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Towards a Proper Evaluation of Al-Hafiz Arabic Collocations Dictionary: A Corpus-based Study*

Ali Al-Halawani, Hesham Khadawardi and Mohamed Elaskary**

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<국문초록>

알-하피즈 아랍어 연어 사전에 관한 적절한 평가 : 코퍼스를 기반으로 한 연구

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언어(collocation) 학습은 외국인 학생과 외국어 학습자에게 있어 매우 중요하다. 원어민은 배우지 않아도 자연스럽게 능숙하게 언어를 구사할 수 있지만, 외국인 학습자가 원어민 수준으로 외국어 실력을 향상시키기 위해서는 언어를 학습해야만 한다. 서구 언어학자들과 사전편찬자들이 언어에 대해 관심을 갖기 시작한 것은 1933 년부터이다. 최초의 영어 연어 사전(the BBI)이 1986 년에 출간된 반면 아랍어 연어 사전은 2004 년에 처음 발간되었다.

이 논문은 최초의 아랍어 연어 사전인 Al-Hafiz 사전에 대해 살펴보고자 한다. 연어 사전은 번역가, 작가 그리고 외국어 학습자에게 없어서는 안될 필수품이다. 연어 번역에 나타나는 오역의 원인 중 하나는 번역가가 언어에 대한 자세한 설명과 예문이 없는 일반 이중언어 사전을 참고하기 때문이다. 이 논문은 언어학적 방법론과 학문적 비평을 기반으로 한 현대 기술의 도입으로 아랍어-영어와 영어-아랍어 범용사전뿐만 아니라 특수사전 분야에서도 선도적 역할을 담당하게 하기 위함을 목적으로 한다. 이 점과 관련하여, 이 논문에서는 Al-Hafiz 사전의 장점과 단점에 대해 살펴볼 것이다.

본 연구의 목적은 Al-Hafiz 사전에서 발견되는 오류들을 지적하기 보다는 오류의 수정을 통해 아랍어 사전편찬자들이 이런 점들을 활용하여 같은 실수를 반복하지 않게 하는 데 있다. 사전편찬자가 사전 편찬에 좀더 심혈을 기울여서, 일반독자들조차 쉽게 발견할 수 있는 오류들을 범하지 않았더라면 Al-Hafiz 사전은 더 잘 만들어졌을 것이다. 이에 본 논문은 연어 사전을 편찬하는 데 있어 코포라(corpora)나 소프트웨어(software) 같은 현대기술의 활용을 제안한다.

주제어: 아랍어 방언, 아랍어 번역, 경계 연어, 연어, 구어체 아랍어, 코퍼스, 사전 편찬, 관용구, 어휘적 연어, 사전학, 기계 번역, 현대 표준 아랍어, 속담, 개방 연어, 제약적 연어, 짧은 연어, 동의어, 번역

Abstract

Collocation has become one of the most controversial linguistic terms of today. As evidence to this, linguists did not agree up till today as to its exact definition, types or patterns. This may explain, to some extent, the scarcity of collocational dictionaries and their late appearance regardless of the huge number of collocations that can be found in general (i.e. non-collocational) lexicons and dictionaries of nearly all languages. Added to this is the difficulty of compiling a collocational dictionary unless modern technological tools such as computers, huge corpora, and text analysis software are used. This is true as the first English collocational dictionary appeared in 1986, the BBI, while in Arabic, the first one to appear was Hafiz in 2004 which is the main focus of this paper. This is exactly the reason behind our interest in this dictionary as it is already the first of its kind in Arabic as is mentioned by its author on its front cover. Collocation dictionaries are indispensable tools for the translator, writer and learner of any foreign language. One of the reasons behind the errors translators make in rendering collocations from one language to another is that they consult general-purpose bilingual dictionaries that do not provide the translators with detailed explanation or examples of collocations. Hence, the significance of this paper as it represents an attempt towards introducing a modern-technology-based linguistic methodological and academic criticism for evaluating such a great effort aiming at elevating it to the best shape it can be and to help it become a model to be emulated in the field of compiling specialized as well as non-specialized Arabic/English and English/Arabic dictionaries.

As the dictionary's author has committed – according to Al-Halawani – a number of methodological, editorial and translational mistakes; a matter which makes it incumbent upon specialists to look into its content to clarify such mistakes and attempt to amend them whenever possible.

Significance of the dictionary

It has become known that the concept of *Lexical Collocation* is largely controversial. This can be attested to by the fact that until now it is difficult to even state an all-inclusive definition of the phenomenon, or come to a consensus on its different types and patterns. Beside other issues, the problems involving lexical collocations are paramount in a very specific field, namely the translation from Arabic into English and *vice versa*. The basic problem in the process of translation lies in attempting to find a word in one language that perfectly matches another in another language. This, however, presupposes that the two languages in question are perfectly typical in terms of categorization, social and cultural backgrounds, figuration and linguistic usage, imagination, conceptualization, and so on. Nevertheless, this is not and can never be attained, as deemed by Umar (1998: 251–256). The disagreement among linguists regarding the definition, types and patterns of collocations is the reason behind the scarcity of collocational dictionaries and their late appearance among the works of different language aids, regardless of the fact that a huge number of collocations can be found in general (i.e. non-collocational) lexicons and dictionaries (Al-Wadarni 2006: 191). Added to this is the difficulty of compiling any collocational dictionary without adopting the recent methods of

dictionary compilation, such as the availability of large corpora as well as adequate, updated text analysis software; something which is apparent from the fact that the first English collocational dictionary appeared in 1986,¹ while the first Arabic one appeared in 2004.

As for the significance of collocational dictionaries for the translator, Emery (1987: 3-4) noted, "... neither the Arabic translator working into English nor the English translator working into Arabic is particularly well-served by the available monolingual or bilingual dictionaries in their search for collocational equivalence." This is due to the fact that only consulting a traditional (i.e. non-collocational) dictionary, it is 'near to impossible' to locate the correct translation of such 'pre-fabricated' expressions.² Though existing phraseological dictionaries contain a bulk of lexical collocations, in no way are they sufficiently exhaustive or all-embracing.

