

## The Effect of Context on Meaning Representation of Measurement Adjectives in Translation of Texts from Different Languages to English Language

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**Abstract:** The easiest place to study contextualization is surely in the relation between words and their contexts of use. Knowing a word involves knowing its meaning and therefore, knowing a word involves knowing its contexts of use. People communicate via sentences, seldom via isolated words. Our interest here lies in the shift of emphasis from referential or dictionary meaning to contextual meaning of adjectives. For this purpose we choose measurement adjectives such as *big, large, small and little* and we refer to their contextual meaning rather than referential meaning in translation from different languages namely Persian and Azeri into English language or vice versa. Since *big* and *large, small and little* are synonyms; it is not surprising that they can be used to describe many of the same nouns. However, they are not perfect synonyms and there are some differences in the distribution of these adjectives which make some problems for translators especially from those languages which these kinds of differences are not so obvious.

**Key words:** Referential meaning • Contextual meaning • Large • Big • Small • Little

### INTRODUCTION

Translation, as an activity, is a task which has been performed for centuries. This is an activity whose main concern is to facilitate the communication process. The professional of translation reaches this goal by translating the information received in a foreign language into the language of the person who required his services and vice versa. When this complex process is carried out in a factual communicative situation, then, it is possible to say that translation has reached its ultimate goal. Translation studies (TS) relies so heavily on a concept of meaning, that one may claim that there is no TS without any reference to meanings. However, different approaches in TS refer to different types of meaning: some researchers are looking for lexical patterns in source texts and their translations [1], while other scholars concentrate on how the text utterances function within their immediate contexts [2-4]. Or while some studies are investigations of the impact of the text as a whole on its audience or even society [5], others refer to philosophy of language as a means to look at meaning in translation [6-7]. If we assume that the goal of both learning a L2 and translating into another language is to transmit appropriate meaning

linguistically, semantically and pragmatically, then learning a L2 should be linked to translation exercises.

Some researchers explicitly talk about meaning as a cognitive concept and say, for instance, that translators and interpreters construct or assemble meaning [8-9]. Others regard it as a textual characteristic. In the latter view, texts themselves hold meanings, so translations can be compared in terms of meanings with each other, with source texts or with a comparable corpus. Taking into account the lexicological aspect, a translator should be knowledgeable of the formation of words in the languages he works from and into and the semantic relations held among these words, above all in specialized contexts. Sometimes, translators, as linguistic mediators, may face the situation of solving lexical problems, that is, translators are not able to find an appropriate linguistic resource in the target language which properly transmits the message. As Zohrevandi [10] points out “translation now deals with communicative needs and purposes for stretches of written or oral discourse which is calls communicative competence”.

On the other hand, another term for clarifying the meaning in translation is contextualization. Contextualization is not exclusively linguistic, of course;

as Sun [11] refers to it and says that using context to determine linguistic meaning is simply a special case of a general cognitive ability. Contextualization has been defined as the use of context to determine meaning and to resolve potential ambiguities. When contextualization is linked so closely to meaning, of course, it inherits all the uncertainties associated with the concept of meaning. But it also inherits the broad scope of meaningfulness. Wherever experience is meaningful, context must be considered and language provides one of the best avenues to approach a study of the remarkable human capacity to use context. A contextual approach to lexical semantics might assume that the meanings of a word form are fully reflected in appropriate aspects of the relations it contracts with actual and potential contexts [12].

In linguistics, context carries tremendous importance in disambiguation of meanings as well as in understanding the actual meaning of words. Therefore, understanding the context becomes an important task in the area of applied linguistics, computational linguistics, lexical semantics, cognitive linguistics, as well as in other areas of linguistics as context triggers variation of meaning and supplies valuable information to understand why and how a particular word varies in meaning when used in a piece of text. Keeping this question in mind, I have made an attempt here to understand the nature, type and role of context in the act of meaning disambiguation of words used in a language. On the other hand reviewing the English language teaching in Iranian and Azarbayjaniyan institutions and universities, one would recognize that Iranian and Azeri students are confronted with two problems: distinguishing between referential and contextual meaning of special words and finding an appropriate equivalents for those words in target language. In order to examine the mentioned questions or hypotheses a series of steps were taken.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

From pre-intermediate students, who were attending translating classes in the field of English language teaching at Islamic Azad University in Karaj and Kaspi institution in Azerbaijan, a sample of 150 students on the basis of their GEP were selected. The rationale behind selecting subjects suitable for this study was to select homogeneous subjects regarding their language proficiency. On the basis of the subjects' scores on a standard GEP test (i.e. a 1961 version of Michigan test),

150 students were selected. Then these students randomly divided into an experimental group and a control group. It is better to mention that because we had two different native language speakers, in each groups we again had two groups namely Persian and Azeri speakers in experimental group and Persian and Azeri speakers in control group.

