

The Hurdle of Translating Compounds and *Idāfa*: A Contrastive Analysis

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Abstract

The present study investigates the hurdles of deciphering the figurative meaning of English compounds and Arabic construct phrases, known as *idāfa* when they are under the detailed scrutiny of translation. For this purpose, a contrastive linguistic analysis of both multi-word items was conducted in order to show any syntactic and semantic similarity in their behaviour. This analysis was also supported by the conceptual examination of their translation. The findings have shown that compounds and *idāfa*, in terms of figurative sense, are semantically similar, but are syntactically different. In terms of translation, results show that they pose a metaphorical and cultural threat to the Arab translator, who might be tempted to translate them literally in case s/he fails to understand the hidden meaning. Producing accurate translation equivalents for these items cannot be achieved without knowing their metaphorical senses and the ability to provide natural and acceptable equivalents in the target language.

Keywords: Exocentric Compounds, *idāfa*, Metaphor, Metonymy, Translation

Introduction

One of the most noticeable problems of translation, in English and Arabic, is the non-literal lexical words that cannot be rendered word for word. These lexical items are ready-made and must be understood metaphorically in order to produce an accurate translation in the target language. However, the Arab translator might not be aware of the hidden non-literal, and sometimes cultural, meaning that affects his/her translation. The paper examines specific lexical items that capture this problem in Arabic and English phraseology, which are the English compounds and Arabic *idāfa*. It dedicates a section on their linguistic behaviour in terms of their semantic and syntactic structures then focuses on the difficulties of their translation in the two languages.

1. English Compounds

Compounding, as Plag (2003, p. 132) argues, is "the most productive type of word-formation process in English, <and> ...is perhaps also the most controversial one in terms of its linguistic analysis.". He basically defines compounds as a "combination of two words to form a new word" (2003, p. 133) and then elaborates more precisely by noting that a compound is "a word that consists of two elements, the first of which is either a root, a word or a phrase, the second of which is either a root or a word." (Plag, 2003, p. 135).

Regarding the structure of compounds, Ball (1939, p. 68) points out that compounds are either hyphenated like *cold-blooded* or is a solid compound, like *bridesmaid*. Plag states that the left-hand member modifies the right-hand member in English compounds. For instance, the compound *film society* can be interpreted as a kind of a society that is concerned with films. Other examples include *knee-deep* and *parks commissioner* where the former refers to the deepness of water, while the latter is interpreted as a commissioner occupied with parks. The structure these compounds exhibit is called a modifier-head structure, which means that the head in these compounds is modified by the other member of the compound. (2003, p. 135).

In addition, Plag elaborates on compound heads by pointing out the right-hand head rule, which explains how compounds function. The rule basically states that most of the syntactic and semantic information the compound inherits are from the head. Thus, a compound is a verb if the head is a verb like in *deep-fry*, a compound is a noun if the head is a noun like *beer bottle* or a compound has a feminine gender if the head has a feminine gender like *head waitress* (2003, p. 135). Plag also states that if the compound is pluralised then the head is pluralised and not the non-head. For example, *park commissioners* is the plural of *park commissioner* and not *parks commissioner*.

Moreover, Plag states that there are different compounding patterns in English and it is the same in many languages, but he solidly emphasises the fact that words from all word classes do not combine freely to form compounds. According to Plag, compounding patterns can be established according to the nature of their heads, which means that compounds may have nominal heads, verbal heads, and adjectival heads. Still, Plag claims that there are occasions where classifying compounds based on the syntactic category of their heads may not be as clear as it should be because there are several words in English which belong to more than one category. For example, *walk* can be a verb and a noun; *blind* can be an adjective, a verb and a noun. Plag (2003, p. 142) then categorises compounds into four major categories:

1-Nominal compounds (N):

- e.g. N. film society
- e.g. V. pickpocket
- e.g. Adj. greenhouse
- e.g. Prep. afterbirth.

2-Verbal compounds (V)

- e.g. N. brainwash
- e.g. V. stir-fry
- e.g. Adj. blackmail
- e.g. Prep. downgrade

3-Adjectival compounds (A)

- e.g. N. knee-deep
- e.g. V. —
- e.g. Adj. light-green
- e.g. Prep. inbuilt

4-Prepositional compounds (P)

- e.g. N. —
- e.g. V. breakdown
- e.g. Adj. —
- e.g. Prep. Into

Munat notes that that compounds belong to a word class and can be identified by their head constituent, while nominal compounds are ‘part of the word class known as nouns, serving to identify objects, people, or concepts’ (2002, p. 148). These nominal compounds, as Plag points out, fall into three subclasses and are: nominal compounds involving a noun as a non-head, nominal compounds involving a verb as a verb-head and nominal compounds involving an adjective as a non-head. In English, nominal compounds are the most common type of compounds and most are right-headed. Still, nominal compounds, as Plag (2003, p. 145) maintains are not easy to analyse, e.g. *laser printer*, *letterhead*, *bookcover*, *redneck*, *loudmouth*, *greybeard*, *pickpocket*, *cut-throat*, and *spoilsport*.