As for the existence of collocations and the ways of handling them in modern Arabic dictionaries, it is noticeable that bilingual dictionaries of MSA, such as Wehr's (1979, 1985), do not contain enough collocational information to support learners and translators as far as Arabic is concerned. According to Emery (1987), up-to-date monolingual dictionaries of Arabic simply do not exist. Here, a remark is needed to update such a statement, because recently the ALECSO Basic Dictionary appeared (Al-Kasimi et al. 1989). However, the amount of collocations it has is rather limited.³

¹ In reference to *The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English*.

² This term is taken from Carter (1987: 59), where he stated, "language production consists of piecing together such ready-made 'pre-fabricated' units appropriate to a situation and that lexical acquisition may involve the learning of complete collocational chunks of language".

³ The ALECSO Basic Dictionary is an addition to the few modern Arabic dictionaries specialized in linguistics. Moreover, its edge over the former ones is its official

In addition, the Hafiz dictionary of Arabic collocations also recently appeared, focusing mainly on the phenomenon, as can be understood from its title. Unlike the ALECSO dictionary, the Hafiz dictionary is bilingual.

Sample of the study

To maintain impartiality and to avoid any intentional pinpointing of mistakes or selectivity, we randomly chose all the entries under ten (10) specific alphabetic letters. This does not mean that we started writing this paper without having a prior hypothesis that needed to be thoroughly examined to reveal all that could be ascertained concerning the dictionary at hand. This also does not mean that the remaining content of the dictionary is without mistakes. However, we confined ourselves, from the very beginning, to this specific sample and the particular method of research which we adopted. The 10 letters we chose are as follows: the letter *alif* (*a*) (1–886), the letter *baa'* (*b*) (887–1084), the letter *taa'* (*t*) (1085–1583), the letter *dhaal* (*dh*) (2708–2793), the letter *raa'* (*r*) (2794–3113), the letter *daad* (*d*) (4168–4298), the letter *`ain* (*`*) (4566–5033), the letter *faa'* (*f*) (5192–5405), the letter *qaaf* (*q*) (5406–5867), and the letter *laam* (*l*) (6035–6207).

character as it was issued by the ALECSO in 1989. It was prepared by the Arabization Coordination Bureau, in Rabat. It was undertaken under the supervision of a galaxy of able experts in Arabic from Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Tunisia. We have not assessed The ALECSO.

On the definition of collocation

Based on the varying conceptions of different linguists, *Lexical Collocation* has been defined in several ways.⁴ It has been emphasized by Heliel (1990: 129–139) that, "the content of any study on lexical collocation is fundamentally based on the definition of the term itself." However, and despite the fact that the dictionary at hand is a serious, pioneering work, the author did not provide any definition of the term "collocation". We believe that it was the author's duty to bring forward at least one of the definitions set by other linguists to help share a common understanding of the phenomenon with dictionary users. That is something that could have helped users appreciate the boundaries of the phenomenon as well as the differences between it and other linguistic phenomena.

On the types of collocations

Hafiz mentioned in his introduction to his dictionary that he has abided by three types of collocations: *Restricted*, *Bound*, and *Short Idioms*. Though he cited one example for each, he did not draw any dividing lines between them. In our opinion, giving an example or even more for each of the three types does not help dictionary users who – according to Hafiz – are learners of Arabic as a second language. This is because they would – even in the best case scenarios – have little

⁴ We reviewed a number of 16 definitions of the phenomenon and discussed them critically. These definitions were suggested by a number of Arab as well as non-Arab linguists. In addition, we suggested a new definition which is – in our opinion – more suitable as a description of the collocational phenomenon as far as the Arabic language is concerned.

knowledge on the issue of Arabic collocation and its different types. In fact, it is sometimes hard for some specialists to differentiate between *Restricted* and *Bound* collocations. In addition, we could not perceive the reason behind Hafiz's inclusion of idioms in his dictionary which bears the title "*Al-Hafiz Arabic Collocations Dictionary*"! We believe it is necessary to distinguish between collocations on the one hand, and idioms, which have been singled out in many lexicological works, on the other. Besides, Hafiz does not identify the type of idioms he included in his dictionary side by side with collocations. He does not even bother to explain and/or justify their description as *short idioms*, leaving the dictionary users to speculate on its meaning on their own: "Does this mean two-word idioms, as can be seen in the example he gives?" This is just a supposition that could have been enhanced or even refuted, if Hafiz had given any indication as to his own intention.

To appreciate the fact that linguists differ concerning the definition of *lexical collocation* as well as the dividing lines between it and other lexical combinations, we can see that they also differ over the types of collocations in Arabic. The first effort in this regard was exerted by Emery (1991), who divided lexical collocations into four types, as follows:

Open Collocations, which stand for combinations of two or more words co-occurring together, without any specific relation between them as both elements are freely recombinable with other words. For example, *intahat al-harb-u* انتهت الحرب (the war ended), and *bada'at al-harb-u* بدأت الحرب (the war started).

Restricted Collocations in which the combination is used in one of its regular, non-idiomatic meanings, following certain structural patterns, and restricted in its commutability with regards to its usage. For example, *ḥarb-un ḍariyah* حرب ضارية (fierce war) and *jarimat-un nakraa'* جريمة نكراء' (heinous/horrible crime).

Bound Collocations, which constitute a category that forms a bridge between collocations and idioms, as one of the two elements is uniquely selective of the other, for example, '*aṭraq-a 'ar-ra's* أطرق الرأس' (lowered one's head [i.e. listened attentively]).

Idioms whose constituent elements are opaque; this means that they are used in a 'specialized' sense, forming a single semantic unit together. For example, *wada`at 'al-ḥarb-u 'awzaraha* وضعت الحرب أوزارها (i.e. the war has ended) (Al-Halawani: 2009: 121). In this last example, one can see that the meaning of the idiom should be deduced from the whole expression, and not from the meanings of its separate constituents.

Classifications of collocations revisited

We have gone through a number of classifications suggested by Arab as well as Western linguists. This study showed that Emery (1991: 23: 56-65) -to start with - categorized idioms as a type of collocation, and that he differentiated between the *Restricted* and the *Bound* ones; a matter which is - in our opinion - unnecessary. This is due to the fact that drawing a

dividing line between these two types is, more often than not, difficult for many specialists, as mentioned earlier.

