



The Phenomenon of Shared Interference to Develop the Collective Competence of Students in Learning English

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Abstract

Currently, linguistics is actively developing the theory of collocation; however, some aspects of it—such as its definition, place in the language's lexical system, and standards for differentiating it from other lexicological units—remain controversial or have not received enough research. Scholars perform comparative and contrastive analysis on collocations that share a common theme or have similar "bases." In order to identify instances of allomorphy and isomorphism, this article compares collocations in English (n=559) that contain the essential components "fire," "water," "earth," and "air." The primary focus is on categorizing the different kinds of collocations' interlanguage equivalents. Collocations are translated using non-phraseological counterparts, such as free word combinations (complex or simple), one-word translation, or descriptive translation, if the results indicate that collocations have full and partial interlanguage equivalents. Practically speaking, educators who wish to help students learning a foreign language develop their collocational competence can utilize these conclusions as they provide insight into the phenomenon of collocational interference.

Keywords: Translation; English Language; Learning English.

1. Introduction

The analysis of English language collocations containing the components "air," "water," "earth," and "fire" is the focus of this article. According to Varlamova et al. (2016), the majority of linguists consider collocations to be mildly idiomatic phraseological units made up of a collocate, which is a lexical unit selected based on the base, and a base, which is a lexical unit chosen at the speaker's discretion. The central component of a collocation is always the base's meaning. The structure of a word combination is typically shared by collocations; for example, in the phrase "heavy rain," "rain" is the base and "heavy" is the collocator. In contemporary linguistics, the study of collocations and collocational competence is a relatively new field that is gaining interest from practitioners (such as computer linguists, lexicographers, phraseologists, and applied linguists) as well as theorists (lexicologists and phraseologists in particular). It is particularly interesting to compare and contrast collocations in different languages that have the same base or are connected by a common theme. The majority of these comparisons are binary, such as those involving English collocations (Arsentieva, 1999). Our research focuses on examining collocations in English (n=559) that contain the essential words "fire," "water," "earth," and "air," and comparing them to find instances of allomorphy and isomorphism. The attempt to identify different types of interlanguage counterparts among collocations defines the scientific novelty of the research.

2. Literature Review

While Gläser (1986) provides a thorough explanation of the composition and meaning of phraseological units, such as proverbs and idioms, she only devotes five pages to the topic of collocation. This might be the case because a collocation is thought to be primarily compositional, meaning that there are no difficulties in decoding a word combination because the meaning of the whole is equal to the sum of the meanings of its parts. However, from a typological

perspective, it must be recognized that collocation is a concept that encompasses different kinds of word combinations rather than a singular, homogenous phenomenon. Furthermore, the compositional view presents significant encoding challenges because it requires certainty about the company that a word typically keeps in order to sound natural. Thus, linguists tend to ignore or disagree on the concept of collocation. This idea is occasionally even used for other linguistic research, including meaning analysis, learner language, register and style analysis, and sociolects (Halliday & Hasan 1976; Stubbs 1995; Lipka 2002; Nesselhauf 2004). Collocation is a crucial component of any language and, as such, should be of utmost importance to learners, as evidenced by the strong interest in it as an analytical tool. Learners need to have more objective and intuitive access to collocations, particularly when they are aiming for native-like fluency. To ensure that learners are consistently reminded of their role, dictionaries should provide clear information about their status and relevance. This will help learners acquire collocational knowledge over time by teaching them vocabulary as items in collocations rather than as isolated words. This is the ultimate goal, but handling the collocation concept's elusiveness comes first. As a result, I'll attempt to create a more thorough classification based on essential and gradable criteria. A new approach to collocation will be based on a brief summary of the most significant classifications and definitions to date (Bartsch, 2004).

Firth's (1957) statement, "You shall know a word by the company it keeps," is, of course, the most well-known and fundamental definition of word co-occurrences. Most people agree that Firth is the originator of collocation. There were many more definitions, but they could all be broadly classified into four groups. The first category includes definitions that focus on text, such as Sinclair's (1991) definition of collocation, which is defined as "the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text." This may seem simple at first, but without text syntagmatic relations would not exist, making it the fundamental principle for identifying collocations and the foundation upon which all classifications must be built. According to Firth, collocation is an order of mutual expectancy, which is highlighted in other definitions (Palmer, 1968). A specific associative connection exists between two colloquial terms. Collocations are given even more weight by Aitchison (2003), who states that "word meaning is probably learned by noting the words which come alongside." Going one step further, Sinclair (1991) proposes the idiom principle of language, which maintains that we use semi-preconstructed phrases that we simultaneously choose when speaking or writing for a significant portion of text production. Here, he uses the word "of course," which is the result of a single decision rather than the combination of the words "of" and "course." When explaining this principle, the term "semi-" is used to allow for some variation in phrase preconstruction. A fully constructed item would be an expression like *of course*, but classical collocations like *hard + work/luck/facts* are less fixed. This exemplifies the gradable nature of syntagmatic lexical relations in language (Meunier & Granger, 1984).

3. Methodology

The investigation's methodology is built upon a complex of techniques, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, continuous sampling, computer searches using keywords, and contrastive-comparative analysis with synthesis elements. The dictionaries listed below were our source for collocations: 3. "Practical combinatorial dictionary of contemporary: words in their context" (Shakirova & Galiullina, 2019); 1. "Dictionary of combinability of words of the English language"; 2. Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English (Denisov & Morkovkin, 1983). We identified 231 English collocations and 559 collocations with the essential elements "fire," "water," "earth," and "air." Next, we attempted to find the interlanguage counterparts of collocations in three languages, adhering to and modifying Muñoz (2006)'s classification of phraseological relations. Three criteria were used to compare collocations in order to find interlanguage counterparts: The degree of connotation and signification equivalency or non-equivalency; the degree of equivalency or non-equivalency in collocation components; and the degree of equivalency or non-equivalency in collocation syntactic structure.