The compounds *laser printer*, *letterhead*, and *bookcover* are examples of nominal compounds denoting a subclass of the referents of the head: *a laser printer* is a kind of printer, *a bookcover* is a kind of a cover and *a letterhead* is the head or top of the letter. Plag states that "the semantic head of these compounds is inside the compound, which is the reason why these compounds are called endocentric compounds." (2003, p. 145). On the other hand, the compounds *redneck*, *loudmouth*, *greyhound*, *pickpocket*, *cut-throat*, and *spoilsport* are not endocentric compounds but rather exocentric compounds, which, according to Plag, mean that their semantic head is outside the literal meaning of the compound. These compounds refer to persons since *redneck* is a kind of a person and not a kind of neck. Similarly, *loudmouth* and *spoilsport* denote types of persons and not a kind of a mouth or sport, as the former refers to a kind of person and the latter to a person who spoils other people's good time.

The adjectival type of compound, as Plag (2003, p. 152) notes, can have nouns or adjectives as non-heads. The non-heads in adjectival compounds can function as a modifier or as an argument for the head.

Plag argues that compounds such as *blood-red*, *dog-lean*, and *knee-deep* can be interpreted in various ways, depending on the semantics of the members of the compound and on the relationship between them. *Blood-red* means red like blood, *dog-lean* means lean as a dog and *knee-deep* means deep to the height of the knees. The interpretation here involves a comparison and quite often the first element functions as an intensifier in these compounds. (2003, p. 152).

On the other hand, the first element in compounds like *sugar-free*, *structure-dependent*, and *girl-crazy* functions as an argument position for the adjective and appears next to a preposition when interpreted by the reader. For instance, there is *free of sugar*, *dependent on structure* and *crazy for girls*.

In the case of the verbal compounds, the following sets illustrate the three types of verbal compounds:

1-Noun as non-head

e.g. *proof-read*, *chain-smoke*, *ghost-write*

2-Adjective as non-head

e.g. *deep-fry*, *shortcut*, *blindfold*

3-Verb as non-head

e.g. *stir-fry*, *dry-clean*, *freeze-dry*

Plag argues that the best way to analyse verbal compounds is through back-formation or conversion process. Therefore, the compounds in (1) are back-formations from nominal compounds such as *proof-reading* or *ghost-writer*. On the other hand, the compounds in (2) are involved with conversion as in *to take a shortcut* or *to blindfold*. However, Plag also argues that the compounds in (3) are the product of neither back-formation nor conversion since they refer to events that involve two events joined together. For example *stir-fry* means to stir and fry simultaneously.

Even though Plag demonstrates the nature of compounds and the various types of compounds, he does not elaborate on the relationship between the two (or three) elements of the compound. On the other hand, Warren's study (1978) sheds light on this relationship and determines the nature of the semantic relationship of the two components of the compound. Warren's study does focus only on noun-noun compounds.

1.2. Warren's Semantic Patterns of Noun-Noun Compounds

Warren points out that there are four types of semantic classes for these compounds. The first type expresses the constitution and resemblance class, the second class expresses belonging to, the third class displays location and the fourth class expresses purpose and activity as follows.

1.2.1. Constitution and Resemblance

In this type, Warren (1978: 82) includes two classes of compounds. The first includes the Source-Result compounds, which Warren defines as "compounds in which what is indicated by one member is that which wholly constitutes what is indicated by the other member." (1978, p. 82). Also, Warren subdivides source-result compounds into the Material-Artifact, Matter-Shape, Parts-Whole and Non-Material Substance-Whole.

The second class of compounds in the constitution and resemblance is the Copula compound. They are defined as compounds "in which both members can be said to be two alternative "names" for the same referent." (Warren, 1978, p. 82). Similarly, this class of compounds is subdivided into the Attributive, Subsumptive and Adjective-Like Modifier.

1-Source-Result compounds

The first subdivision of the Source-Results compounds is Material Artefact. Warren points out that the source noun indicates that the source "must have the feature + Material for a compound to fit in this group." (1978, p. 82). Examples of this compound category are *paper sack*, *leather belt*, *silver bowl* and *tin cup*. In addition, the result noun must have "the feature + Man-made and + Concrete." (Warren, 1978, p. 83). For example, there are *rubber boots*, *cornbread*, *steel roof* and *brick wall*. These compounds permit a prepositional paraphrase which involves *of*, for instance, *bowl of silver* and *door of metal*. Further, Warren argues that the Material-Artifact compounds are not problematic since it is possible to describe their semantic nature.

The second subdivision of Source-Result compounds is Matter-Shape compounds. The result noun here suggests the shape or form of the substance which is indicated by the source-noun. The result noun may be the result of main activity such as *gold leaf*, *land site* or *land plot*, or the shape is natural for the source-noun to occur like *raindrop*, *airwave* or *silicone fluid*. (Warren, 1978, p. 85).