Ghazalah (1993: 7-44), however, used the term '*collocation*' loosely to refer to any fixed expression, including proverbs and idioms. Among the examples he gave as collocations are *a`dhar-a man andhar-a* أعذر من أنذر (lit. he who forewarns has excused himself), *al-sabr wa-sulwan* الصبر والسلوان (lit. patience and solace), and *awfa min al-kalb-i* أوفى من الكلب (lit. more faithful than a dog) which denotes the highest degree of faithfulness and loyalty.

It is remarkable that Abul `Azm (2006: 33-46) markedly differed from all the above linguists as he discarded both the *Open* and *Bound Collocations* that were advocated by Emery (1991: 23: 56-65). He also did not agree with Heliel (1997) over the necessity of drawing a line between *collocations* and *idioms* on the grounds that it is difficult – as he said – to differentiate between the two, especially upon compiling a dictionary.

According to Abul Azm (2006: 33-46), there are seven types of collocations; a matter which is not void of confusion and leads to some overlaps, as far as collocations and other linguistic phenomena are concerned. Surely, it would have been better if he had drawn a line between *collocations* and other phenomena. However, we find it necessary to differ with him over a number of issues:

First, his work is confusing as he did not clearly distinguish between collocations and other linguistic phenomena.

Second, he discarded *Open Collocations*, considering them to be sheer free combinations. However, we think they should be mentioned among the types of collocations as their existence would help differentiate between the above types of collocations.

Third, he disagreed with Heliel (1997) as he did not think it was a necessity to differentiate between *collocations* and *idioms* on the grounds that it is difficult to define these differences. However, this is a relative issue that differs from one lexicographer to another, and thus, cannot be generalized. Therefore, we think it is necessary to distinguish between *collocations* and *idioms* so as to avoid any confusion. In addition, *idioms* should be mentioned as being among the types of *collocations*, not on the ground that they represent one and the same linguistic phenomenon, but rather because their existence in such a way would expound the differences between the different types of collocations, which is not a matter that should be ignored (Al-Halawani: 2009: 121-122).

On the patterns of collocations⁵

In his introduction, Hafiz (2004: 13-14) divided Arabic collocations into twelve patterns. It seems that his sole interest was in the grammatical patterns of collocations, neglecting other patterns, such as the roles that can be played by semantics or lexicology in determining collocational patterns.

Collocations and other lexical combinations

We think that the compiler of the dictionary did not exert the due effort he should have done to differentiate between

⁵ In my doctoral dissertation I discussed a number of classifications of the patterns of collocations in Arabic as suggested by a number of linguists, such as Karim Zaki Husamuddin (1985), Shahir Al-Hassan (1982), Hasan Ghazalah (1993), Hoogland (1993), At-Tahir `Abdul Salam Hafiz (2004), `Abdul Ghani Abul `Azm (2006); (Al-Halawani, 2009: 122-128), Al-Halawani.

collocations and other lexical combinations such as *compounds* and *free combinations*. Noteworthily, Hafiz mentioned in his introduction that *free combinations* are not to be included in the dictionary as they are used freely and they can be used with other terms without any prior knowledge or special attention on the part of the language community.

It is very important to stipulate a dividing line between collocations and other lexical combinations, such as *proverbs*, *compounds* and *idioms*. The peculiar characteristics of each category should be precisely defined as this procedure is helpful when developing specialized collocational dictionaries, which are indispensable for learners of any foreign language and/or translators. In addition, *collocation* should be considered in its capacity as a lexical phenomenon so as to study the degrees of its collocability, the nature of its lexical entries, and its genuineness, in order to see which collocations are genuine and which are transferred or translated from other languages and, consequently, other cultural dimensions.

The type of Arabic used in the dictionary

Hafiz does not identify the type of Arabic he used in his dictionary, either in recording the entries or the examples he brought forth to clarify the meaning of a collocation. Surprisingly, any examination of the dictionary's content will reveal that the Arabic language used therein is a mixture of Classical Arabic, MSA, Colloquial as well as Hybrid Arabic.⁶ In this regard, Arabic can be divided into four types, as follows:

⁶ As preferably called by As-Sulaiti (2004: 35).

Classical Arabic (CA), which stands for the Arabic language which has maintained its unique structural and phonetical characteristics throughout the past centuries. This is the pure and intact Arabic that is free from any modern styles or terminologies. The use of this type of Arabic is now restricted to religious and historical issues, as it does not usually appear in other than ancient religious books. In addition, these days one hears it only from competent mosque orators and scholars of Islamic studies. Acquiring this variety of Arabic can only be achieved in a formal way at school. It was once the international language of scholastic research and religion due to the spread of Islam.

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the language commonly used in all forms of mass media and authorship. Compared to CA, MSA is much simpler in terms of the terminology and even the pronunciation applied. It is the universal language of the Arab world and a direct descendant of CA. It is used in formal speaking situations, such as sermons, lectures, news broadcasts, and speeches, and in all formal writings such as official correspondence, literature and newspapers. It is noteworthy to point out that there are no native speakers of MSA, as the vast majority of educated Arabs learn it through formal schooling. In addition, many Arabs, even without formal schooling in MSA, are able to understand it. It is uniform throughout the Arab world and serves as a *lingua franca* for speakers of various colloquial dialects.⁷

Colloquial Arabic (English for: *`amiyyah* عامية) refers to the regional varieties used to express the different needs of

⁷ *Lingua franca* stands for "a medium of communication between peoples of different languages". (Source: The American Heritage Dictionary)

people at home, work and on the street. All colloquial varieties are acquired by Arab children as their first language. In fact, numerous spoken dialects vary along geographical, socio-economic, and religious lines. Arabs from one region can usually understand dialects from other regions, depending on their geographical proximity and command of MSA. There are four major spoken dialect groups, each of which contains numerous sub-dialects:

Table (1.1): Showing the four major spoken dialect groups in the Arab world, adopted from the NVTC.⁸

<i>Maghrib</i>	Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania
Egypt	Sometimes Libya is assigned to this region
Levant	Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, parts of Iraq
Gulf	Saudi Arabic, Yemen, UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, parts of Iraq

Moreover, As-Sulaiti (2004: 35) stated that there is a fourth form of Arabic referred to in linguistics by the term '**Educated Spoken Arabic**' (ESA), *al-lughah al-wusta* اللغة الوسطى, or the hybrid form. This form of Arabic is characterized by deriving its features from both the standard and the colloquial varieties of Arabic. Generally, it is used by educated speakers and also by speakers from one region when communicating with people from other regions.

