Frequency of unacceptable collocations in English-Persian translations: A case study of Hemingway's *for whom the bell tolls*

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Abstract

Collocations are clusters of words that are acquired together and are subject to constraints in co-occurrence with their adjacent words. Inadequate knowledge of collocations emerges into the formation of unacceptable collocations from the viewpoint of native speakers. The present study was an endeavour to identify the most frequent types of unacceptable collocations in the Persian translated versions of Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls". This is the first time the Persian translation of this book is being analyzed. To this end, the four Persian translated versions of the aforementioned novel were investigated precisely. Moreover, all the unacceptable collocations were compiled and clustered into English patterns based on Benson's classification theory, in an aim to decode the groups of patterns which are most frequently leading to the bearing of unacceptable collocations in the translation of English texts to Persian. A detailed SPSS analysis was conducted and the findings including the frequency and percentage of each type of unacceptable collocations were reported. The most frequent types of unacceptable collocations spotted in the translated versions of the novel incorporated were as follows: 1. Adjective + Noun 23.3%, 2. Subject + Verb 11%, 3. Verb + Object 10.3% patterns. The research makes recommendations to researchers at the end of the study.

Keywords: Benson's Classification Theory, Collocations, Literary Translation;

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1. Introduction

Collocations have generated considerable research interest in the last decades. The issue of collocations has constantly been a realm of concern for translators, for the reason that collocations are demanding for non-native speakers to translate, predominantly due to their opaque nature and implausibility of being translated literally. In this regard, Hoey (2005) proposed that in comparison to native speakers, non-native speakers exhibit different attitudes towards collocations. Inadequate knowledge of collocations brings about vague and perplexing translated texts. However, the issue has sporadically been investigated in the translation of texts. Therefore, the current study sought to investigate the unacceptable collocations in the Persian translated versions of Hemingway's literary masterpiece to determine which English patterns are more frequently leading to unacceptable collocations in Persian translations.

Previous studies have generally approved the significance of collocation knowledge, on skills of the second language learners, in addition, on the quality of translated texts. The applied methods were almost the same: providing questionnaires based on different types of collocations, distributing among second language learners, and finally analyzing the achieved data. Findings generally indicated that the knowledge of second language learners and translators in collocations is not generally sufficient. Amongst mentioned studies, the present study is consistent with those of Karimkhanluie (2008) and Mollanazar (1990). Nevertheless, the number of participants in the current study were 184 students, which compared to Mollanazar's thesis with 150 participants and Karimkhanlui's thesis with 80 participants benefited more statistics. Furthermore, the other difference was about the corpus of the studies.

2. Literature review

Firth who is believed to be the 'father' of the term "collocation" describes collocations as a lexical phenomenon, autonomous of grammar. Meanwhile, Firth (1968) defines collocations of a given word as "statements of habitual or customary places of that word in collocational order but not in any other contextual order and emphatically not in any grammatical order" (p. 181). According to McCarten (2007), the term collocation generally refers to "the way in which two or more words are typically used together" (p. 5). Chang (2018) suggests that 'Acceptable' means the combinations were existing collocations and used in appropriate contexts. Beekman and Callow (1974) put forward the idea that if a sentence presents a combination of words which does not sound accurate to the addressee (audiences), this may perhaps be due to an unacceptable collocation.

On the other hand, Larson (1984) claims that arrangement of words will habitually vary from one language to another language and concludes that what is flawlessly correct in one language may bring about collocational clashes or unacceptable collocations in another language. In this regard, Zughoul and Abdul-Fattah (2003) assert that the Translation of collocations can pose complications since diverse languages have diverse patterns of collocation. As a result, some collocations may sound weird and be misinterpreted when translated (p. 79).