Next subdivision is the Parts-Whole compounds. In this type of compound, A represents the parts or the whole of B. The source-noun, as Warren states, is necessarily countable like *student group*, *two-storey mansion*, *34-hour week* or *National Symphony Orchestra League*. Moreover, the result-noun is a noun that indicates a plural quantity like *class*, *group* or *team*. The result-noun may also indicate a whole of the subcomponent as indicated by the source-noun like *two-part bridge* or *four-lane freeway*. (1978, p. 88)

The fourth subdivision is the Non-Material Substances-Whole compounds. Warren states that the Source-noun and the Result-noun in this kind of compound indicate an abstract entity with an abstract connection between them like *tax-exemption*, *divorce case* or *family-community*. In addition, Warren divides the Non-Material Substances-Whole into two subgroups; the Tennis-Match compounds and the Subject Matter-Whole compounds. Regarding the Tennis-Match compounds, Warren points out that "A and B are combined in these combinations to express an abstract Source-Result relation, A representing the non-material Substance, sometimes implying Cause which constitutes B, the Whole or the Outcome." (1978, p. 92). Examples of this compound are *tennis match*, *sandwich snacks* and *base-ball game*. Regarding Subject-Matter-Whole compounds, in this compound, A implies information about B which is the Whole of A. For example, *drainage problem* implies that drainage constitutes a problem. A similar example is *language problem* which implies that people do not understand other languages which of course is a problem. (1978, p. 93).

2-Copula compounds

According to Warren, these compounds "consist of nouns that are alternative names for the same referent." (1978, p. 98), and she divides them into Attributive, Subsumptive and

Adjective-like Comment-Noun. Regarding Attributive Copula compounds, Warren states that if A indicates status, age, sex, or race of B, then B is animate as in *baby brother*, *veteran salesman*, *free-lance investigator* or *Baptist teetotaler*. However, if A indicates the function or sometimes the kind of B, then B is inanimate like *nursery school*, *market place*, or *ransom money* or *gala concert*. In the case of Subsumptive Copula compounds, Warren argues that compounds with an animate B like *hound dog*, *codfish* or *bossman* are few. Compounds with an inanimate B are greater where which A represents B's function such as *study room* or *hotel building* or the subspecies of B like *guerilla war* or *maple trees* (1978, p. 101). As for Adjective-like Comment compounds, as the name says, Warren points out that adjectives are part of these compounds. The Comment-Noun here "suggests properties rather than entities, which is shown by the fact that synonyms of the comment-noun are often adjectives and not nouns." (1978, p. 101). For example, there are *chief store*, *fellow student*, *key issue* and *favourite painting*.

1.2.2. *Belonging To*

In this second type of Warren's compound classes, three divisions occur: Whole-Part, Part-Whole and Size-Whole.

1-Whole-Part

In this type of compound A indicates the whole of B which is the part of A, which is illustrated in four subdivisions. The first subdivision is Object-Part compounds. A here is concrete and so is B, however A is inanimate. There are examples of this compound where A is a building, room, plant, area or a body and B is a part of a body like *prison door*, *hotel porch*, *garlic clove*, *lobby floor* or *eyelid* or *ghetto wall*. (Warren, 1978, p. 126). The second subdivision is Group-Member compounds. A here is a group of people, organisation, or community and B is a member of this group like *family man* or *union member*. In addition, B may have a function as a member of a subunit like *school board*.

The third subdivision is Object-Geometrical Outline compounds. B here may be the top or base of A like *roof top*, *cigarette butts*, or may be the width or height of A like *heart girth* or *water level*, or the centre of A like *nerve centre*, or may be the front or side of A like *pool-side* or *water front*, or may be the corner of A like *street corner* or *loophole*. (1978, p. 131). The fourth subdivision is the Residual Cases. B here is not part of A in the same sense as in the previous divisions. However, it is linked or is belonging to A like *bank customers* or *TV audience* where B is animate. It may also be inanimate in examples like *telephone number* or *household chore*. (1978, p. 133).

2-Part-Whole

This second class of belonging to compounds has three subtypes of compounds under it. The first type is the OBJ-Place where B indicates the place or container of the occurring entities like *flower garden* or *featherbed*. B may also indicate the time of A in OBJ-Time type compounds like *golf season* or *springtime*. (1978, p. 146). The third type of the Part-Whole is the Part-OBJ where it is the reverse of Whole-Part compounds. B here may indicate the feature of A as in *high-speed buses* or *top-quality hand-gun*, or it may be the possessor and defined by the possession like *gunman* or *horseman*. (1987, p. 148).

3-Size-Whole

The third type of belonging to compounds has five subtypes of compounds under it. A may refer to the physical size of B like *19-foot female* or *half-mile track*. It may also indicate the duration of B as in *4-year contract*, *a ten-hour day* or *a full-time student* (1978, p. 153). Warren also states that it may indicate a currency as in *\$200 dinner* or it may indicate the power size as in *20-megaton bomb*. Finally it may indicate the position on a value scale like *low-class crook*. (1978, p. 155).