⁸ NVTC stands for the National Virtual Translation Center.

On the entries of the dictionary

A number of shortcomings can be observed concerning the dictionary's entries, which constitute its basic material and the origin it was built upon. We have examined a number of cases as to prove the significance and/or insignificance of a random selection of these entries using the Classical Arabic Corpus (CAC) developed by Eliwa (2004)⁹ and the Mutual Information measure (Church & Hanks: 1990).

In addition, we tested the accuracy and naturalness of the equivalent translations Hafiz gave to these Arabic collocations using two specialized English monolingual collocational dictionaries: *The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English* (1993), and *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English* (2003). This was done only to prove whether or not they are used, both in reality and naturally, by the English language speaking community. What follows is the outcome of the review of the randomly selected ten entries which were stated earlier:

First: Order of the dictionary's entries:

Hafiz ordered his dictionary in the following way:

Diagram (1.2): A random table showing the structure of the dictionary and the order of its entries.

الكلمة الرئيسية	المصاحبة	Meaning	معلومات أمثلة Information Example
عبأ	استئين	to fill in a questionnaire	—

⁹ For a detailed account of the CAC, the following studies can be consulted: Eliwa (2004), As-Sulaiti (2004), and Al-Halawani (2009).

كان الزوار على أدب جم	politeness	أدب	على
ضرب جرس الباب كثيرا	to ring the bell	جرس	ضرب
--	new year	السنة	رأس
عمل الأكابر والعلماء باحترام شديد	with due respect	احترام - كل احترام	بـ
تكلمت معه بأدب جم	politely	أدب	--
لم يتزوج بإرادته	willingly	إرادة	--
جلسوا يحرسون المكان بالتناوب	alternately	التناوب	--
نجح بجدارة	appropriately; deservedly	جدارة	--

Hafiz placed the collocational combination in its original order of appearance: the first word comes first and then the second, etc. He followed the same order in all the 7756 entries of the whole dictionary. Undeniably, this shows nothing but an unawareness of the peculiarity of the linguistic phenomenon at hand, especially in Arabic where the node¹⁰ is not specific to one particular position, be it the first, the second or even the last word in the collocation. In other words, the node in Arabic collocations does not necessarily come at the beginning of the collocational combination. The following table shows this clearly (Al-Halawani: 2009: 129–130):

Table (1.3): The node in Arabic collocations does not always come first.

Collocation		The Node	The Collocate
تقدير سليم	Perfect/proper/ assessment	تقدير	سليم
فغر فاه	opened one's mouth wide	فاه	فغر
منهوك القوى	exhausted	قوى	منهوك
لا يجدي نفعا	useless	نفع	لا
تحت رحمته	under one's mercy	رحمة	تحت

¹⁰ The basic component in a collocational combination is called the *Node*, while the other component is called the *Collocate*.

In reference to diagram (1.2), it is obvious that terms such as “*jaras*” (ring), “*istibyan*” (survey), and “*adab*” (politeness) placed by Hafiz in the collocates cell are nodes and not collocates. Examples of this are uncountable. Amazingly, the alphabetical letter “بـ” /b/ is placed in the Node cell and is followed by seventeen collocates – according to Hafiz – all of which only share the same letter as their prefix.¹¹ Ironically, he mentioned that Emery (1991), Benson (1986), and Hoogland (1993) stressed the necessity of ordering the collocational combination under the Node term in the Arabic-English dictionary. However, he did not seem to have exerted the necessary effort to apply this rule and, further, he admitted that as he deemed it much easier for the dictionary user to consult the collocation in this way. Notwithstanding, we believe that ordering the dictionary entries in accordance with the Node term helps to collect the dictionary's dispersed collocational combinations under one banner, that may facilitate the user's job, saving his/her time and effort.

Second: Inclusion of irrelevant free lexical combinations

Free combinations constitute a great part of the entries of the dictionary. These free combinations cannot, in any way, be counted to be among collocations as they enjoy a great amount of liberty in terms of being joined to each other and other Arabic terms, as was previously expounded under *Types of Collocations*. To cite only a few examples:

(87) *Ijabat-un Dhakiyyah* (إجابة ذكية) (smart answer), (233) *idman-un fazi`* (إدمان فظيع) (strong addiction), (219) *ada'-un fashil* (أداء فاشل) (failed performance), (461) *idafat-un jadhriyah* (إضافة جذرية) (genuine addition), (879) *ayyam-un jamilah/hulwah*

¹¹As in Hafiz (2004: 58), entries (887 – 903).

(أيام جميلة/حلوّة) (nice days), (1338) *tatwir-u al-mintaqah* (تطوير المنطقة) (developing the region, area), (1511) *tanaqud-un `ajib* (تناقض عجيب) (strange contradiction), (2728) *dhi'b-un dar* (ذئب ضار) (vicious wolf), (2762) *dhikrayat-un jamilah* (ذكريات جميلة) (nice memories), (2961) *rasam-a kharitah* (رسم خريطة) (to draw a map), (2963) *rasam-a khat* (رسم خط) (to draw a line), (2964) *rasam-a da'irah* (رسم دائرة) (to draw a circle).¹² These words and the like can collocate with these terms as well as with other terms in a natural way. This is well-known to native speakers of Arabic.

Third: Confusing nouns and collocations

Hafiz included in his dictionary huge numbers of nouns referring to humans, animals, plants or insects, and counted them as collocations; a matter which should be re-examined and reconsidered as proper names given to humans and/or other life-forms should not be regarded as being among the patterns of collocation. To cite only some examples:

(27) *ibn adam* (ابن آدم) (man), (28) *ibn awa* (ابن أوى) (jackal), (962) *barghuth al-bahr* (برغوث البحر) (shrimp), (4644) *`abbad ash-shams* (عباد الشمس) (sunflower), (4675) *`ijl-u al-bahr* (عجل البحر) (sea calf, seal), (2661-2667) *dudat al-ard/ad-dam/shariṭiyah/al-`alaq/al-qazz-al-harir/ma`awiyah/wahidah* (دودة الأرض/الدم/شريطية/العلق/القز-الحريز/معوية/وحيدة) (earthworm/bloodworm/tapeworm/leech/silkworm/intestinal worm/armed tapeworm), (2660) *dawwar ash-shams* (دوار الشمس) (sunflower), (5381) *ful sudani* (فول سوداني) (peanuts), (5382) *ful al-suya* (فول الصويا) (soybeans).