Benson et al. (2010) have discussed collocations and organized different types of collocations. According to Bensons' dictionary:

"In any language, certain words regularly combine with certain other words or grammatical constructions. These regular, semi-fixed combinations, or collocations, are dividable into two groups: grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocations are defined as the knowledge of the rules including, vocabulary and word-formation, pronunciation/spelling and sentence

structure. Grammatical collocations consist of a dominant word — noun, adjective/participle, verb — and a preposition or a grammatical construction. Lexical collocations, on the other hand, do not have a dominant word; they have structures such as the following: verb + noun, adjective + noun, noun + verb, noun + noun, adverb + adjective, adverb + verb. (p. xiii)"

The theoretical framework of the current study is based on Benson's theory; therefore, this theory will be elaborated clearly.

Benson et al. (2010) pointed out some steps that should be taken to identify lexical collocations. These steps are as follows: If there is a noun in the collocation, look under the noun; if there are two nouns, look under the second; if there is no noun, look under the adjective; if there is no noun or adjective, and look under the verb. (p. xiv)

Benson et al. (2010) designated eight types of grammatical collocations.

- They mentioned the first groups as collocations consist of 'noun + preposition' combinations. We do not normally include 'noun + of' combinations. Numerous English nouns can be accompanied with of, particularly to signify the concepts of 'direct object', 'subject', or 'possession'.
- The second group of collocations consists of nouns followed by to + infinitive.
- The third type is explained as follows: We include here nouns that can be followed by that clause. The Dictionary does not include nouns followed by relative clauses introduced by that, i.e. when that can be replaced by which …Nor does it include nouns that can be followed by a clause only when they are objects of a preposition. (p. xxi)
- The fourth group of collocations consists of "preposition + noun combinations. Examples are: by accident, in advance, to somebody's advantage, on somebody's advice, under somebody's aegis, in agony, on (the) alert, at anchor, etc." (p. xxi).
- The fifth group of collocations is "adjective + preposition combinations that occur in the predicate or as set-off attributives (verb fewer clauses): they were angry at everyone — angry at everyone, they stayed home — my friends, angry at everyone, stayed home". (p. xxi).
- The sixth group of collocations consists of established adjectives and a succeeding to + infinitive. Adjectives divide into two main constructions with infinitives.
- The seventh group is explained as follows: The seventh group adjectives (many of which are also in Group six) can be followed by 'that clause'. For instance, she was doubtful that she could pass the test; it was wonderful that they were able to play the piano. The current subjunctive follows a number of adjectives in formal English: It was vital that the doctor was there at that time; it is necessary that he is fast in his job.
- Finally, the last group of collocations "consists of nineteen English verb patterns" (p. xxiii).

A number of studies have dealt with the issue of collocational errors :

Dastmard and Gouhary (2016), investigating patterns of common English Persian translation of collocations by Iranian EFL learners, focused on the EFL learners' difficulties in applying collocations. Researcher-made questionnaires that involved 60 items including 10 collocation types translated into Persian were distributed among 20 intermediate and advanced level students to complete. The results indicated that there were meaningful differences between the two translations in 'verb + noun'; 'prepositions of time, place and manner; 'verb + adverb'; and 'adjective + preposition' correlations. In addition, the most frequently used strategy for the translation of collocations in English-Persian and in Persian-English translations was the literal translation. Findings showed that collocational differences between Persian and English are the main sources of errors in translations of Iranian EFL learners.

Hassan Abadi (2003), recommended that learning lexical collocations is easier than grammatical collocations; the performance of the participants is different in diverse subcategories of lexical collocations, and it is slightly in favor of Verb + Noun collocations. The order of diverse sub-categories of grammatical collocations are Participle + Adjective +Preposition, Verb + Preposition, Noun+ Preposition, and Preposition + Noun. A multiple-choice test of collocations was distributed among 55 English language learners to assess the awareness of Iranian EFL learners with lexical and grammatical collocations. Findings proved that there was a significant difference between the participant's awareness of different subcategories of lexical collocations. Among grammatical collocations, Participle + Adjective + Preposition was very easy to learn, and Preposition + Noun was the most challenging (56%).