1.2.3 Location

This is the third type of Warren's compound classes and it has four classes: Goal-Object, Place-Object, Time-Object and Origin-Object. In Goal-Object, A indicates the place the aim of B is directed toward, which represents its goal. For example, *moon rocket* or *downhill trend*. (1978, p. 163). The second compound class is the Place-Object where A represents the place of B and may indicate a concrete place-concrete, inanimate entity like *ghetto street*, *home offices* and *island base*. It may indicate a concrete place-animate entity like *farm people*, *hospital nurse* and *classmate* and may also indicate a concrete place-abstract entity like *school dance* and *workshop session*. In addition, A may represent an abstract-place-concrete entity like *school friend* and *World Series hero*. Finally, A may represent an abstract place-abstract entity like *law degree* and *showbiz career*. (1978, p. 174).

The third compound class is Time-Object where A represents a period or a point of time. A here may indicate a time-animate entity like *weekend guests* and *afternoon clerk*, and it may represent a time-concrete, inanimate entity like *night club*, *Sunday paper* and *Friday mail*. (1978, p. 179). B may, just like A, represent a time or an event resulting from a human activity like *Thursday evening* or *summer music festival*.

The fourth compound class in the Location compounds is Origin-Object, which includes two main groups; one is the Place of Origin-Object, and the other is the Causer Result group. The former group may indicate a place of origin with an animate entity where B is animate and A is the background like *Harlem boy* and *Hollywood girls*. A also may represent the place of origin of an inanimate entity which is B as in *hospital bill*, *welfare check* and *government funds*. (1978, p. 184).

The second group of Origin-Object is the Causer Result compound. A here is not the place of origin, but rather the causer of B. A may be inanimate like *bullet hole*, *hay fever* and *poll figures* or animate like *student newspaper*, *Nobel prize* and *Christian Dior shoes*. (1978, p. 186).

1.2.4 Purpose and Activity

The fourth and last type of Warren's compound classes expresses purpose and activity whereas in purpose-class B as Warren points out it "may be an object, an event or an animate being, is defined by the indication of its purpose." (1978, p. 197). Warren uses the two linguistic terms Goal and Instrumental in this class to deal with the semantic roles. B as an instrument may be a container for the goal of containing A as in *mail box*, *beer bottle*, and *salad plates*. B may also be a place for fixing or putting A like *drink tray* and *flag-stick*. In addition, B may be a vehicle for transporting A as in *sewer pipe* and *laundry truck*. (1978, p. 201).

Furthermore, B may be defined by A in which A indicates the intended place for B as in *tablecloth*, *bedside table*, or *table spoon*. Also, A may be used to indicate the event or social activity of B like *sports car*, *evening gown* or *emergency telephone*. However, other compounds in this class have A as the Goal or event to define B which is the time of the event as in *dinnertime* and *labour day*. (1978, p. 204). Moreover, A may be the Goal that is achieved by the Instrumental/Causer, which is B as in *car key* and *teaspoon*. Finally, B may be an object intended for use by a body part, which is the Causer A, such as football, *hand grenade* and *mouthpiece*. (1978, p. 208).

In the activity class, B may refer to a single animate being, a group of people or an organisation. In the case of a single human being, it may refer to one with a specific reference like *probation officer*, *Foreign Secretary*, or *Mortgage banker*. In the case of a group of people reference, we may have compounds like *Bible Society* and *Foreign Relations committee*, while in the case of organisational reference, we may have compounds like *fire department*, *power company* and *personnel office*. (1978, p. 212).

The above classes demonstrate that the constituents of the compound have a semantic relationship that then affects the compound. However, Warren's pattern of nominal compounding has not been without criticism. Benczes (2006, p. 34) argues that this pattern covers the endocentric compounds and does not pay attention to the metaphorical exocentric ones. According to Benczes, the only way to interpret and understand these compounds is by analysing conceptual metaphor and metonymy. She states that metaphor is "based upon two entities that resemble one another." (2006, p. 48), while metonymy is when "we are using one entity or thing to provide mental access to another thing that is related to it in some way." (2006, p. 51).

Moreover, Benczes points out that conceptual metaphor and metonymy act upon compounds on either one or both of the compound constituents (modifier and profile determinant). For example, the compound *heartland* is an example of a metaphor-based modifier, which means the central part of a land or country, where heart is a metaphor for the central location of the land. Thus, the modifier specifies the location of *land*. (2006, p. 91).

In addition, Benczes includes *jailbird*, which means a person serving a prison sentence, as an example of a metaphor-based profile determinant. Benczes argues that in order to interpret this compound we have to understand the concept of the two inputs involved: the source domain 'imprisoned person' and the target domain 'caged bird'. The compound here illustrates the imprisoned person as an image of a caged bird, and, therefore, links the two domains yielding a blend of the two concepts manifested in the compound. (2006, p. 97).