4. Results

Three categories of interlanguage counterparts were identified: non-phraseological equivalents, partial equivalents of two subtypes, and full equivalents. Let's illustrate each kind of interlanguage equivalent. Collocations that are fully equivalent in terms of their components, syntactic structure, meaning, and connotation are known as full equivalents. As an illustration:

Rus. hot air – Eng. hot air – Sp. hot air

Or: Rus. filter water – Eng. filter the water – Sp. filter the water

Our database analysis led us to the conclusion that there are two subtypes of partial equivalents: interlanguage counterparts, which have full equivalency in their components and syntactic structure but partial equivalence in their signification and connotation (Muñoz, 2006).

In contrast to moist, which is defined as "slightly wet, especially in a good way," damp is defined as "slightly wet, especially in a way that is not pleasant or comfortable" by Cambridge Dictionary Online. The word brackish means "salty, dirty, and unpleasant," so this equivalent is not the same in meaning or connotation. Interlanguage counterparts that differ in their constituent parts or/and syntactic structure but have full or partial equivalency in signification and connotation.

It's not strong fire, according to the English collocation with the same meaning. The adjective strong and the noun fire do not collocate; instead, one must use another collocator, such as fierce or intense. As a result, we can identify these interlanguage counterparts as partial equivalents and observe differences in the components. Since second language learners may experience language interference or transfer, we can assume that interlanguage counterparts with variations in their component structure may present difficulties (Davletbaeva et al., 2016).

A) A translation using a free word combination can be straightforward or intricate.

- When a basic free word combination is used for translation, it consists of two words, such as Sp. fuego interior – Rus. inner fire (lit. inner fire);
- A complex free word combination translation is one that uses three or more words; for example, English "gasp" for "air" becomes Russian "catch/gasp for air" (lit. "catch air with one's mouth").

The English collocation water spurts are something we want to focus on especially. This unit presents challenges for translators because there isn't an equivalent in the other language. Compare the translations of two sentences using this collocation into different languages:

- a) Because of the high pressure, the spring water column can shoot up to 12 meters in the air. A column of water from a source can rise as high as 12 meters due to pressure. (lit. Pressure from the source can cause a column of water to rise up to 12 meters.
- b) This strange-looking head, whose glittering eyes guard the entrance gate, squirts water out of its mouth. This strange creature, shaped like a head with shiny, eerie eyes guarding the gate, splatters water from its mouth. (lit. This strange creature that resembles a head and is watching the gate with eerie, glittering eyes spits water out of its mouth) (Bialek, 2014).

When used with the noun water, the verb spurt has a unique meaning that reads, "to (cause to) flow out suddenly and with force, in a fast stream."

Example (a) uses a free word combination to translate the collocation "water rises," while Example (b) uses a free word combination "water splashes" to translate the same collocation "water splashes." Considering the original context's stylistics, both choices are suitable.

B) Since a word combination is compressed or squeezed into a single word in L2, one-word translation is comparable to compression.

For example:

Sp. air duct. air duct (lit. air-duct).

C) A description of the meaning in L2 appears in a descriptive translation.

For example:

Eng. choppy water - Rus. water having ripples or swells on its surface (lit. water having ripples or waves on its surface).

The frequency of various non-phraseological counterparts of collocations is as follows, based on our qualitative analysis:

- translation using a straightforward free word combination: 78%;
- translation using a combination of complicated free words – 13%;
- one word translation (compression) – 8 %;
- descriptive translation (explication) – 1%.

However, since our research material was limited, we cannot be certain that these are the only methods for translating non-equivalent collocations from L1 to L2.

4. Discussion

It is noteworthy to mention that there are a lot more partial equivalents than full equivalents. In addition to collocations with equivalents across languages, we came across collocations that were limited to a single dictionary. Other researchers had previously proposed their own categories for translating collocations from L1 into L2. As an illustration, Arkhipova (2017) proposed the following methods: Translations can be made in three ways: 1) using equivalent collocations; 2) translating a single word; and 3) using a free word combination. Mozol (2021) developed four translation strategies by contrasting Korean collocations with their equivalents. 1) Change the part of speech; 2) Translate a two-component collocation into a single word; 3) Change the lexical meaning of one collocation component; 4) Change the lexical meanings of all the collocation components. In her research on English-American ethnocultural collocations, Arkhipova (2017) proposed three methods for translating collocations: First translation; second translation by loan; and third translation by descriptive (a longer explanation of the meaning). Our database analysis revealed that non-phraseological counterparts—that is, free word combinations, one-word translation, or descriptive translation—are used to translate non-equivalent collocations.

5. Conclusion

The interlanguage counterparts of collocations containing the components "fire," "water," "earth," and "air" were categorized into two categories: non-phraseological counterparts and equivalent collocations (full and partial). A partial equivalency in signification or connotation or a difference in components and/or structure are two characteristics that define partial equivalents. The quantity of partial equivalents is much higher than the quantity of complete equivalents. We identified three non-phraseological translation strategies for collocations: one-word translation, descriptive translation, and translation using a free word combination, which is the most popular method. All things considered, there is a great deal of room for more research into the collocation phenomenon. Practically speaking, the conclusions are valuable because they can clarify the phenomenon of collocational interference and be applied by educators who wish to help students learning a foreign language improve their collocational competence.

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