Shahbaiki and Yousefi (2013) accomplished a comparative study of adjective-noun collocations in the famous novel Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte, and its two Persian translations to find the differences between English and Persian languages in translating collocations and to investigate different strategies applied in translating collocations according to Vinay and Darbelnet's model of translation. The achieved results inferred that: a) there are numerous differences between English and Persian in translating collocations. b) employed procedures in the study were equivalence, literal translation, modulation, and transposition. In particular, findings showed that the practice of equivalence could be operative in the translation of collocations, and could produce the same context as the original in the target language; In contrast, the literal translation is not a proper procedure and fails to produce a natural translation. Besides, occasionally, translators confront some problems in translating collocations; for instance, from time to time, they cannot make a distinction between collocations and ordinary words and translate them by the word-for-word method. Besides, because of the nature of any languages, which is very different from other languages, at times, a translator has to move away from the source text and change the form. Hence, a collocation of one type is translated into a collocation of another type or to a statement, that is not a collocation.

Karimkhanlooei (2008), considering collocational clashes in English-Persian translations, focused on the importance of linguistic issues in translation. She sought to find how and to what extent Source Language collocations affect Target Language collocations; in what areas of translation clashes between two languages of English and Persian occur; how SL affects the selection of collocations in TL; and whether non-native speakers of English language are aware of the collocations in their language. In order to answer these questions, six Persian translations of two English novels were investigated. The unacceptable collocations were compiled and applied as a groundwork in two multiple-choice tests and distributed among the 40 students of non-English language majors, and 40 students of English language. The most common clashes were as follows: non- observance of collocational possibilities in TL, mistranslation, and typesetting errors.

Mollanazar (1990) carried out a study on the problem of 'unacceptable collocations' in the Persian translations of English texts, to find their sources, and to suggest useful solutions to prevent the repetition of this problem. Seven Persian translations of two English novels were investigated, and 371 cases of unacceptable collocations were found. Questionnaires containing collocations out of these translations were distributed among 150 students. Findings showed that the rate of recurrence of unacceptable collocations depends on three factors' (1) the translator's knowledge of the SL and the TL, (2) the volume and amount of the text, and (3) the degree of difficulty of the text. In addition, it was concluded from the study that although the word-for-word method of translation is the main source of creating unacceptable collocations, there are other less important reasons including morpheme-for-morpheme translation, transliterating, and the importation of foreign words.

3. Methodology

2.1 Design of the Study

The present study was a descriptive analytical study in nature. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the investigation. The main objective of the study was to identify the frequently occurred unacceptable collocations in English-Persian translations. The research data was drawn from the four Persian translations of 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'.

2.2 Corpus

The corpus of the current study consisted of Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls and its four corresponding Persian translations:

1.   Ali Salimi, (1350, سلیمی), Sekeh Publication.
2.   Reza Marashi, (1352, مرعشی), Javid Publication
3.   Rahim Namvar, (1386, نامور), Neagh Publication
4.   Kiomars Parsai, (1394, پارسای), Kaj Publication

The criteria behind the selection of this book were; It is a literal masterpiece and a praiseworthy work; it has been originally written in English; it has numerous Persian translations toward the objective of comparison; it has not been assessed in previous translation studies. Accordingly, Hemingway was possibly one of the most eminent American writers and For Whom the Bell Tolls is one of the author's renowned and award winner novels.

2.3 Data Collection

At the start, the four translated versions were precisely studied and all the unacceptable collocations were detected and compiled. Then, the sentences and phrases congregated from the translated versions were compared with their alternative translations in other versions along with the original English equivalent.

2.4 Instrument

A list composed of 233 elicited sentences and phrases containing unacceptable collocations was organized. Afterward, they were reviewed by ten English and Persian language experts and the necessary modifications were made. The logic behind this point was that according to Lawsh Formula:

$$CVR = \frac{n_E - \frac{N}{2}}{\frac{N}{2}}$$

Item CVR must not be lower than 0.99 unless it is known not to be valid.