Furthermore, Benczes shows that there are occasions where both the modifier and the profile determinant are metaphorical. For example *flame sandwich*, which means a note consisting of a negative comment between two positive comments, is an example of compounds with three concepts. The first is a 'sandwich' domain, the second is a 'line of comment' domain, and the third is 'argument/fire' domain. Benczes indicates that the negative comment is situated between the positive ones which are metaphorically similar to the filling of a sandwich situated between two slices of bread. The second domain is illustrated by the following: the slices of bread are the positive ones while the sandwich filling is the negative one and the third domain is

understood by linking argument to flame metaphorically. The reason for choosing *flame* instead of *fire* is because, as Benczes logically argues, there is an element of suddenness with in *flame* and it is not as big as *fire* which is followed by a positive comment (2006, p. 105).

In addition, Benczes argues that metonymy also plays a part in yielding creative compounding. For example, *phone neck*, *mouse wrist* and *Nintendo thumb* are compounds with metonymy in both constituents. These examples denote the pain caused by using the aforementioned gadgets; therefore, *phone neck* is metonymical for the pain felt in the neck caused by the holding of the phone for a long period of time. The same interpretation applies to the other compounds (2006, p. 156).

Indeed, the creative compounds that Benczes demonstrates are metaphorical and metonymical, which means that the only way to interpret them is that we have to understand the source and the target domains involved along with their conceptual blending. Therefore, any text that includes these compounds will puzzle translators since they carry non-literal meanings.

The two studies of Warren and Benczes focused on the semantic content of compounds. Warren's study focused on the semantic classes of nominal compounds based on the purpose, location, constitution, and belonging and provided examples for all types. This study is one of the most important studies in compounding because of the detailed classification of nominal compounds and the semantic relationship between the components. However, Warren's semantic focus was on endocentric compounds, which can be understood by interpreting the literal meaning of the components of the compound. Indeed, all the examples provided by Warren were understood by rendering the compound word for word. Yet, Warren did not cover the exocentric compounds, the ones that cannot be understood by interpreting the components of the compound. On the other hand, the study of Benczes shows that the literal interpretation of compounds is not always applicable because of the metaphorical meaning of the exocentric compounds. In fact, the analysis of the conceptual metaphor and metonymy is the only way to interpret the meaning of the exocentric compounds, as shown in her examples. Both studies are significant because they refer to the semantic content of compounds, with each study focusing on a type of compounds (endocentric/exocentric) and indicate the meaning they have. The difference between the two studies is that Warren's study refers to the endocentric compounds only, whereas both the endocentric and exocentric compounds are included in Benczes's study. Foreign language learners can benefit from both studies, but relying on the classification of Warren is not enough for the understanding of the English compounds.

2. Arabic *Idāfa*

Like English, Arabic includes a two item combination in its linguistic repertoire. Emery (1988, p. 34) states that the components of this item in Arabic are referred to as words *كلماتان* or as a root. However, Emery also argues that roots in Arabic cannot form compounds since they cannot occur independently. Likewise, Ryding (2005, p. 205) notes that "in Arabic, two nouns may be linked together in a relationship where the second noun determines the first by identifying, limiting, or defining it; thus the two nouns function as one phrase or syntactic unit". Ryding states that this Arabic linguistic item is *إضافة idāfa* whereas in English, the item is referred to as a 'genitive construct', 'construct phrase' or 'annexation structure'. Emery notes that

idāfa in Arabic also has a head مضاف إليه modifier type and can be divided in endocentric and exocentric *idāfa*, which are similar to the English ones.

Ryding (2005, p. 205), on the other hand, elaborates by pointing out that the first noun المضاف has "neither the definite article nor nunation because it is in an "annexed" state, as determined by the second noun" while the second noun المضاف إليه is "marked either for definiteness or indefiniteness, and is always in the genitive case." (2005, p. 205). Emery points out that the construct إضافة *idāfa* is "a typically Arabic construction. The "idafa [sic] is primarily a structure in which two nouns or nominals are linked together in a head/modifier relation" (1988, p. 36). Moreover, Hassan (1975, III, p. 3-29, cited in Emery) divides *idāfa* into two types: namely, pure محضة and not pure غير محضة, and points out that the head in the former is an inanimate underived noun and is not separated from the modifier, while the first element in the latter is animate and is a derived or deverbal noun and is separated from the modifier by a pronoun. This point is echoed by Al-Khateeb and Mosluh (2002, p. 95), who elaborate by pointing out that the reason pure *idāfas* are termed 'real' *idāfa* is because the function of the modifier is to define or specify the head and link relation between them.

Likewise, Ryding (2005, p. 221) maintains that 'unreal', 'false' or 'unpure' compounds are called 'adjective' *idāfa* because the adjective serves as the first term where it acts as the modifier of the noun. Ryding elaborates by stating that this adjective "may take the definite article if the phrase modifies a definite noun", which then violates the general rule of genitive structure. This 'adjective' *idāfa*, as Ryding (2005, p. 222) asserts, is frequent in Modern Standard Arabic because of its use to express newly coined, 'long-range' terms.

