

## English 'Green' and its Arabic Equivalent 'Akhḍar': Similar or Different?

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**Abstract:** *This lexical contrastive study aims at investigating the similarities and differences between the English color term "green" and its Arabic equivalent "akhḍar" in terms of: denotative meanings, connotative meanings, morphological specifications, inflections, derivations, compounding, metaphorical meanings and idiomatic uses. Data were collected from several monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and electronic databases. The analysis revealed that the color terms "green" and "akhḍar" express similar meanings in addition to their common universal meaning as terms expressing a color between yellow and blue. However, despite the similarity, each lexical item expresses different meanings not expressed by its equivalent.*

**Keywords:** Lexical contrastive analysis, Green, and akhḍar.

### 1. Introduction

Contrastive analysis is a subfield of linguistics that aims at comparing and contrasting two language systems or subsystems in order to identify the similarities and differences between them. A brief but an adequate history of Arabic-English contrastive studies can be found in Lewis Mukattash's paper (2001). Most of those contrastive analyses were conducted at the phonological and syntactic levels. For example, at the phonological level, the final word syllables in English and Arabic were investigated in a contrastive study carried out by Salman (2012). At the morphological level, Ibrahim (2010) conducted a contrastive study to compare and contrast noun formation processes in English and Arabic. Syntactically oriented contrastive studies, on the other hand, are hierarchically abundant, starting from connectives up to words, phrases and whole texts (see Hamdan and Fareh, 1999; Al-Saleemi, 1987; Fareh, 2006).

Arabic-English lexical contrastive studies are very scanty. Hasan and Al-Sammerai (2011) studied how color terms are used in the Arab and English cultures. The six colors chosen for the study are black, white, red, green, blue and yellow. The original, extended and additional meanings of each color were investigated in both English and Arabic in order to determine the similarities and differences between these words in both cultures. It is worth mentioning here that Hasan's study is an overview of the basic and extended meanings of six colors in both Arabic and English. Furthermore, this study devoted only one paragraph to explain the differences between English 'green' and its counterpart in Arabic. In contrast, the present study is a one-to-one proper comprehensive contrastive analysis between one English color term "green" and

its Arabic counterpart “akhḍar”. Another study on color terms in Arabic was conducted by Al-Adaileh (2012) in order to investigate the connotations of Arabic color terms with special reference to Jordanian Arabic. The researcher examined the figurative uses of the colors *black, white, yellow, red, green* and *blue*. This study, although non-contrastive, can be used as a base for comparing the connotations of Arabic color terms with those of colors in other languages. However, the reference to Jordanian Arabic limits the scope of this study. Another limitation of this study is that it is restricted to one lexical aspect that is the connotations of certain color terms.

Contrastive lexical studies on color terms are also very few in other languages. Rasekh and Ghafel (2011) investigated the differences between the connotations of color terms in English and Persian. The study revealed that although the connotations of color terms in both languages overlap, they are culture-bound in most cases.

This review indicates that lexical contrastive studies in general are still very scanty, especially in the field of color terms. This means that there is a dire need for more comprehensive studies as it is the case in the current study.

## 2. Objectives of the study

This study is an attempt to identify the similarities and differences between two lexical items: the English color term (green) and its Arabic equivalent (akhḍar). In more specific terms, it aims at answering the following questions:

1. What are the morphological differences and similarities between the two words?
2. What are the differences and similarities between the basic denotative and connotative meanings of English "green" and its Arabic equivalent "akhḍar"?
3. What are the major metaphorical and idiomatic uses of the two words?
4. What implications may this contrastive lexical study have for teachers, translators, and foreign language learners?

## 3. Rationale of the study

The study is carried out at the lexical level of language; a level that received scant attention in the field of contrastive linguistics. The findings of this study may contribute to the fields of lexical contrastive linguistics, lexicology, foreign language teaching, and translation. The present study not only makes similarities and differences between the two terms more explicit, but it also helps translators, teachers and students to readily recognize the differences. Consequently, translators are expected to become more capable of handling the difficulties that might arise while translating texts containing the lexical items in question.

According to Bell (1991:36), translation competence consists of five types of knowledge: target language knowledge, text-type knowledge, source language knowledge, real world knowledge, and contrastive knowledge. Once these five types of knowledge are combined, the translator's lexical competence

will be remarkably enhanced and will work effectively at the problem-solving and decision-making processes he experiences while translating. According to Mehdi (2011), when words, including color terms, are examined cross-linguistically, their lexical properties become more explicit.

