more or less in line with the findings of previous research by Sadeghi and Panahifar (2012) who believe that certain collocation patterns such as preposition-based and verb-preposition combinations are more problematic for language learners.

Another point is that, as Xiao and McEnery (2006) correctly highlighted, "there is a pressing need for the cross-linguistic study of collocation to be pursued by researchers" (p. 127). The language learning research community can subsidize by first identifying word combinations in the L2 (using findings from corpus linguistics) that are sufficiently

predictable or statistically significant, and then by drawing on contrastive analysis, among other resources, to investigate various avenues by which the teaching and learning of collocations may be accomplished in the most cost-effective, convenient, and productive manner (Sadeghi, 2009).

The findings of the current study suggested that educational approaches to teaching collocations in Iran call for extra attention. Also, the effects of proficiency in using collocation need specific attention. As a substitute to teaching vocabulary distinctly and out of texts, it is better to employ and follow a contextualized and focused method in teaching collocations. Teachers can increase the students' awareness about collocations and co-occurrence of words through formal instruction. The findings of this study showed that despite having good knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, most Iranian EFL learners seem to have problems with collocations particularly in terms of productive skills. This inadequacy seems to be primarily related to the insufficient emphasis put on collocational patterns by teachers and also in the teaching material.

The study indicated that learners should be aware of the usefulness of using collocations in their communication activities since it is expected from learners of a foreign language to try to be like a native speaker. Furthermore, EFL learners' failure in the correct production of collocations, to some extent, stems from the language teachers' tendency to teach words through definition rather than as parts of their collocational patterns. As to the role of learners' L1 in the production of English collocations, the results revealed that the participants were adversely affected by their mother language in the use of collocations, so that the majority of the collocational errors were due to the negative transfer from the first language. Hence, a direct implication is a need for the selection and teaching of collocations with reference to learners' first language. The high frequency of literal translation of collocations as a strategy in translation shows the lack of knowledge and also lack of endeavor from the side of all education system, not only teachers and learners to enhance the level of competence in this regard.

This study has also several suggestions for further research. First, research should be done on different aspects of collocations to further examine the mechanism of learners' acquisition of collocations. Therefore, more empirical research on other types of collocations and word combinations, e.g. grammatical collocation and all other combinations of collocations, needs to be conducted to get a comprehensive standpoint on collocation acquisition by Iranian EFL learners at different proficiency levels. It is hoped that the visions presented in this study may motivate more research into learners' collocational productive performance, which is of crucial importance to L2 learners' overall language performance and which is shown to be challenging for the participants.

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