Also, Ryding stresses that the first term of the adjective *idāfa* does not have the definite article when modifying an indefinite noun, e.g. *They are called evergreen trees* تسمى أشجارا دائمة الخضرة (the adjective *idāfa* as a predicate of an equational sentence modifying an indefinite noun).

Moreover, the first term of the adjective *idāfa*, according to Ryding (2005, p. 223), does not have the definite article when serving as the predicate of an equational sentence, in which it agrees with the noun it refers to in case, number and gender, e.g. *The Earth is circular in shape* الأرض مستطيلة الشكل.

In addition, Eid (2005, p. 438) argues that pure *idāfa* can have the meaning of the preposition في (in, at, on). For example, عثمان شهيد الدار means 'uthmān the martyr in the house'. The pure *idāfa* can also have the meaning of the preposition من 'min' (of, from). For instance, خاتم ذهب is 'a ring of gold', or could be a definite article اللام as in حضارة الأمة meaning 'the nations' civilisation'.

Furthermore, Ryding (2005, p. 206) states that there are different types of *idāfa*. She provides examples with each type as follows:

1-Identity relationship

In this type, the second noun defines or explains the 'particular identity' of the first noun. For example:

e.g. *Starfish* نجمة البحر
e.g. *A police officer* ضابط الشرطة

2-Possessive relationship

The first noun in this type belongs to the second noun, e.g. *The leaders of the tribes* زعماء القبائل

3-Partitive relationship

Ryding states that in a partitive relationship "the annexed term (the first term) serves as a determiner to describe a part or quantity of the annexing term" (2005, p. 206). Ryding also notes that this should include a quantifier noun, such as 'some', 'all' or 'most', numbers and superlative constructions.

e.g. *Most of the seats* معظم المقاعد (definite)
e.g. *A quarter of a Riyal* ربع ريال (indefinite)

4-Agent relationship

The second term, as Ryding notes, is the agent of the action, while the first term is the name of the action, e.g. *The squeaking of the door* صرير الباب.

5-Object relationship

Ryding (2005, p. 208) points out that the second term in this type of structure is the object of an action and the first term is "either the name of the action, or an active participle that refers to the doer of the action" (2005, p. 208). The following examples illustrate that the first term is a verbal noun that then refers to the action.

e.g. *The solution of the problems* حل المشاكل (definite)
e.g. *Opening fire* إطلاق النار (indefinite)

On the other hand, the following examples show that the active participle, which is the first term, denotes the doer of the action, e.g. *The decision-makers* صانعو القرار (definite)

6-Compositional relationship

Ryding (2005, p. 209) also states that the second noun in this type of structure expresses the nature of the first noun, e.g. *Bouquets of flowers* باقات زهور and *A chain of mountains* سلسلة جبال.

7-Measurement relationship

Ryding maintains that in this type of structure, the first noun expresses "the nature of the measurement and the second (and third) the extent or the measurement itself" (2005: 209), e.g. *A stone's throw* مرمى الحجر and *a kilo of bananas* كيلو الموز.

8-Contents relationship

In this type, Ryding simply states that the first noun denotes a container while the second noun denotes its contents, e.g. *Boxes of gold* صناديق الذهب.

9-Purpose relationship

Here, the particular purpose or use of the first term is explained or defined by the second term, e.g. *A rescue plane* طائرة الإنقاذ and *Greeting cards* بطاقات التهنئة.

10-Quotations or Title relationship

Ryding (2005, p. 210) indicates that in this type the second term is a quotation or a title where "the words of the title or quotation in quotation marks are considered to be set off from the case-marking requirements of the second term of the *idāfa*, and are inflected independently, not necessarily in the genitive" (Ryding, 2005, p. 210), e.g. *The book The Thousand and One Nights* كتاب ألف ليلة وليلة and *A lecture entitled "The Middle East and its Challenges"* محاضرة بعنوان "الشرق الأوسط وتحدياته".

As for Emery (1988, p. 37), he classifies Arabic noun and adjective *idāfa* according to the various types of meaning relationships as follows:

1-Endocentric *idāfa*:

a. Noun Head + Noun Modifier

i-'Head that is a modifier', e.g. طائرة هليكوبتر '*helicopter*'

ī-'Head that belongs to/comes from the modifier', e.g. رأس السهم '*arrowhead*'

īi-'Head contains/is made up of a modifier', e.g. سفينة البضائع '*cargo ship*'.

iv-'Head is verb-ed by modifier', e.g. سفينة بخارية '*steamship*'

v-'Head that is like the modifier', e.g. مسطرة طائية '*T-square*'

b. Deverbal / Noun Head + Deverbal / Noun Modifier

1-'Head of the modifier (modifier being the goal), e.g. صانع الأحذية '*shoemaker*'

ī-'Head + modifier' (modifier being location, time), e.g. حلم اليقظة '*daydream*' or عامل المزرعة '*farm worker*'

īi-'Head that is a modifier+s), e.g. دول المواجهة '*confrontation states*'

iv-'Head that is Modifier+ed), e.g. أملاح الشم '*smelling salts*'

v-'Head at / on / where something is modifier-ed', e.g. نقطة التشبع '*saturation point*'

2-Exocentric *idāfa*

Emery argues that exocentric *idāfa* are not "apparently productive in MSA" (1988, p. 38). He uses a couple of examples from Classical Arabic, such as 'jackal' ابن أوى and 'rattlesnake' ذات الأجراس.