In order to conduct this study, three sets of tests were needed: a proficiency test (i.e. Michigan test), translating pre-test and translating post-test. The translating pre-test, which was validated against a standardized test (i.e. IELTS), conducted before the treatment of experiment to see whether there is any difference between control and experimental groups. The last test was a translating post-test which was after six sessions instructing the differences between referential and contextual meaning of measurement adjectives such as big, large, small and little and the effect of context for finding appropriate equivalents in translation. First, for experimental groups the teachers activated students' background knowledge about the referential and contextual meaning of the mentioned adjectives, then, by clarifying the special collocations that these adjectives take and choosing appropriate equivalents in translating from their native languages (Persian and Turkish) to English language they helped students to have appropriate translating. The criterion for these sentences, which were chosen, was their readability grades. Then, to estimate the reliability of the tests, the KR-21 formula was applied. It is better to mention that for the control groups, there was no instruction. They did translating without being aware of the effect of the differences between referential and contextual meaning of the mentioned adjectives.

Regarding the distribution of raw scores in each group, it was for the researcher to determine the descriptive statistics for the translating pre and post tests (Table 1)

Then, in order to examine the mentioned hypothesis, i.e. the effect of teaching differences between referential and contextual meaning of measurement adjectives and the effect of context on meaning representation of measurement adjectives again a one way ANOVA was run (Table 2). The F observed value for the effect of the grouping variable, is 434.55. This amount of F at 1 and 146 degrees of freedom is greater than the critical value of F, i.e. 3.92. This indicates that the experimental groups performed better than the control groups on the post-tests.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the translating Pre and Post Tests

Tests	Groups		Mean	SD	V	Maximum	Minimum	N
Pre-test	Persian language speakers	Exp.	18.92	4.963	24.63	9.00	24.00	38
		Cont.	18.72	4.634	21.48	9.00	24.00	37
	Azeri language speakers	Exp.	18.93	4.964	24.64	9.00	24.00	37
		Cont.	18.98	4.969	25.11	9.00	24.00	38
Post-tests	Persian language speakers	Exp.	23.58	4.551	20.71	14.00	30.00	38
		Cont.	15.13	2.083	4.342	4.00	15.00	37
	Azeri language speakers	Exp.	22.75	4.335	21.12	14.00	30.00	37
		Cont.	16.078	2.984	5.75	4.00	15.00	38

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for the Post-test

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	D.F	Mean squares	F observed	P	F critical
Group	4372.01	1	4372.01	434.55	.000	3.92
Residual	1468.88	146	10.06			
Total	7637.89	149	51.26			

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study examined the effect of context on meaning representation of measurement adjectives as well as the effect of being aware of differences between referential and contextual meaning of the mentioned adjectives in finding appropriate equivalents in translation. As mentioned in the previous parts, I want to concentrate in this article on the problems non-native speakers may have with English vocabulary use-in particular with the appropriate combinations of words. This is an aspect of language called collocation. An example of collocation that many learners of English may be familiar with is adjectives that are used to describe nouns. In order to clarify this research questions we chose measurement adjectives for explaining differences between referential and contextual meaning as well as finding appropriate equivalents in target language i.e. English. Since *big* and *large* or *small* and *little* are synonyms, it is not surprising that they can be used to describe many of the same nouns.

However, they are not perfect synonyms and there are some differences in the distribution of these four adjectives which make some problems for the translators. On the other hand when the translation is taking place across two different languages that do not have culture in common, it is often difficult to obtain even the lexical equivalent of a given items in translation. In order to elaborate these differences in detail, we will try to give the translation of sentences given to the students in experimental and control groups. As mentioned above, the main question here is that since there are not any differences between the mentioned adjectives in some

other languages, how translators can make a distinction between them in English or vice versa. For answering these kinds of questions, comparing the list of the words which occurred only with *big* and *large* and those which occurred only with *small* and *little* in English revealed some differences and put an end to some confusing in choosing appropriate collocations.

In support of this statement at first we are going to speak about *big* and *large* then we will consider *small* and *little* in details.