Socially speaking, avoiding meanings that might be considered impolite or socially unacceptable in the target culture will in turn facilitate communication between native and non-native speakers. In addition, realizing the differences between the two languages adds a new way of perceiving reality and enhances our acceptance of foreign ideas.

#### 4. Methodology

In his book *Linguistics Across Cultures*, Lado (1957:89) states that in comparing two vocabulary systems, "The full vocabulary of the major languages known is extremely large and would require a lifetime of research to compare, item by item, with any other full vocabulary." In an attempt to delimit the scope of lexical contrastive analysis, James (1980:86) suggests the "preselection of various semantic domains (or fields)." Hartmann's list (Hartmann 1975, as cited in James 1980) includes the word fields that have been studied, which are: "offence, joy, visual perception, sounds, facial expressions, colors, eating, verba dicendi (verbs of speaking), parts of the body, vehicles, cooking, artifacts for sitting, pipe joints, etc. This study investigates one color item that is "green" and its Arabic equivalent "akhḍar" as representative items of the semantic field of colors. The entire semantic field of colors cannot be covered in one single research paper. In fact, it needs a whole book to do so. In this study, data for the two terms were collected from the following sources:

##### 4.1 Arabic monolingual dictionaries

More than 30 Arabic monolingual dictionaries were used in order to determine the meanings and uses of the word "akhḍar." Examples of such dictionaries are: الصحاح في اللغة والعلوم (1960), معجم متن اللغة (1908), المنجد في اللغة والأدب والعلوم (1975), العين (1986), جمهرة اللغة (1987), المصباح المنير (1987), الصحاح في اللغة (1990), لسان العرب (2001), تاج العروس في جواهر القاموس (1998), مختار القاموس (1990), قطر المحيط (2008), معجم اللغة العربية المعاصرة (2005), القاموس المحيط (2004), المعجم الوسيط (2009), قاموس المعاني (2014).

##### 4.2 English monolingual dictionaries

More than 20 dictionaries were used, including: *The Century Dictionary* (1895), *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary* (1913), *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1992), *English Collins Dictionary* (2014), *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*, *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*, *Chambers 21st Century Dictionary* (2011), *The Free Dictionary.com*, *Dictionary.com*.

#### 4.3 Bilingual dictionaries:

*The Concise Oxford English-Arabic Dictionary* (1982), *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (1980), المورد الوسيط (1996), *A Learner's Arabic-English Dictionary* (1989), الدليل (2009), المرشد (2013), قاموس المورد (2013), قاموس المعاني (2014).

**4.4 The Holy Quran:** An interpretation of the meanings of the Holy Quran by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (1996).

The two terms "green" and "akhḍar" were first analyzed in terms of basic morphological specifications: inflection, derivation and the formation of compounds. Second, their denotative, metaphorical, idiomatic, and connotative meanings were highlighted. The similarities and differences in these areas were identified between the two items. Finally, conclusions, in addition to further implications, were provided.

#### 5. Discussion of grammatical similarities and differences

Although Arabic and English have their own unique morphological systems, both systems focus on three fundamental processes: inflection, derivation and compounding.

##### 5.1 Inflections

Having collected all the possible Arabic and English inflections of the word "green" and its Arabic equivalent "akhḍar", the researcher observed that there are far more inflected words in Arabic than in English. Moreover, English has the same inflected forms of the word "green" for every meaning that the words include, whilst in Arabic, there are different inflected forms for almost every different meaning of the word "akhḍar". The only similarities here would be that both words, when inflected, express plurality and different verb tenses. However, these two categories are not expressed similarly.

##### 5.1.1 Plurality

Grammatically speaking, plurality is regularly expressed in English by adding the suffix (-s) to nouns, regardless of the different meanings each word conveys. Hence, the plural form of "green" is 'greens'. This process of adding the plural (-s) applies also to the derivative forms of the word, again regardless of meaning as in 'greengage' and its plural form: 'greengages'.

