

Grammatical Collocations and their Role in Language Development for Non-Native Arabic Speakers

Dr. Mohamed Aziz Abdelmaksoud Sayed Ahmed, Reda Owis
Hassan Serour, Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Hassan Othman,
Dr. Shehata Hafez Mohamed Elsheikh, Dr. Mohamed Lukman
AlHakim Bin Md Noor

Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic University (UniSHAMS) &
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Malaysia

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Abstract

This research in applied linguistics aims to emphasize the need for further attention on applied linguistics, inspired by several calls for the creation of modern dictionaries that not only include linguistic vocabulary but also cover various areas such as phonetics, semantics, and lexicography. Several recent studies have been conducted on this subject, particularly on linguistic collocations. Through interactions with non-native Arabic speakers, I observed their urgent need for simplified Arabic grammar rules, as presenting grammar to non-native speakers in the same manner as to native speakers is ineffective. This research aims to clarify the concept of collocation, both linguistically and terminologically, highlight its importance, and simplify Arabic grammar rules for non-native speakers through collocation in sentence construction to encourage them to learn the language. It also seeks to employ Arabic grammar rules to safeguard language integrity from errors and mistakes by clarifying the use of collocation in grammatical markers and improving their spoken and written language. The research addresses several questions, such as: What is the linguistic and terminological definition of collocation? What is its importance? How can Arabic grammar be simplified for non-native speakers through collocation in sentence construction? Can Arabic grammar rules be employed to teach non-native speakers through collocation in grammatical markers, and why? The researchers will adopt a descriptive-analytical approach to observe the phenomenon of collocation within the framework of how non-native Arabic speakers use collocation in sentence construction and grammatical markers and analyze this phenomenon after studying its aspects.

Keywords: Grammatical Collocations - Language Development - Non-Native Arabic Speakers.

Introduction

Praise be to Allah, who taught by the pen and taught man what he did not know. May peace and blessings be upon the guide of humanity, Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions, and upon those who follow them until the Day of Judgment. This research in applied linguistics was inspired by several calls to focus on the subject and adopt the idea of creating modern dictionaries that include linguistic vocabulary and cover various fields such as phonetics, semantics, and lexicography. Several recent studies have been presented in this area, especially concerning linguistic collocations. Through interactions with non-native Arabic speakers, I observed the great need for simplifying Arabic grammar rules, as grammar cannot be taught to non-native speakers in the same way it is taught to native speakers.

The focus here is on the relationship between two grammatical elements linked together to convey meaning in a sentence structure, as outlined by standard rules. These rules classify sentence elements, where each unit consists of two interconnected components, such as the subject and predicate, the verb and subject, the possessive and the possessed, the preposition and its object, the adjective and the described, the relative pronoun and the antecedent, and so on. Between every two elements, a correlation and interdependence are determined by standard rules (Fanon, 2009).

Contribution of the Research to Society

The importance of collocation is especially apparent for language learners. Dividing language and its grammar into interdependent pairs makes learning easier for beginners, reduces the complexity of the language, and eliminates confusion in its components. For example, if we considered the nominative noun before a verb as the subject, there would be confusion between the subject and the predicate, making it difficult for learners to distinguish between verbal and nominal sentences. Thus, grammarians emphasized the importance of maintaining the collocation between the verb and subject, the subject and predicate — especially ordered collocation — to simplify grammar for beginners (Fanon, 2009).

There is no doubt that "teaching grammar is the responsibility of grammar teachers, while teaching the language, especially classical Arabic, is a societal issue that extends beyond the capabilities of these teachers to become a concern for society as a whole" (Al-Makarem, 1993).

We often see students, especially non-native Arabic speakers, struggle with Arabic grammar when responding to exams or writing their theses for their master's or doctoral degrees. They frequently misuse grammatical concepts that form the sentence and the text. The root of the problem lies in their lack of understanding of grammatical collocations, prompting this study to pave the way for a better understanding of Arabic grammar.