*Large* but not *big* is used with the nouns *amount*, *number* and *quantity*, so it would be surprising to find these nouns on the list of nouns which occur significantly often with *big* and the words that occurred significantly often with *big* but not *large*, shows that *big* does not occur significantly often with any *Quantity Nouns*. Other categories which occur significantly often with *big* but not with *large* are *Actions words*, *Popular Things*, *Important*, *Serious Things* and *Head of Idioms*. With all of these nouns, *big* is describing something other than physical size. For example, with the nouns listed under *Actions*, *big* describes the intensity of the action, that is, the amount of energy involved and / or the strength of the effect. *A big lift* is one that lifts something very high and *a big push* is one that involves a lot of energy and which moves something a long way. The meaning of *big* with the *Action* nouns is quite similar to the meaning with some of the *Amount* nouns, such as *change* and *drop*. For example:

- (in persian) *Agar motevajehe shurue tagirate kuchek va jozi bashid baraye tagire bozorgi ke ehtemalan dar rah ast behtar amade mishavid.*

- (in Azari) *Kiçik dəyişiklik baş verməyə başladıqı anda siz onu hiss edə bilərsiniz, odur ki, siz gələcək böyük dəyişikliyə daha da yaxşı hazır olmalısınız.*
- (in English) *You could notice when the little change began so that you would be better prepared for the big change that might be coming.*

In fact, most of the *Amount* nouns which occur with *big* could probably be considered *Actions* rather than (or in addition to) *Amounts*. I have distinguished the two types here mainly because the *Amounts* are somewhat more abstract in meaning than the *Actions* and because some of the *Amounts* (e.g. *cut, drop, increase*) also occur significantly often with *large*, but *large* does not occur significantly often in the corpus with any *Actions*. Although there are some contexts in which *large* may be able to modify some of the *Action* nouns (e.g., *a large boost in the polls*), it sounds quite strange with most of them (e.g. *a large jump, a large splash*).

The nouns listed under *Important, Serious Things* name things which are not necessarily important or serious in themselves, but which are interpreted as such when modified by *big*; in other words, it is *big* that contributes the meaning of *important* or *serious* to phrases such as *big news* and *big factor*. *Project*, one of the nouns seems to belong to this category--a *big project* is a project that is important. *Project*, of course occurred significantly often with *large* as well as *big*.

Unlike *project*, most of the nouns categorized as *Important, Serious Things* cannot easily be quantified in terms of dollars or other units of measurement, which may explain why phrases such as *a large news* and *a large test* do not occur. The same kind of explanation can account for the fact that *large* does not sound especially awkward with a few *Action* nouns such as *large boost* and *large impact*; in some contexts, at least, these nouns describe things that can be easily quantified

Another category which occurs with *big* is *Heads of Idioms*. While *large* did not occur significantly often in any idiomatic *adjective+noun* phrases, *big* forms idioms with several nouns, for example, *big band* (a band that plays a particular kind of music, not a band with a lot of members) and *the big bang* (the explosion that is supposed to have created the universe). Some nouns have both literal interpretations (usually as *Physical Objects*) and idiomatic interpretations with *big*. For example, *big picture* can be used to refer to a drawing, painting or photograph which is large in size and it also has two idiomatic interpretations; it can mean something like 'an overall view or understanding of a situation' and

it can be used to refer to a successful movie. Obviously, *large* cannot take the place of *big* in any of the idiomatic phrases. With many of these nouns *large* sounds extremely awkward, e.g., *a large bucks, a large name, a large talk*; In the cases where *large* sounds fine, the noun is always interpreted literally (e.g., *large fish, large band* and *large business*). In some of the idiomatic phrases, the meaning of *big* is quite similar to its meaning with the *Important, Serious Things*. For example:

- (in Persian). *Sare bozorg darde ziyadi ham darad. "harke bamash bish barfash bish"*
- (in Azari). *Böyük başın böyük də ağrısı olar.*
- (in English) *A big head has a big ache.*