2.5 Data Analysis

The confirmed unacceptable collocations were classified according to Benson's classification theory. Data analysis, including frequency, relative frequency, and the percentage of occurrence of each type, using SPSS software version 21, were accomplished. Consequently, the most common types were acknowledged, and the results were tabulated and presented in tables and charts.

4. Results

Table 2 displays the frequency and percentage of patterns, which were most frequently leading to unacceptable collocations in order to take steps toward answering the research question.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of unacceptable collocations found in the four Persian translated versions of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" by four Iranian translators

| Type of collocations	Total (n)	Percent
Adjective + Adverb	2	1.4
Adjective + Noun	34	23.3
Adjective + Noun phrase	3	2.1
Adjective + Prepositional phrases	2	1.4
Determiner + Noun phrase	5	3.4
Noun + Noun	11	7.5
Noun + of + Noun	13	8.9
Noun phrase	4	2.7
Preposition + Noun	3	2.1
Preposition + Noun phrase	5	3.4
Subject + Verb	16	11.0
Verb + Adjective	2	1.4
Verb + Adverb	8	5.5
Verb + Indirect object	7	4.8
Verb + Noun	5	3.4
Verb + Object	15	10.3
Verb phrase	2	1.4
Verb + Prepositional phrase	4	2.7
Grammatical	5	3.4
Total	**146**	**100**
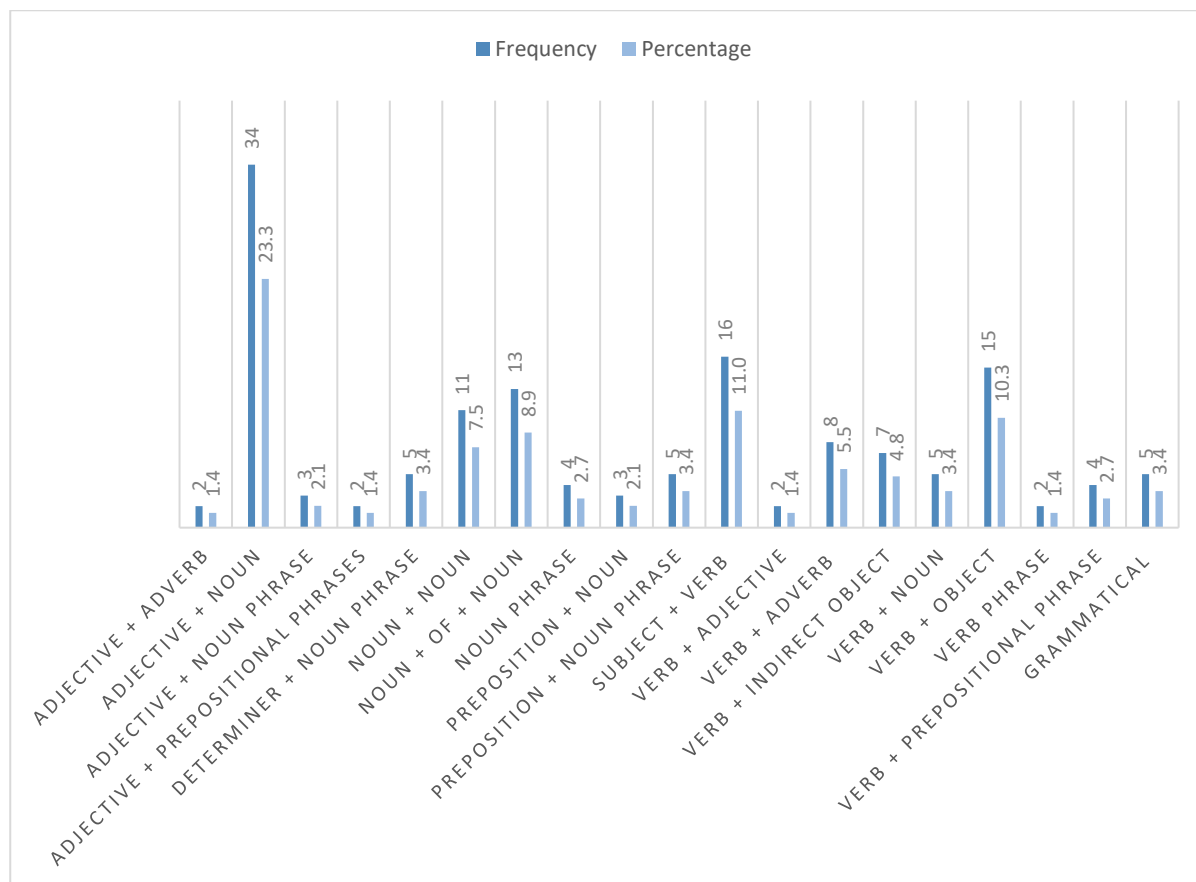
Figure 2: Bar chart of distribution of unacceptable collocation types found in the Persian translated versions of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" by Four translators