Most importantly, Arabic *idāfa* have their own contexts as al-Hagawi (2005, p. 172) argues. Al-Hagawi demonstrates that the modifier of the Arabic *idāfa* appears after an adverb of time or place. For instance, there is 'before noon' قبل الظهر, 'since morning' منذ الصباح, 'between the two castles' بين القصرين, or 'during the meeting' خلال الاجتماع. In all these examples, the modifier comes after the adverbs of time and place. Thus, the modifiers are الظهر, الصباح, and القصرين. Also, the modifiers come after numbers such as 'six months' ستة أشهر, 'a thousand soldiers' ألف جندي, 'third news(flash)' ثالث موجز, or 'million dollars' مليون دولار. Another context is after the superlative adjectives as in 'the smallest creature', 'best case/condition' or 'the greatest explorer'. Clearly, the modifier in these *idāfa* is 'the smallest creature', 'أفضل حال', 'best condition' and 'أعظم المكتشفين'. Finally, modifiers may come after dependent words, as in 'all parties' جميع الأطراف, 'both persons' كلا الشخصين, or 'all the people'. As shown in these examples, the modifiers are 'الناس' and 'الأطراف'.

3. Translating English Compounds and Arabic *Idāfa*

Based on the above discussion, compounds and *idāfa* are some of the most creative linguistic entities in English and in Arabic. They make languages economical since two words or

concepts can be introduced as one linguistic item. Compounds and *idāfa* share certain characteristics, such as having a head and a modifier as components of their compounds and having endocentric and exocentric types. Most Arabic endocentric *idāfa* can be translated into English with ease. For instance, قطار الصباح has a literal meaning and is translated 'morning train'. Other similar examples are فناء المدرسة 'school yard' and معلمو المدرسة 'school teachers'. The same concept applies when translating English endocentric compounds into Arabic. For example, *TV audience* and *bank customers* are translated as مشاهدوا التلفاز, and 'عملاء البنك', respectively.

However, translating compounds that do have an idiomatic meaning can be difficult for translators. For examples, translating exocentric compounds like *jailbird* can be quite puzzling since the word has no literal meaning and the intended meaning is complex due to the blending of two concepts. (Benczes, 2006, p. 97). This compound is an example of a metaphor-based profile determinant and means 'either a person serving a prison sentence or is an ex-convict' and can only be understood by the two concepts involved (see above). The Arab translator cannot understand this compound unless s/he blends the two concepts successfully to produce the equivalent خريج سجون أو مسجون. Another puzzling example is the compound *flame sandwich* which is 'a note consisting of a negative comment between two positive ones'. Benczes (2006, p. 105) suggests that this compound has three domains (see above). When an Arab translator encounters this compound in a text s/he will not be able to translate it mainly because of the metaphorical element involved in its meaning. The translator needs to understand that the negative comment lies in between the two positive ones.

Other examples that support the difficulty of rendering exocentric compounds are *chain-smoker* and *couch-doctor*. The former compound refers to an excessive smoker, who indulges in smoking one cigarette after another (مدخن شره). Translating such figurative compound will puzzle the Arab translator, who might not be aware of the concept of linking smoking cigarettes non-stop to a metal chain. The conceptual similarity lies in the image of connected metal rings that form a chain and the act of smoking a cigarette immediately after finishing with the previous one. Hence, back-to-back smoking draws a similar image of a chain that is linked by metal rings. Only a knowledgeable translator can link the two mental concepts in order to provide the translation equivalent. On the other hand, *couch-doctor* may not harbor a deep mental conceptual framework like *chain-smoker*, but pose a similar threat to the Arab translator. This is because *couch* in *couch-doctor* might not, on the lexical surface, show the meaning of the compound, which is a 'psychiatrist' (طبيب نفسي). However, if the translator is able to link between this compound and the image of a psychiatrist, which involves him/her sitting in a couch and listening to a patient, then s/he will be able to yield a valid translation.

Other compounds might not pose a translation threat from a conceptual framework, but they tend to be challenging because of the culture-bound meaning that is attached to them. Such examples of culture-bound compounds are *dime-dropper*, *double-decker*, and *moonshine*. The unified difficulty of these three compounds is their cultural input. *Dime-dropper* means either a snitch or an informant for the police in English and مخبر سري أو واثي in Arabic. The dropping of 'dime' revolves around the image of a snitch who heads to the public pay phone and inserts a dime to call the police and informs them about an illegal activity that is taking place nearby. This is attached to the culture of crime informants, ex-convicts, who work for the police as the only

way to avoid going to jail. Therefore, the compound is used to refer to someone who snitches on others.