Fourth: Confusing between idioms and collocations

¹² The numbers in brackets refer to the number of each entry in the dictionary.

Hafiz usually identified the idiomatic expressions whenever they occurred in his dictionary. However, this is not without exception as he cited some idioms without providing any indication that they were idioms and not collocations. To cite some terms:

(4966) *`an bakrat-i abihim* (عن بكرة أبيهم) (all of them), (267) *arkha al-lail-u sudulah* (أرخی الليل سدوله) (to lower its curtains, veils), (2024) *ḥabl-u-llah-i al-matin* (حبل الله المتين) (the strong cord of God (the Quran)), (4578) *`ajil-an am ajil-an* (عاجلا أم آجلا) (sooner or later).

Fifth: Entries with structural errors

Hafiz mentioned in his dictionary that one objective of compiling his dictionary was to help language learners and translators learn Arabic eloquent structures and avoid the awkward, incorrect ones. He argued that this would help them render their own language as native-like as possible. However, he committed the very mistake he warned others to pay attention to. To cite only some examples, in this context:

(82) *athmar-a`an* (أثمر عن) (lit. to result in) whose illustrative example reads, *athmar-a al-mu'tamar-u`an nata'ij-a taiybat-an* (أثمر المؤتمر عن نتائج طيبة), as Ash-Shihab stated in his *Shifa'-ul Ghalil*, "The (Arabic) term *athmar-a* is known to be an intransitive verb as it is regularly used in the Qur'an, and no one has ever used it in the transitive form." Also, Al-Azhari said in his *At-Tahdhib*, "*yuthmir-u thamar-an fihi ḥumudah*" (يثمر ثمرا فيه حموضة) (i.e., it produces sour fruits); and many eloquent people use it in this way," (Az-Zubaidi: 2575). Consequently, no one makes this verb transitive by using the preposition *`an* (عن), as far as we know. Alternatively, the illustrative example should read, *athmar-a*

al-mu'tamar-u nata'ij-a taiybat-an (أثمر المؤتمر نتائج طيبة) (i.e., the conference yielded good results).

As for the entry number (4747), *`ard al-ha'it* (عرض الحائط) (sign of rejection), Hafiz mentioned only part of a famous idiomatic expression that reads, *darab-a bih-i `ard al-ha'it* (ضرب به عرض الحائط), indicating the action of rejecting something in an aggressive manner. He considered this fragment a lexical collocation but it would have been better if he had mentioned all idioms and then pinpointed that it is an idiomatic expression, explaining that it is used only as a figure of speech.

Sixth: Colloquial collocations

Hafiz seemed to have confused between Classical Arabic and Colloquial Arabic, especially in his illustrative examples. It is dangerous to include in a dictionary that is meant to assist – as stated by the compiler himself – learners of Arabic as well as translators a huge number of colloquial collocations or combinations, as these will not be able to withstand any linguistic scrutiny or examination. Examples include, but not limited to:

(3046) *rakib-a hawah-u* (ركب هواه) (to follow one's whim), the original Arabic collocation that can be traced back to the Qur'anic text being *it-taba`-a hawah-u* (اتبع هواه), (i.e., he followed his own whims).

(5710) *qata`-a tadhkarat-an* (قطع تذكرة) (purchased a ticket), the native Arabic expression reading, *ishtara* or *ibta`-a tadhkarat-an* (اشترى أو ابتاع تذكرة), meaning (he bought a ticket).

(6126) *la`ib-a dawr* (لعب دور) (to play a role), the original classical Arabic collocation reading, *add-aWmaras-aWqama bi dawr-in* (أدى/مارس/قام بدور), meaning (he played a role). Truly, the term *al-la`ib* is never mentioned in the Qur'an save to

indicate diversion and uselessness; a matter which does not, in any way, befit the example cited by Hafiz, which reads, *yal`ab-u al-wazir-u dawr-a al-wasit-i baina al-hukumat-i wal thuwwar* (يلعب الوزير دور الوسيط بين الحكومة والثوار), meaning (the minister plays the role of a mediator between the government and the revolutionaries). We believe that the term *la`ib-a* (لعب) in the expression, *la`ib-a dawr-an*, is a mere literal translation of some English expressions, such as *to play a role*, *to play cards*, and *to play music*. Moreover, it is better for the last one to be rendered into Arabic as *ya`zif-u al-musiqa*, and not **yal`ab-u al-musiqa*.

Entry number (6127), *la`ib-a qimar* (لعب قمار) (to gamble), can be expressed in Arabic using a single word, which is *qamar-a* (قامر), meaning (he gambled). Other examples include the entries (122) *ahbat-a ma`nawiyat* (أحبط معنويات) (to cause to feel down, disappoint), (241) *add-a salah* (أدى صلاة) (to pray, perform prayer), (5773) *qilat nawm* (قلة نوم) (sleeplessness), and (3106) *yal`ab-u riyadat-an badaniyat-an ma`-a asdiqa'ih-i* (يلعب رياضة بدنية مع أصدقائه) (physical exercise).

The examples of this error are hard to count; a matter which indicates the existence of a countless number of combinations that can be attributed to contemporary colloquial dialects, and not Classical Arabic or even MSA. There is no indication whether Hafiz intended this or not, as nothing is mentioned in the introduction in this regard. In principle, the introduction should be the manual or guide to the potential users of any dictionary, as is the habit of all marketable dictionaries nowadays.

Seventh: Unjustified repetition of entries

We noticed unnecessary repetition of a great number of entries; a matter which raises questions as the compiler

should have exerted some effort in reviewing and revising the content of his dictionary to make sure it was void of any repetition or redundancy. Just to cite some examples:

Entry number (111), *ijhad al-janin aw al-haml* (إجهاض الجنين أو الحمل) (abortion), with the definite article, and (114) *ajhad-a haml[an]* (أجهض حمل) (to terminate a pregnancy) without the definite article. The definite article /*al-*/ (meaning, *the*) should not be taken as an argument in favor of repeating the phrase here because it indicates – according to some linguists – a distinct pattern of collocation, as we disagree on this as the definite article /*al-*/ would not make any difference to the user of such dictionaries. Another example is (4255) *difat / difat al-nahr* (ضفة / ضفاف النهر) (river bank), and (4257) *difat al-nahr* (ضفة النهر) (river bank), as the only difference that can be identified here is the use of different examples to support the two distinct entries: *jalasat al-usrah `ala difat al-nahr* (جلست الأسرة على ضفة النهر) (the family sat by the river bank), and *jalasa `ala difat al-nahr yatahadathan* (جلسا على ضفة النهر يتحدثان) (they both sat by the river bank); without the two examples even differing concerning their use of the definite article /*al-*/ (i.e., *the*) and so being able to explain that it may render a distinct collocation, as deemed by some linguists, as a separate pattern of collocation, as explained earlier.