Regarding the collocation-types, the most common unacceptable collocations found in the current study, as shown in Table 2, were as follows:

Adjective + Noun (34) 23.3%

Subject + Verb (16) 11%

Verb + Object (15) 10.3%

Noun + of + Noun (13) 8.9%

Noun + Noun (11) 7.5%

These collocation-types constitute more than 50 percent of all the unacceptable collocations found in the study.

Taking the collocation-types into account, the most common unacceptable collocations found in the study of Mollanazr (1990) were as follows:

1. Adjective + Noun (90) 24.2%

2. Subject + Verb (61) 16.4%

3. Noun + of/'s + Noun (38)10.2%

In the same vein, the most common unacceptable collocations found in the study of Karimkhanlui (2008) were as follows:

1. Adjective + Noun (32)14.48%

2. Verb + Adverb (30)13.57%

3. Verb+ Preposition (38) 17.19%

These collocation-types constituted more than 50 percent of all unacceptable collocations found in this study.

Some Examples of the Most Common Unacceptable Collocation types in the texts:

Collocation Type	Original Sentence or Phrase	Persian Translation
Adjective + Noun	Impossible situation (p. 174)	مواقع باریک (Salimi, p. 211)
Adjective + Noun	Irregular fighting (p. 383)	نبرد غیربرابر(Namvar, p. 225)
Noun +of +Noun	The patches of snow (p. 38)	های برف پاره(Salimi, p. 5)
Noun + Noun	Pounding roar (p. 79)	غرش ضربان هواپیماها (Salimi, p. 98)
Noun + Noun	A time waster (p. 22)	زمان است باعث هدرشدن من وجود (Namvar, p. 24)
Noun + Noun	Half a dozen cigarettes (p. 22).	شش هفت دانه سیگار(Marashi, p. 2 2)
Subject + Verb	The dusk was coming (p. 31).	گرفتشونکم تاریکی داشت می کم.(Salimi, p. 41)
Subject + Verb	As far as I can think (p. 489).	تواند برود فکر من جلوتر از این نمی(Namvar, p. 358)
Subject + Verb	The voice hung there (p. 62).	صدا در هوا آویخت (Salimi, p.78) .
Verb + Object	You all make yourselves a heroism (p. 309).	خودتون را قهرمان گرفته ین (Salimi, p. 372)
Verb + Object	It should be possible to unite fifty rifles (p. 36).	پنجاه نفر تفنگدارتهیه کنیم (Namvar, p.31).
Verb + Adverb	Dew had fallen heavily (p. 62).	شبنم فراوان درآمده بود (Salimi, p. 78)
Verb + Adverb	He spread his scorn so widely (p. 386).	تحقیرش را چنان پردامنه بکار برده بود (Salimi, p. 459)
Verb + Adverb	A properly organized possibility (p. 178).	امکانی که صحیحا پیش بینی شد (Salimi, p. 216) .
Adjective + Noun phrase	The problem was all clear and hard and sharp (Salimi, p. 204).	همه چیز واضح، جامد و تیز بود. (p. 16)
Adjective + Noun phrase	In the head, you are very cold (p. 96).	سرت خیلی سرده (Salimi, p. 118)
Adjective + Noun phrase	He was not cynical when he talked (p. 245).	بدون کوچک بینی صحبت می کرد (Salimi, p. 295)