However, as it is mentioned, there are many nouns from these categories which occur only with *big* or only with *large*. Perhaps the most striking pattern is that *large* occurs significantly often with many more *Physical Objects* than *big* does. This is somewhat surprising given the dictionary descriptions of *big* and *large*; since the basic meaning of both *big* and *large* seems to involve physical size, it might be expected that all of the *Physical Objects* nouns on the *large* list could also occur with *big*. Certainly, *big* does not sound as awkward with these nouns as it does with the *Quantity Nouns*. That is, although *bag, bowl* and *buildings* do not occur on the *big* list, the phrases *big bag, big bowl* and *big building* do not sound very strange and they sound more natural than *big quantity* or *big degree*. The question here, then, is why *large* is preferred with nouns of this type. In many cases, it may be because *large* is used (along with *small* and *medium*) to describe a standard size of food and household items. Many of the nouns which occur with *large* but not *big* fall into this category (e.g., *bowl, eggs, onions, skillet* and *tomatoes*), while none of the *Physical Objects* nouns which occur with *big* do. However, this does not explain why *large* is preferred with nouns such as *flowers, garden* and *rock*. Register differences may play a role here; if, as dictionaries suggest, *large* is more formal than *big*, then perhaps *large* is chosen over *big* because this written corpus is relatively formal.

Another difference between *big* and *large* with the *Physical Objects* nouns is that many of the nouns that occur with *big* but not *large* seem to be describing something other than purely physical size. Many of these nouns describe people (*boy(s), guard, guy(s)* and *kid*) or parts of people's body (*mouth* and *toe*). While *big* can describe purely physical size with these nouns, all of them except *guard* also have idiomatic interpretations, e.g., *big*

*kid* meaning 'older kid', *big toe* referring to 'a particular toe' and *big mouth*, in sentences such as *He's got a big mouth*, used to talk about someone who says something he should not say. With *grin* and *smile*, *big* seems to be describing intensity rather than, or in addition to, physical size, so these two nouns seem similar to the nouns in the *Actions* category. If all of these nouns are weeded out, there are only a few nouns with which *big* have a purely physical interpretation, i.e., *bar*, *boats*, *gap*, *guard* and *tent*. For example:

- (in Persian). *Dar zamanhayə naxostin anha adət dashtand beravand be donbale in golha dar gayegi ke benodrat bozorgtar az yek zorag bood.*
- (in Azari). *Əvvəllər onlar kanoədən bir az böyük qayıqda gedərdilər.*
- (in English) *In earlier times, they used to go after these giant in a boat hardly bigger than a canoe.*

*Large*, in contrast, occurs with many nouns of this type, which strengthens the impression that in this corpus at least, *large* is preferred over *big* for describing purely physical size, especially for non-human things. Both *big* and *large* occur with *Amounts*, but the additional data suggests a slight semantic distinction between *big* and *large* when used with nouns of this type. The amount nouns which occur with *big* but not *large*--*change*, *difference*, *discounts* and *rise*, are "dynamic" in meaning in that they describe *changes* in an amount; in contrast, most of the amount nouns which occur with *large* describe amounts of money or products which are relatively "stable" (although they can potentially undergo an increase or decrease), e.g., a *fee* is a set amount of money that is charged for a service and an *inventory* is a listing of the amount of products that are in stock at a particular time. This difference between *big* and *large* is not absolute--as was shown above, *big* occurred with "stable" amounts such as *profits* and *stakes*, while *large* occurred with "dynamic" amounts such as *cut* and *increase*---but there is a tendency for *big* to be used to describe amounts of change.

It has been shown so far that when the overall uses of *big* and *large* are compared, they have many uses in common, but there are also a lot of differences; in particular, there are entire semantic categories of nouns which occur with *big* but not *large* and vice versa.

Another basic option in the system Measure-type is [class-property], which does not specify a measurable parameter, like [quantity], but the class of objects that are semantically considered as large or small. This feature

covers uses of little thing in the example as well as big names, low achievers, deep feeling, etc. In several cases, the feature controls the choice between near-synonymous lexical items. For instance, a large fish refers to the physical size of a particular fish, while a big fish belong to the class of big fishes. The expression a large city is not idiomatic. It is normally used in expressions referring to the number of people living in it or the area it occupies uses of a big city are different. The big city is used to refer to a large city which seems attractive to someone because they think there are many exciting things to do there and opportunities to earn a lot of money. So in the case of [non-directional] size specifications, the feature [quantity] is preferably realized by large, while the feature [class-property] by big. Pay attention to these examples:

- (in Persian) *Dar gharne hejdahom, shahrha bozorgtar va shulugtar shodand.*
- (in Azari) *On səkkizinci əsrdə şəhərlər daha böyük və daha sıx əhalili oldu.*
- (in English) *In the eighteenth century, cities became larger and more crowded.*
- (in persian) ..... *Sedaye in masale be tamamiye shahrhaye bozorg, homeye shahr va rostaha paksh shode bud.*
- (in Azari)..... *bunun əks-sədası bütün böyük şəhərlərdə, ucqar guclərdə, xırda kəndlərdə də yayıldı.*
- (in English)..... *tidings of this spreaded to all big cities, outskirt places, small villages as well.*