Regarding *double-decker*, ambiguity is achieved here since this compound refers to either to a two-level bus (باص ذو طابقين), as seen in London and Tokyo, or a two-layer sandwich (شطيرة محشوة بأكثر من طبقة من الجبن واللحم). Only a translator who has an encyclopedic and cultural knowledge can render this culture-laden compound effectively. A translator who is not aware of the ambiguity here might provide one of the two senses in an invalid context.

As for *moonshine*, two senses are contained here; it either means 'nonsense' (كلام لا طائل منه), or 'an illegally distilled alcohol' (خمر مستقطر وغير مرخص). The second meaning is used in the southern states of the United States of America, such as, Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, etc. which adds cultural value to the compound. This specific cultural meaning does not conjure up a universal meaning that the Arab translator hopes to find or is aware of, which will either forces him/her to use the first sense 'nonsense' or opts for a literal translation. Both options will damage the intended meaning of *moonshine* and affects the translation of its context. Thus, cultural knowledge is a must for the translator who comes across such culture-bound compounds. Similarly, Arabic has several *idāfa* that can be difficult to translate into English. For instance the *idāfa* شيخ المترجمين literally means 'sheikh of the translators', which does not make sense to non-native speakers, as this *idāfa* is culture-specific. This *idāfa* means that a person is knowledgeable and has a high status in translation. The reason the word 'sheikh' is chosen for this *idāfa* is because 'sheikh' in Arab culture denotes a person of high rank or stature, and it is also honorific for people versed in religious ways or even village elders. Thus, blending the concepts of 'sheikh' and 'translator' produces this unique *idāfa* that emphasises both high status and knowledge in the field of translation. Other *idāfa* that might cause some difficulty in rendering them to English are 'ابن حرام' and 'ابن حلال'. Both are used as adjectives; however, the former has a literal meaning along with the figurative one. The former literally means 'a bastard son/love child', but when used figuratively, it may mean something like 'cheater', 'deceiver' or 'disloyal', depending on the context. Therefore, this *idāfa* is definitely used when degrading a person. On the other hand, 'ابن حلال' is used to praise a person and may mean something like 'trustworthy', 'helpful' or 'kind', again, depending on the context.

Other exocentric *idāfa* cases that could pose a threat to the translator are مخروط جيد البضعة, لثيم السبال and اللحية. The first example when translated literally mean 'of good fleshy meat', but the intended exocentric meaning is 'of massive girth' or simply 'a big man'. Such *idāfa* might not lose most of the intended meaning when rendered literally, but it is not natural in English. Still, this literal translation is not far from the figurative meaning, which might indicate the unpacked meaning to the translator. Thus, s/he can modify the translation equivalent to suit the metaphorical intention and achieve naturalness in the target language.

In the second example, مخروط اللحية, a literal translation of this *idāfa* will not provide any hints to refer to the intended meaning, since the literal translation would end up as 'a coned beard'. This equivalent sounds unnatural in English, which disqualifies the impact of the translation in context. Interestingly enough, the proper translation is 'a lengthy and thin pointy beard'. This metaphor-based *idāfa* can only be understood if the translator is aware of the feature

of the 'مخروط', which is cone-shaped in a sense that it is pointy and lacks the 'bushy' feature of a typical beard.

As for *لثيم السبال*, it creates more problems than the other two exocentric *idāfa*. This can be attributed to the choice of words used in the head and modifier. *لثيم* conjures up the concepts of a 'mean', 'vile' or 'wicked' person, and *السبال* means 'the hair of the moustache'. A translator who confronts such *idāfa* will render it as 'a vile hair of the moustache', which is erroneous because it cannot be translated word for word. The metaphorical-laden sense adds a layer of difficulty for the translator who is oblivious to the intended meaning, which is 'a contemptible or despicable person'. One might consider this *idāfa* as culture-specific due to the fact that insults towards facial hair are a sign of a status of a person in certain parts of the Arab world. An opposite expression that denotes a positive image of a person is *لحية غانمة* (a blessed person). However, the latter is an idiom rather than a compound in Arabic, which literally means 'a winning beard'. The pattern here is that adjectives used for facial hair either denotes a positive or a negative image in the Arab world.

Conclusion

The present study discussed English compounds and Arabic *idāfa* in terms of their contrastive analysis in order to provide a solid linguistic background on these two phraseological entities. The study also paid attention to their literal (endocentric) and figurative (exocentric) semantic senses for translational purposes. The examples show that exocentric English compounds and Arabic *idāfa* are not easy to render due to their metaphor and metonymy-based meanings. In addition, cultural attachment to the intended meaning of these multi-word items adds another degree of translation difficulty to the Arab translator. Therefore, successful translation of compounds and *idāfa* should be supported by both cultural knowledge and competence and performance in English and Arabic.

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