On the other hand, "akhḍar" has a different plural form or even forms for the different meanings of the word. When "akhḍar" means *the color green*, it has two inflected forms: 'khudār خُضَرَ and khudr خُضْر. When "akhḍar" denotes *vegetables*, it has the plural form: khadra:wa:t خَضْرَاوَات. When "akhḍar" means *milk mixed with so much water*, it has the plural form: 'khaḍa:r خَضَار', etc. The fact that an Arabic singular noun may have different plural forms with different meanings seems to be unique to Arabic.

### 5.1.2 Different verb tense

When inflected with (-s, -d, -ing), "green" expresses different tenses of the verb; greens (third person singular), greening (present participle), and greened, (past tense and past participle). The Arabic "akhḍar", on the other hand, has different inflected verbs, past and present, for almost every different meaning. For example, the following forms: (ʔikhḍarra اِخْضَرَ, khaddar خَضَرَ, ʔikhḍawḍar اِخْضَوْضَرَ, khadīr خَضِرَ, yukhḍir يُخْضِرُ, akhḍur أَخْضُرُ, ʔikhḍa:rra اِخْضَارًا, akhḍarahu أَخْضَرَهُ, etc.) all mean *to become green*. (khuddir خُضِرَ), on the other hand, means *to be blessed with something; usually a handicraft*, (kha:ḍar خَاضَرَ, ʔikhtaḍar اِخْتَضَرَ, ʔikhtaḍart اِخْتَضَرْتُ, ʔikhtuḍir اِخْتَضِرُ) mean *to take or sell or eat while green or unripe*, etc.

Moreover, one Arabic inflected form denotes more than one grammatical category as in "khaddar خَضَرَ", which means *to become green*. It also expresses the following grammatical categories: tense (past), person (2<sup>nd</sup> person), number (singular), gender (masculine), aspect (perfective), and voice (active). All of these notions are expressed by one word; a syntactic luxury that the English word structure lacks.

### 5.1.3 Number and gender

In addition to being inflected for plurality and tense, the Arabic word "akhḍar" can also be inflected for duality, a notion that is not grammaticalized in English. However, English indicates the concept of duality lexically rather than grammatically. Therefore, Arabic "akhḍar" can become "akhḍara:n اِخْضَرَانِ" which functions as an adjective, meaning "Two green ... (any noun)", and "akhḍar أَخْضَرَ (masculine) and khadira:ʔ خَضِرَاءُ (feminine) " mean "green (neutral)".

## 5.2 Derivations

To derive new forms, the two languages utilize two very different techniques. Arabic uses the root-pattern system to generate new words while English uses affixation. Every root in Arabic has a specific lexical meaning. Roots interlock with different patterns to create new derived forms; so basically, roots can be viewed as semantic fields from which other new words are created. These new words hold meanings related to that of their root (Ryding 2005:47-48). Due to the flexibility of the root-pattern system, the number of Arabic derived forms of "akhḍar" are again far more than the derivative forms of its English equivalent "green". In contrast, English uses prefixes and suffixes (affixation) as a lexical enrichment tool.

Despite this discrepancy in number, almost half of the derived forms related to "green" express meanings related to those expressed by "akhḍar". These similarities are:

1. Both have derivatives denoting nouns: ("akhḍar": khudra خُضْرَةٌ, khudr خُضْرٌ, khuda:ra خُضَارَةٌ, khadīr خَضِيرٌ, khadri: خَضِرِيٌّ, khadira:ʔ خَضِرَاءُ, khadira خَضِيرَةٌ, khadār خَضَرَ, khudr خُضِرَ, mikhḍa:r مِخْضَارٌ, ʔukhayḍir اُخْيَضِرُ, khudda:ra خُضَارِيٌّ, khudri: خُضْرِيٌّ, khudda:r خُضَارٌ, khuda:ri: خُضَارِيٌّ

خَضَارِيّ, mukha:dara مُخَاضِرَة, khada:ra خَصَاة, khada:r خَصَار, khudayr خُضَيْر, khudriya خُضْرِيَّة, ?ikhdi:r اِخْضِير, khudayra:? خُضَيْرَاء, etc.) ("Green": greenness, greening, greenage, greens, greenishness, greenery, greensome, greenie, greenth and greenhood).