By comparing the translations of the given examples in other languages, it can be seen that both *big* and *large* are translated to *bozorg* in Persian and *böyük* in Azeri. By lack of these differences in mentioned languages, as it mentioned before being aware of the context that these adjectives can be used can be the best way for overcoming these kinds of problems. On the other hand, in translation, the translator ought to translate the communicative function of the source language text, rather than its signification. Thus for more considering pay attention to the following examples:

- (in Persian) *O va shoharash, Piter, mazraeye bozorgi dar jazire dashtand.*
- (in Azari) *O və onun əri Peterin adada böyük bir ferması vardı.*
- (in English) *She and her husband Peter had a large farm on an island.*

- (in Persian) *Do bar tuye pakat ra gashtam va fagat yek surakhe bozorg yaftam*
- (in Azari) *Mən çantanın içində kəsik hiss etdim və yekə bir deşik olduğunu gördüm.*
- (in English) *I felt inside the bag a gain and found a big hole.*
- (in Persian) *Mery dokhtare bozorgi shode ast. O sari bozorg mishavad.*
- (in Azari) *Meri böyük qız olub. O, çox tez böyüyür.*
- (in English) *Mary has become a big girl. She is growing up fast.*
- (in Azari) *Dumana baxmayaraq o kiçik qayıqları və çayın sahilini görə bildi.*
- (in English) *Through the fog he could see small boats and shore of a river.*
- (in Persian) *Pedare Albaniyaiye o yek mazreye kucheki dasht.*
- (in Azari) *Onun alban atasının kiçik bir ferması vardı.*
- (in English) *Her Albanian father had a small farm.*

For more considering the referential and contextual meaning of other lexical items lets us consider the other two adjectives for example *small* and *little* which are considered synonymous in the world of non-linguistic reality, but are not simply used alternatively in free variation on each other.

In support of this statement it is better to mention that unlike *little*, *small* occurs significantly often with many different nouns that name *Physical Objects, Groups, Organizations, Actors, Quantity Nouns and Amounts*. Why doesn't the adjective *little* occur with these nouns? This may be due in part to its connotations. *Little* is used about something or someone that is small to show that you like or dislike them or that you feel sorry for them. However, things such as airport, engines and farms are more likely to be described in objective terms using *small*. Since *little* occurs with a wider range of physical objects such as boat, building, clouds, coat, door and many others *small* also occurs with physical Objects, which are purchased in standard sizes, e.g., *bowl, potatoes* and *skillet*, as well as some nouns which name other non-human objects, such as *buildings, flowers* and *pool*. Look at these examples;

- (in Persian) *Avalin mashine parandeye Lionarddo motore kucheki dasht.*
- (in Azari) *Leonardanın ilk uçan maşınında kiçik bir mühərrik vardı.*
- (in English) *Leonardos' first flying machine had a small engine.*
- (in Persian) *Mardan ba paro zadan gayege kuchek ra amud bar nahang dar miavordand.*
- (in Azari) *Adamlar kiçik qayıqı balınaya tərəf sürürdülər.*
- (in English) *Men would row the little boat right up to the whale*
- (in Persian) *Az miyane meh mitavanest chand gayege kuchek va sahele yek rud ra bebinad*

Of the two adjectives examined in this case study, *little* is the only one that has two grammatical functions-it is used both as an adjective of size (in combinations such as *little dog*) and as a quantifier for mass nouns (in combinations such as *little relevance* and *little respect*).

These functions are quite distinct; all the learners' dictionaries list the quantifier and adjective under separate headings and point out that the opposite of the adjective *little* is *big*, while the quantifier contrasts with *much* and a *great deal*.

Choosing *little* as an adjective or quantifier is done meaning on the basis of the status of each noun as either count noun or a mass noun. With count nouns, *little* generally functions as an adjective (e.g. *little dog*, *little kids*, *little town*) while with mass nouns, it is generally a quantifier (e.g., *little damage*, *little enthusiasm*, *little headway*). Many of the nouns which occurred significantly often with *little* can be used as either count or mass nouns, for example, *benefit*, *consequence*, *emotion* and *faith*, but with most of them, only the mass interpretation is possible with *little*, so these were categorized as examples of the quantifier use of *little* with others, both interpretations are possible (e.g., *difficulty* and *disagreement*). In all, *little* occurs significantly often with three categories, *Physical Objects, Heads of Idioms* and *Abstract Nouns*; it does not occur significantly often in this corpus with any nouns in the categories of *Groups, Organizations, Actors, Amounts* or *Quantity Nouns*.