Preposition + Noun phrase	I have been waiting for the snow (p. 186)	در انتظار فرود آمدن برف بوده‌ام (Namvar, p. 110)
Preposition + Noun phrase	Since the planes there is much fear (p. 84)	ترس زیاد هم پیدا اندهواپیماها درست شده از وقتیکه شده.(Marashi, p. 43)
Determiner + Noun phrase	His brown face was grinning (p. 84)	ای بر پیشانی خرماییش خنده(Salimi, p. 342) نشسته بود.
Determiner + Noun phrase	The way she is (p. 284)	این مسلسل با موقعی که دارد(Salami, p.341)
Verb + Noun	The bullbaiting in the square would be cancelled (p. 380).	برنامه گاوبازی در میدان عمومی ده (Namvar, p. 224) حذف شده
Verb + Noun	She was mimicking a visit to a bedside (p. 58)	ادای عیادت کردن بیمار را گرفت (Salimi, p.73)
Verb + Noun	The posts must be exterminated. (p. 157)	ها باید ویران شود تمام دیدگاه(Marashi, p. 53)
Verb + Preposition phrase	Going into unreality (p. 355).	لذت گریختن از واقع. (Salimi, p. 424)
Verb + Preposition phrase	We swim within the idiocy (p. 99).	تو این حماقت شنا می کنیم (Salimi, p. 122)
Grammatical Collocations	He draws a slanted tank, and then a mark for each one (p. 82)	دانه تانک یک نقطه درپایین شمایلش برای هریک بگذار(Marashi, p. 42)
Grammatical Collocations	Do they prepare an attack? (p. 85)	دشمن حمله بزرگی را تهیه می بینند (Marashi, p. 4) .
Grammatical Collocations	Do you want to die? (p.57)	سیرشده‌ای. مثل اینکه از عمرت (Namvar,p.45)
Grammatical Collocations	What movement was there on the road? (p. 85)	باید دید آمدوشد دشمن در این حوالی چه صورتی دارد. (Marashi, p. 44)

Type-Setting Errors	References	The correction
ماموریت حیاطی	(Marashi, p. 10)	ماموریت حیاتی
شبه هواپیما	(Marashi, p. 21)	شبح هواپیما
تخیلاتی که تحقیق نمی‌یابد	(Marashi, p. 204)	تخیلاتی که تحقق نمی‌یابد

5. Discussion

Although the concept of collocations has vastly been addressed in the second language acquisition, few studies have, however, endeavored to ponder upon the crucial role of collocations in translation. The first study of the role of collocations in translation in Iran was conducted by Mollanazar (1990). Mollanazar (1990) articulated the issue of 'unacceptable collocations' in the Persian translations of

English texts, to discover their sources, additionally, to put invaluable solutions forward with a critical eye on preventing the repetition of this problem. Seven Persian translations of two English novels were investigated, and 371 cases of unacceptable collocations were found. Questionnaires containing collocations out of these translations were distributed among 150 students. Findings showed that the most frequent types of unacceptable collocations found in the study of Mollanazar were as follows:
1. Adjective + Noun
2. Subject + Verb
3. Noun + of/'s + Noun

Correspondingly, Beekman and Callow (1974) in translating the word of God affirmed the following collocations as the most common types:
1. Adjective + Noun
2. Subject + Verb
3. Verb + Object

Karimkhanloeei (2008) reviewed the matter of collocational clashes in translation. To this end, six Persian translations of two English novels were assessed, and the clashes of collocations were detected. The gathered data were employed in two multiple-choice tests that were prepared to show the essential causes which result in unacceptable collocations. The tests were distributed among the students of Persian literature and students of English language. The results were analyzed. According to the results, the most frequent types of unacceptable collocations found in the study of Karimkhanloeei were as follows:
1. Adjective + Noun
2. Verb + Adjective
6. Subject + Verb + Adverb

The findings of the present study on the most frequent unacceptable collocations are consistent with those of Mollanazar (1990), Beekman and Callow (1974), and Karimkhanloeei who found the English patterns of Adjective + Noun as the most frequently leading pattern to unacceptable collocations.