(893) *bil-jurm al-mashhud* (بالجرم المشهود) (in the act; red-handed), and (914) *bil-jurm al-mashhud* (بالجرم المشهود) (in the act; red-handed), as also the only difference came in the example provided to clarify the meaning of the lexical entry. In the first entry, the example reads, *masakuh bil-jurm al-mashhud* (مسكوه بالجرم المشهود) (he was caught in the act), while the second one reads, *qubida `alaih-i bil-jurm-i al-mashhud* (قبض عليه بالجرم المشهود); there is no difference between the two, in my viewpoint. Moreover, the compiler did not even notice

that the Classical Arabic term is *amsak-a* (أَمْسَكَ) and not *masak-a* (مَسَكَ), which is very colloquial.

(900) *bi-farigh al-sabr* (بِفَارِغِ الصَّبْرِ) (impatiently), and (1011) *bi-farigh al-sabr* (بِفَارِغِ الصَّبْرِ) (impatiently); as, like the other illustrations, the only difference is in the example. While the first example reads, *intazarah-u bi-farigh al-sabr* (انتظره بفارغ الصبر) (he waited for him impatiently), the second reads, *intazar-a qudumah-a bi-farigh al-sabr* (انتظر قدومها بفارغ الصبر) (he waited for her impatiently). Remarkably, Hafiz used the same equivalent to render both expressions into English, namely, *impatiently*.

(281) *azah-a al-sitar/niqab `an* (أَزَاحِ سِتَار/نِقَابٍ عَنْ) (to uncover s.th. (to make it known); to inaugurate), and (283) *azah-a niqab* (أَزَاحِ نِقَابٍ) (to uncover s.th. (to make it known)); as there is no difference between the two. Amazingly, the author seemed to have been unaware of such repetitions and, hence, did not even comment on any of them to clarify or even justify his approach.

Eighth: Spelling mistakes

The dictionary at hand is not free of spelling mistakes, as typos can be found in different locations throughout. Among these are: (681) **aman kadhibah* (أَمَانٌ كَاذِبَةٌ), as the author means, *amal-un kadhibah* (أَمَالٌ كَاذِبَةٌ) (false hopes). Among the mistakes that appear in the section stating the meaning include, (104) *to *hod discussions* instead of *to hold discussions*. Another example is (5211), where he writes *to shed *teats* instead of *to shed tears*. A third example can be found in the meaning of entry number (5775) in which he writes **freighted hearts* instead of *frightened hearts*.

On dictionary citations

Lexicographers consider citations as material, proofs or samples of the language discourse. Despite the fact that a dictionary citation is as important as the definition of the lexical entry itself, because it constitutes an essential integral part of the dictionary discourse, the former is rarely attended to.

It has become habitual to not consider a citation as being a basic part of the entry explanation. In addition, citations in monolingual Arabic dictionaries have witnessed some sort of "stability" throughout the ages. This is because lexicographers or dictionary compilers have usually copied these citations from past dictionaries into their own relatively new ones. The aim behind giving examples or quoting citations is to prove the existence of the lexical entry in ordinary linguistic usage, as citations are nothing but samples or illustrative aids linking the dictionary to language usage and putting language facts as well as patterns of its discourse before the lexicographer and the dictionary user.

As for the types of citations, these can be divided into *attributed citations* on the one hand, and *suggested citations* by the dictionary compiler on the other, but such a classification looks foggy, especially when it comes to putting it into practice, as the *suggested* or *proposed* citation can be adjusted in a way to make it seem common or regular. There are no distinctive degrees of generalization or specification as there are only "*possible*" as well as "*already used*" citations, as stated by Al-Kasimi (2004: 173).¹³

¹³ Emphasis added.

The question of attributing citations is regarded as a criterion for assessing the cited quotations in their capacity as genuine ones, because this attribution process is the only way to attest to their authenticity as well as appreciate their original meanings by resorting to their respective sources. The lexicographer, thus, has to either adopt the authentic attributed citations, or give preference to present and current citations without citing the references. To some, ignoring citation sources or references can be justified as, “the value of the citations does not emanate from realizing who said them, but from how the lexical item has been used” (An-Nagrawi: 2006: 91).

Based on the above, and by looking into the citations and examples provided by Hafiz in his dictionary, the following observations can be expounded:

First: Hafiz did not rely on *attributed citations*. Instead, he gives preference to current examples and citations without exerting any effort to refer them to their original sources.

Second: It is clear that in all the examples cited by Hafiz he did not depend on any particular corpus. Instead, he relied on his knowledge of Arabic as his mother tongue in formulating the examples, as he mentioned in his bibliography. Therefore, a host of problems arose; foremost among which are:

- Sometimes, the citation does not serve the lexical entry *per se*, for example in (37) the entry reads, “*ata fulan-an*” which is rendered into English as (to offer a bribe to so and so) but the example reads, “*lam yaqd lah-u hajatah-u illa ba`d-a an a`tah-u itawah*”, meaning (*he did not fulfill his request until he paid him a tribute*). Certainly, the difference between a bribe and a tribute is clear. While the former

means, "Something, such as money or a favor, being offered or given to a person in a position of trust to influence that person's views or conduct."¹⁴ The latter means, "Any payment exacted for protection."¹⁵

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- In entry (89), which reads "*ajazah-u fi `ilm al-qira'at*" (to grant scholarly degree in), the example does not specify whether he is licensed to observe a certain mode of recitation (*qira'ah*) or more than one mode, as the realm of *qira'at* is so wide that no one can encompass the whole of it. Instead, it is possible for one to be licensed in just one or a few number of *qira'at*, as it is not possible to master more than this.