Even within the *Physical Objects*, the largest category of *little* nouns, are people-related and some of them seem more likely to be used with an idiomatic interpretation (i.e. *little finger* used to refer to a specific finger, *little lady* used to refer to girls or women regardless of their physical size and *the little guy* used to refer to 'the average person'). Within the other three nouns, *boy(s)*, *girl(s)* and *kid(s)*, *little* conveys an impression of young age in addition to small physical size. Unlike *small*, *little* is not one of a range of standard sizes, so it doesn't usually occur with nouns that name food or household items. For more considering, pay attention to these examples:

- (in Persian) Tamrine kucheke sar angoshti baraye shoma gofte mishavad.
- (in Azari). Bu da kiçik barmaqla məşq.
- (in English) Here's a little finger exercise.

We can also consider the realization of features like [absolute] or [relative] age specification by specific lexical items and/or grammatical constraints on the structure of the nominal group. For instance, the [relative] age specification is realized by *little*, while the [absolute] age specification can be realized by *young* for an adult and either *little* or *small* for a child, depending on preference options, such as the interpersonal attitude and other restrictions, i.e., *small* refers more to the size of a child, while *little* to the age. This means that we have three lexical items: *little*, *small* and *young*.

To sum up, the translation task becomes a complex process where either linguistic or non-linguistic elements provide the text with that nuance that makes it unique. Since some language learners believe that memorizing many words could freely help them to use this language, but in fact, the more important is to know the relation among words, properly combine words, phrase, sentences and lexical chunks. Luo [14] refers to this fact and says that it is more important to know the fellowship of one word. For this reason, translators should demonstrate that they have developed both linguistic and communicative competence in the languages involved in their translating exercise in order to solve possible problems they may face during their professional practice. A translator must, therefore, look for a target-language utterance that has an equivalent communicative function, regardless of its formal resemblance to original utterance as far as the formal structure is concerned. In other words, translation should operate or take place on the level of language use, more than usage. However, it's not important to be able to classify collocations in target language according to their exact degree of fixedness. It probably is helpful to know that some collocations are more fixed than others: if you recognize a collocation as very fixed, you can learn it as one item; if you recognize it as less fixed, you understand that there's a pattern there that you can use to build a collection of useful related phrases. It's also helpful to pay attention to how collocations relate to the context around them. In some cases, especially with structures and longer phrases, the use of a collocation depends very heavily on the situation in which it's used.

## CONCLUSION

The study reported in this paper shows an approaching for describing lexical semantics from the viewpoint of their uses in contexts. Our interest here lies in the shift of emphasis from referential or dictionary meaning to contextual meaning. The meaning of a given word or set of words is best understood as the contribution that word or phrase can make to the meaning or function of the whole sentence or linguistic utterance where that word or phrase occurs. The meaning of a given word is governed not only by the external object or idea that particular word is supposed to refer to, but also by the use of that particular word or phrase in a particular way, in a particular context and to a particular effect. In order to expand the importance of this fact, referential and contextual meaning of the measurement adjectives has been studied. This study showed that although both *big and large*, *small* and *little* are near synonyms, this does not mean they are identical in meaning and translator can choose each of them without paying attention to their contextual meaning; they are synonyms by virtue of the fact that they are associated with the same semantic dimension, but they are differentiated by the fact that they modify different kinds of nouns and cannot simply be used alternatively in free variation on each other.

**Pedagogical Implications for Learners as Well as for Teachers:** Learners should realize the importance of lexical collocation and teachers should also put it on the important state in the teaching outline of English. In recent years, the selected teaching materials in colleges all arrange the exercises of lexical collocation and offer some practical collocation exercises, but there is still largely improved space. For example, the glossaries involved in these exercises are less and the exercise form is single and theoretical explanation is shallow, which cannot effectively enhance students' ability in lexical collocation. Aiming at learning on different levels, teachers could design various lexical collocation exercises. On the other hand, a good lexical collocation dictionary is necessary for learners who want to further enhance their English level. The "Oxford Collocations" published by the Oxford University Press in 2006 [13] has about ten thousand words including nouns, verbs and adjectives and it contains the language situation and collocations of most words for middle and high level learners and includes 50000 example sentences which could exactly and vividly reflect the application of lexical collocation in practical life.

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