Shen (2009) attempted to identify collocational errors and their sources, along with the relationship between collocation and coherence in writing by Chinese students. Thirty non-English majors and 30 English majors participated in this study. The findings revealed that both groups made more errors in lexical collocations than grammatical collocations. Moreover, non-English majors tend to make "Preposition + Noun" type errors, whereas English majors' made more errors in "Verb + Noun" type.
The finding of the current study on the frequency of grammatical collocations with (5) 3.4% is consistent with those of Shen on the finding that more errors in lexical collocations than grammatical collocations.

6. Conclusion

On the questions concerned with the English patterns that more frequently led to unacceptable collocations in English-Persian translations, the results of the current study revealed that the most frequent English patterns leading to unacceptable collocations, were as follows: 1. Adjective + Noun, 2. Subject + Verb, 3. Verb + Object. Reviewing the results of some previous studies, interestingly, the researcher found that this finding was in accord with the findings of [Beekman and Callow (1974);

Mollanazr (1990); Karimkhanloeei (2008)]. Moreover, the 'Adjective + Noun' pattern of collocations was one of the most frequent collocation patterns in the studies carried out on unacceptable collocations. A possible explanation for this unexpected finding might be that the pattern 'Adjective + Noun' compared to other collocational patterns happens more frequently throughout texts.

"For Whom the Bell Tolls" is one of the few books whose Persian translations have not been assessed in previous studies. In assessing the Persian translations of this book therefore, this research has opened the debate for the assessment of this book by future researchers. Although the findings of this research are similar to findings of other Persian -English translation related research, there are some findings that are unique to this study, which can be applied in the assessment of other books as well.

The findings of the current study can possibly be helpful for English learners who are concerned with the concept of collocation and its dominant role in acquiring language skills. Via investigating the collocations of English language relying on the distinct categories presented in the study, the novice translators will get into the concern of collocations that can consequently help them to avoid unacceptable items. In keeping with findings, the study emphasizes the restrictions concerning words that can go with other words and therefore is a resource enlightening on how to avoid unacceptable collocations.

The results, moreover, can possibly be helpful for novice translators or translation studies students who intend to learn the most frequent types of collocations and their accurate translations, whether in person or in public translation classes.

Translation teachers can devote part of their class time to compare the collocations of words compiled throughout this work and teach the translation students how to deal with this issue in the translation process.

For material designers and developers, this research recommends that there is a tangible need to lay more emphasis on teaching collocations and devoting parts of textbooks to this important issue. This issue has generally been overlooked in our textbooks.

7. Recommendations for Further Research

Considering the findings of the present study, further researches on this topic can be recommended. In addition to quantitative methods of investigation, the qualitative ones such as classroom practice and translation exercises can be employed to shed valuable light teaching collocations.

One recommendation for further studies is the issue of 'most frequent patterns leading to unacceptable collocations' by limiting the scope on merely one or two of the researched patterns.

Since this investigation was restricted to finding unacceptable collocations in the four translations of Hemingway's masterpiece, researchers can duplicate the study with other translated books. Moreover, parallel studies can be conducted with books from different fields rather than novels.

As mentioned in the literature review, collocations are subdivided into 'lexical' and 'grammatical' groups. More research is needed to focus particularly on grammatical collocations.

As it was discussed, variety of categories have been employed to classify collocations. The applied classification for the current study was Benson's category. The other classifications can be employed in the future studies.

It is also recommended that various sources of unacceptability be included and examined in other translation studies. Finally yet importantly, the phenomenon of unacceptability of colocations can be investigated with reference to theoretical frameworks of translation.

Acknowledgment

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