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- In entry number (971), that reads "*barhan-a `ala*" (to show evidence on), the citation reads "*barhan-a al-katib `ala anah-u dali` fi al-lughah al-`arabiyah*". Here Hafiz obviously intended "*dali*", which means "one who has vast knowledge and a deep specialty of something", and not "*dali*", which stands for "someone who has a hand in or a connection with something (harmful or wrong)". A "*dali*" is an unjust or inequitable person, which is clear in An-Nabighah Adh-Dhubyani statement, apologetically addressing An-Nu`man saying,

*Atu`idu `abd-an lam yakhunk-a amanat-an,
Wa tatruk-u `abd-an zalim-an wa-hwa dali`-u?! (Az-Zubaidi:
5407)*

This can be rendered into English as:

*Do you threaten a servant who has never betrayed you,
And forgive another, who is unfair and has been caught red-handed?*

¹⁴ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Third: Hafiz did not cite any examples for a number of entries, such as the following: (88), (105), (125), (152), (171), (208), (209), (235), (259), (265), (269), (284), (287), (294), (309), (332), etc. However, it would have been better if he had provided examples that served these entries, as he did with the rest of the dictionary entries, or at least clarified the reason behind his abstention from providing examples, as such examples help block all possible trials to guess the meaning of the collocation and also personal interpretations.

Fourth: Some examples showed collocational conflicts. Such clashes or divergences either emanated from the components of the lexical entry itself, or from the citations used to clarify the meaning of the entry. Examples of the former type include entry number (1361) “*ta`alam-a `ala*”, as it is rendered into English as follows, (to learn [something]), while the citation or the example reads, “*ta`alam-a `ala qiyadat as-sayyarat mundh-u as-sighar*” (*literally*, He learned how to drive cars at a very early age). It is more accurate to say, “*ta`alam-a qiyadat as-sayyarat mundh-u as-sighar*”, as the verb “*ta`alam-a*” is a transitive one that needs no preposition to transit it to its object or predicate. This is, of course, unlike the saying, “*ta`alam-a `ala yad fulan*” (*meaning*, He was taught by so and so) as mentioned in another location in the dictionary. Another example is entry number (82), which reads “*athmar-a `an*”, whose English rendition reads (to result in); and whose example reads, “*athmar-a al-mu'tamar `an nata'ij taiybah*”, meaning (the conference yielded good results). The confusion between transitive and intransitive verbs is very clear here as well.

Fifth: Some examples are vague and, thus, need further clarification themselves; a matter which defeats the purpose of their existence in the dictionary as they are provided to display the meaning and to bring it to the fore. In addition, they are provided to attest to the authenticity and practicality of the lexical entry at hand in linguistic usage, as mentioned earlier. To cite some examples of this: (6054) “*`indama kana al-insan fi al-lawujud*” (*'literally meaning, When man was in the nonbeing*), (6055) “*darabaha fi halat al-lawa`r*” (*meaning, he hit her while she was in a case of unconsciousness, or possibly, he hit her while he was in a case of unconsciousness.*), and (6068) “*al-qalam lasiq bil-waraqah*” (*meaning, the pen is stuck to the paper*).

Meaning of collocations and their English equivalents

In the column identifying the meaning of the collocation, Hafiz provided English equivalents for the Arabic collocations his dictionary ¹⁶ encompasses to make them more comprehensible. Besides, Hafiz thought that most learners of Arabic can understand the English language, and can use it to communicate with others. Therefore, it was his intention to assist everyone! In our opinion, he succeeded to a great extent in doing this. However, in many instances, he failed to

¹⁶ However, Hafiz was sometimes inconsistent as he included some entries or collocations without accompanying them with any meanings or English equivalents, such as “*sahih-ul binyah*” (3994) and entry number (7525), without stating why he avoided writing their meanings.

provide the correct equivalent of the Arabic collocations. This can be referred to being due to two main reasons:

First: Literal translation:

Hafiz renders many of the dictionary entries into English in a literal way. By so doing, he distances these collocations from the intended meaning which is usually expressed in the target language by using any well-known collocation. Here, it is clear that the translator has to first look for a genuine equivalent collocation in the target language before writing down any translation. Examples of collocations translated literally into English are countless in the dictionary and the process needed to review them requires much time and effort; which is beyond the scope of this paper. The following examples are presented here just to highlight this problem:

He renders "*rawaḍ-a khail*" (3094) as (to train horses), while the most appropriate English equivalent should be (to tame horses).

He renders "*turuq ṣufiyah*" (4416) as (Sufi Paths), while the most accurate translation should be (Sufi Orders).

He renders "*ṭa`am thaqil*" (4433) – although its significance as a genuine Arabic collocation is highly doubted – into English as (heavy food); while it should be translated as (a heavy meal). However, it should be pointed out that the genuine Arabic collocation is "*wajbah dasimah*", and not \*"*ṭa`am thaqil*".

He renders "*katim ṣawt*" (5874) as (sound) ignoring the word "*katim*", while the correct translation should be (silencer or muffler).

He translates "*qut al-qulub*" (5816) as (food for the heart), while the correct rendition into English should read (provision for the heart); this is due to the fact that the phrase is

metaphorical and thus cannot be used according to its real or literal meaning.

He renders "*wailat al-harb*" (7728) as (catastrophes of war), while the accurate wording should read (the horrors of war).

Second: mother tongue interference:

Mother tongue interference or influence led Hafiz to produce mistranslated collocations in his dictionary; a matter which could have been avoided, especially since he aimed to produce an important reference in an unprecedented area. He should have been more careful in terms of suggesting these translations. Instances of mother tongue interference that affected the compiler of the dictionary and made him produce unaccepted literal translations are as follows:

"*qit`ah min al-`adhab*" (5732), as he rendered this as (part of torture), while a more accurate suggestion could be (a kind of torture). Besides, this fragment cannot be considered as a significant Arabic collocation. In fact, it is part of a Prophetic *hadith*¹⁷ that was narrated by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), in which he stated that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Traveling is a kind of torture as it prevents one from eating, drinking and sleeping properly. So, when one's needs are fulfilled, one should return quickly to one's family." (Al-Khara`iti: 403).¹⁸ He translated "*libas-un muhtashim*" (6082) as (respectable clothes), while it is more native-like to say (decent or modest clothes).