Research Objectives

1. Define the concept of collocation both linguistically and terminologically and explain its importance.
2. Simplify Arabic grammar rules for non-native speakers through collocation in sentence construction to encourage them to learn.
3. Employ Arabic grammar rules for non-native speakers to protect their speech from errors by clarifying collocations in grammatical markers.

Definition of Collocation in Language

The root of the word "collocation" (لزوم) in Arabic comes from the letters Lām, Zāy, and Mīm, which indicate the accompanying of one thing by another permanently. It is said, "He adhered to it" (lazimahu) (Faris, 1979).

Definition of Collocation in Terminology

Al-Jurjani (2004), defined it as "one judgment necessitating the occurrence of another, meaning that one judgment, if it happens, necessarily entails the occurrence of another, as smoke entails fire during the day, and fire entails smoke at night". He also considered absolute collocation as the condition where one thing necessitates the occurrence of another. The first is called the "collocated" (ملزوم), and the second is called the "collocative" (لازم), as daylight necessitates the rising of the sun; the rising of the sun is collocated, and the existence of daylight is collocative. (Al-Jurjani, 2004).

Modern scholars have also defined collocation as the functional union of two or more words to the extent that they are perceived as a single unit in a sentence structure, performing a unified meaning. Dividing them would lead to a meaning different from what the speaker intended. This union occurs through a specific grammatical relationship, after which they are linked to the sentence nucleus (the verb in verbal sentences and the subject in nominal sentences, whether generative or transformational) (Amairah, 1984).

Syndromes in Sentence Structure

Sentences are divided into two types: nominal and verbal.

Conjunction in the Nominal Sentence

According to grammarians, a nominal sentence has two essential components: the subject and the predicate, as in the sentence: "Mohammed is successful." This sentence is composed of two main elements: the subject "Mohammed" and the predicate "successful."

The first conjunction in building a nominal sentence is that any nominal sentence, when analyzed grammatically, will contain two main parts. For example, if we identify the subject, the question arises: Where is the predicate? Hence, the predicate is a necessary counterpart to the subject in forming a nominal sentence. However, certain linguistic phenomena, such as omission, inversion, and others, might affect nominal sentences, making the identification of the predicate (which is the counterpart of the subject) require thought and effort.

Conjunction in the Verbal Sentence

It is undeniable that the need for a verb for a subject to complete its meaning is similar to the need for a subject for a predicate, and the need for an adjective for a noun, and a relative pronoun for its antecedent. The connection and coherence between these pairs impose a necessary conjunction between them to convey the meaning, which cannot be expressed by one without the other. As soon as we see a verb, we look for the subject to make sense of the meaning. Similarly, when we see a conjunction, we instinctively look for the word it is conjoined to, in pursuit of the same goal, which is meaning (Funoon, 2009).

The conjunction in a verbal sentence is represented by the relationship between the verb, subject, and object. If the verb is intransitive, the sentence does not require an object. However, if the verb is transitive, it requires an object, as in the sentences:

- Mohammed succeeded, where the verb "succeeded" only needs one conjunction, which is the subject "Mohammed."
- In contrast, in the sentence "Mohammed wrote the lesson," two conjunctions are needed: the first is the subject "Mohammed," and the second is the object "the lesson."

From this, we can conclude that the conjunction in a nominal or verbal sentence is what completes the meaning of the sentence.

Conjunctions in Grammatical Rules

Words are divided into nouns, verbs, and particles, as grammarians have noted. Nouns and verbs share two properties: they can be either nominative or accusative. They differ in one thing: nouns can be in the genitive case, which is one of their distinctive features, while verbs can be in the jussive case, which is also one of their characteristics. Particles, however, are always indeclinable. Thus, the grammatical inflection of nouns and verbs includes four aspects:

1. The nominative.
2. The accusative.
3. The genitive.
4. The jussive.

The Nominative Forms of Nouns Include

- The subject.
- The predicate.
- The doer of the action.
- The deputy subject.
- The noun of the verbs of beginning.
- The predicate of the particles of negation.
- The nominative adjective.
- The nominative substitution.