Noteworthy, Hafiz included a great number of lexical collocations which – according to his point of view – are related to the *Shari`ah* or Islamic domain, while some of them, in fact, are not. This means that some of the lexical

¹⁷ Tradition or Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

¹⁸ This *hadith* can be found in *Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad*, No. 2779.

combinations he provided in his dictionary are not genuine Arabic collocations. Instead, they are just common combinations that have never been proved to be significant collocations according to any valid methodology. Among these combinations is entry number (241) *adda aṣ-ṣalah* (to pray; perform prayer). The genuine Arabic collocation is, on the other hand, *aqam-a aṣ-ṣalah* (meaning, to perform prayer or *aṣ-ṣalah*) with all its derivatives. Ironically, Hafiz included this collocation – *aqam-a aṣ-ṣalah* – as entry number (579), along with the other insignificant one.¹⁹ In so doing, he mentioned two lexical combinations having nearly the same meaning; one of them being a genuine collocation while the other is not. The issue is not limited to this one example, as Hafiz used other cases, such as the entries “*kabat-a ghaiz[an]*” (to suppress one’s anger) (5886) and “*kazam-a ghaiz[an]*” (to control one’s anger, frustration) (5960), the latter being the only significant collocation, which is also derived from the Qur’an.

It is also surprising that Hafiz inserted “*ha’it al-mabka*” as an entry in (1974) and further gave it the equivalent ([the] Wailing Wall). As Muslims, we have no record of anything being called by this name. From our point of view, the real historic name given to that part of the Aqsa Mosque is “*Ha’it al-Buraq*” or al-Buraq Wall; the latter emphasizes the Islamic identity of al-Quds (Jerusalem), and, further, refutes any attempt towards changing the identity of such historical and religious places.

In addition, Hafiz translated the term “*futuḥat islamiyyah*” (5240) into “Islamic conquests”, a common mistaken translation, due to it being inaccurate as well as imprecise in rendering the denotations and connotations of the Arabic term

¹⁹ Linguists use the significance/insignificance dichotomy to describe collocations so as to show which are genuine and which are not.

al-fath al-islami into English. As an alternative, the term “liberation campaigns” can be proposed as it denotes the real essence of these past wars. The well-established aim behind those campaigns was to *liberate the oppressed peoples from the tyrannical grip of their rulers and enable them to choose for themselves the matter of their religion*, and to rid them of the influence of the rulers, which is indicated in the famous saying which states that people usually follow the very steps of their kings.

In the same vein, Hafiz included the term “*az-zakah*” under two separate entries, while the meaning of the collocation used with it is the same: “*aata az-zakah*” (55) and “*ada az-zakah*” (240). In addition, he translated the former as: (to give (Islamic due) alms); while the meaning of the second is written as: (to pay the zakat). Wouldn't it have been better for him to just use one translation to convey the meaning of both combinations, regardless of the fact that “*aata az-zakah*” is the significant Qur'anic collocation as the Qur'an uses nothing but “*al-ita'a*” with the term “*zakah*”, and never uses the Arabic term “*al-ada'a*” with any of its derivatives.

Finally, Hafiz mistakenly switched translations or equivalents of different entries, such as “*tah^hlil buraz*” (1215) (meaning, stool test) and “*tah^hlil bawl*” (1216) (meaning, urine test). He wrote “urine test” before the former and “stool test” before the latter; a mistake which does not need much effort to unfold. We think that such mistakes stem only from being inattentive when reviewing and revising the text material of the dictionary following its compilation.

Suggestions for developing the dictionary

- Corpora have to be used to distinguish between significant and non-significant collocations. The high frequency of collocational combinations is a vital factor that relies on statistics, rather than just intuition or lingual instinct. If the author had used a corpus-based methodology in the compilation of his dictionary, he would have avoided falling into the following traps:

- Including non-significant and colloquial Arabic collocations in his dictionary.
- Being unable to provide genuine English collocational equivalents. If he had used the available English monolingual dictionaries, he would have been able to provide genuine English collocational equivalents. But since he did not refer to such sources, he fell into the traps he himself had warned translators as well as learners of Arabic as a second language against in the introduction to his dictionary.
- Not making use of the concordances available to and through the corpora analyzing software packages, such as MonoConc and Wordsmith, etc. and not using any of the actual or genuine materials (i.e., corpora) as sources of examples or quotations for his dictionary entries to be provided with.

- Hafiz should re-examine his dictionary to see the dividing lines between collocations and other lexical combinations, which are usually confused by many. In so doing, he should endeavor to remove the non-collocational lexical combinations so as to make his dictionary a purely collocational one; this was his original intention and the point of distinction of his work as a specialized dictionary.

- Using a not-less-than 20,000,000 word corpus is necessary for such a collocational dictionary, as small size corpora are only suitable for checking some grammatical rules and the like. But when it comes to examining any lexical phenomenon, such as collocations, the issue is different as the re-occurrence frequency is the main criterion in judging the collocability of the collocation before running any advanced analyses that may reveal its significance or non-significance.

Conclusion

Though it is a great work, the present dictionary is not sufficient for translators and/or Arabic language learners. In fact, the Arabic repertoire lacks genuine, in-depth studies on the linguistic phenomenon of collocation as well as that of specialized collocational dictionaries. To amend this, efforts of both linguists and lexicographers must be joined together so as to give this phenomenon due attention. Individual efforts are noteworthy; however, they can only be taken as the nucleus of a much greater endeavor. Another fact became clear upon carrying out the research, namely, the difficulty of processing Arabic scripts via computers by analyzing the sample of this study using the corpus. When searching for a word in the corpus, we have to search for every possible form of the word. This is because, if the search was restricted to only the stem of a given word, an unnecessarily huge number of results would have emerged; this added to the complexities usually encountered when analyzing Arabic. Thus, we suggest that more advanced and sophisticated software packages should be developed by Arabic programmers and linguists to overcome such difficulties.

Finally, our Arabic linguistic legacy should be re-examined in light of contemporary linguistic research methodologies. It has to be reclassified in a way that may facilitate the work of researchers and learners of Arabic.

Key words: Arabic dialects, Arabic translation, bound collocations, collocations, colloquial Arabic, Corpora, dictionary compilation, idioms, lexical collocations, lexicography, machine translation, MSA, proverbs, open collocations, restricted collocations, short collocations, synonyms, translation.

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