The Nominative Form of The Verb Includes

- The present tense verb in the nominative state, remains nominative if not preceded by a particle that causes accusative or jussive.

The Accusative Forms of Nouns Include

- The five objects.
- The circumstantial accusative.
- The accusative of distinction.
- The exception.
- The vocative.
- The predicate of the verbs of beginning and the noun of the particles of negation.
- The accusative adjective.
- The accusative substitution.

- The accusative is due to the removal of a preposition.
- The accusative is due to preoccupation.
- The specified accusative noun.

The Accusative Form of The Verb Includes

- The present tense verb is in the accusative form when preceded by an accusative particle.

The Genitive Forms of Nouns Include

- The noun that is in the genitive case after a preposition.
- The noun in the construct phrase.
- The genitive adjective.
- The genitive substitution.

The Jussive Form of The Verb Includes

- The present tense verb in the jussive form when preceded by a jussive particle.

It is noteworthy that grammatical inflection involves several conjunctions. For instance, if we say: "Ahmed is successful," the word "Ahmed" is grammatically analyzed as the subject. Since the word is the subject, it requires its first conjunction: it is "nominative," and the second conjunction is "nominative" in our statement: "And its nominative sign."

Similarly, the word "successful" also has two conjunctions, just like the subject: the first is that it is "nominative," and the second is that "nominative" is part of its analysis. The same applies to a verbal sentence. If we say: "Mohammed succeeded," the word "succeeded" is a past tense verb. The first conjunction of a past tense verb is that it is "built," and the second conjunction is its sign of construction, which is the fatha if it is not connected to pronouns. The word "Mohammed" is the subject. Since the word is the subject, it needs its first conjunction, which is that it is "nominative," and the second conjunction is its "nominative" sign in the statement: "And its nominative sign," and so on.

Opinion on the Issue of Grammatical Analysis

What matters most for non-native Arabic learners is their ability to speak correct Arabic, accurately punctuate texts, write correctly, and read without errors, even if they are not familiar with the grammatical rules specific to nominal or verbal sentences or similar topics. The real problem we face when teaching non-native Arabic speakers stems from the fact that we use the same methods we use for native Arabic speakers. What works in an Arabic-speaking environment might not work in a non-Arabic environment.

For instance, when we ask in the sentence: "Ahmed is successful," what is the grammatical analysis of the word "Ahmed"? An Arab would say: "It is the subject, and it is nominative." In this way, they provide the evidence before the ruling. However, when asking the same question to a non-Arabic speaker, we might expect them to respond similarly, saying: "It is the subject, and it is nominative." However, it would be more effective for non-native learners to state the ruling first before the evidence. Thus, we should ask: "Is the word 'Ahmed' in 'Ahmed is successful' nominative, accusative, or genitive?" The answer would be "nominative" because they pronounce it as such, without necessarily knowing the

grammatical rule. Then, the second question would be: "Why is it nominative?" This leads to the idea of conjunctions for nominative cases, as mentioned earlier. This approach helps learners understand the word's position in the sentence and protects their speech from mistakes or grammatical errors.

Conclusion and Findings

First, Some of the Results

- Re-reading many grammatical topics while teaching them to non-native speakers could make grammar easier for them, thus reducing the difficulties they face in learning Arabic grammar.
- The structural conjunction in sentence construction and grammatical inflection is of special importance for non-native speakers. Dividing language and its grammar into pairs of conjunctions helps them better understand the language and avoid confusion in its nuances.
- Fixing the conjunction between the verb and subject, as well as between the subject and predicate, makes it easier for non-native learners to distinguish between nominal and verbal sentences.
- Prioritizing the ruling before the evidence in grammatical inflection helps preserve non-native speakers' speech from errors, reducing their grammatical mistakes.

Recommendations

We recommend that researchers specializing in Arabic studies re-examine the material presented to non-native speakers, especially in grammar and morphology, to avoid unnecessary complexity to simplify the rules.

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