2. Both have derivatives denoting adjectives: ("akhḍar": akhḍar أَخْضَر, khadu:r خَضُور, khadir خَصِير, khadi:r خَصِير, yakhdī:r يَخْضِير, yakhdū:r يَخْضُور, makhḍara مَخْضَرَة, khadi:ra خَصِيرَة, khada:r خَصَار, khadira خَصِرَة, khudri: خُضْرِي, khudr خُضْر, etc.) ("Green": Greenish, greenless, ungreened, nongreen, and greeny).
3. Both have a derivative denoting adverbs: ("akhḍar": khidran خُضْرًا). ("Green": greenly).
4. Both have derivatives denoting active participles: ("akhḍar": mukhḍir مُخْضِر). ("Green": greening and greened).
5. Both have derivatives denoting passive participles: ("akhḍar": mukhḍar مُخْضَر). ("Green": greened).
6. Both have derivatives denoting verbal nouns: ("akhḍar": khadr خُضْر and takhdī:r تَخْضِير). ("Green": greening and to green).

There are, however, derivative forms that are unique to Arabic "akhḍar". They are:

1. Name of a place: 'makhḍara مَخْضَرَة'.
2. Diminutive nouns: 'khudayra خُضَيْرَة', 'khudayra:? خُضَيْرَاء' and '?ukhaydir أَخْيَضِر'.
3. Cognate accusatives: The verb '?ikhḍarra اِخْضَرَّ' has the cognate accusative '?ikhḍira:ran اِخْضِرَارًا'. The verb 'khadir خَصِير' has the cognate accusative 'khadran خَصْرًا'. The verb 'yakhdur يَخْضُر' has the cognate accusatives 'khadran خُضْرًا', etc.

### 5.3 Compounding

Generally speaking, the compounds of "green" and "akhḍar" can be classified into two categories: equivalent compounds and language-specific compounds. It is worth mentioning that most of the compounds listed in the first category, i.e. equivalent compounds, are neither included in Arabic monolingual nor in bilingual Arabic-English or English-Arabic dictionaries. These dictionaries list a very limited number of compounds and neglect the hundreds of compounds that recently infiltrated into Arabic due to the fast growth of the medical, technical, social, financial fields, etc. This led the researcher to collect the most common English compounds and see whether an Arabic equivalent exists or not.

#### 5.3.1 Equivalent compounds

The majority of the collected compounds fall under this category. Some of these compounds are rendered into an equivalent compound, others into a single word equivalent and many have both a compound as well as a single word equivalent. The analysis revealed that most of the Arabic equivalents seem to be translations of the English compounds; simply because most of these compounds are medical, technical, environmental, political, financial,

botanical or cultural terms that are newly added to the Arabic language such as 'agent green العامل الأخضر', 'green economics اقتصاد أخضر', 'green card البطاقة الخضراء', etc.

It is also interesting to find out that some of the Arabic equivalents, whether those that have a single-word equivalent or a compound equivalent, do not include the word "akhḍar" in them as in 'green meat لحم طازج', 'green pea بازلاء', 'green market سوق المزارعين', 'greenstick عصن نصير', etc. However, they suggest a function, idea, shape, quality, color or application that relates to "green". Besides having a compound or a single-word equivalent, compounds can also be paraphrased, e.g. 'green engineering هندسة خضراء صالحة بيئيا', 'bowling green غرفة استراحة الممثلين', 'green room أرض معشبة للعب الكرة الخشبية', etc., or transliterated as in 'Green Beret غرين بيريه' or 'القوات الأمريكية الخاصة'.

Most of the English compounds denoting plants, stones, animals, or even medical conditions are alternative terms for other complicated, more scientific terms, and are suggestive of the main characteristic or shape of the things they denote, as in 'green alder' which has the scientific term '*Alnus Viridis*', 'green hellebore: *Helleborus viridis*', 'Greenwing: *Anas crecca*', etc. The Arabic counterparts of these compounds, in many cases, are equivalents of the scientific terms, rather than being direct equivalents of the English compounds such as '*Alnus Viridis* نغت أخضر', '*Helleborus viridis* خربق أخضر' and '*Anas crecca* الخذف الشتوي'.

"Green" and "akhḍar" also have many compounds that express different shades of the color. Some of these Arabic counterparts are translated, e.g. 'emerald green' أخضر زمردني, 'pea or pale green' أخضر فاتح, 'bottle-green' أخضر داكن, 'olive-green' أخضر زيتوني, 'acid green' خضرة حمضية, etc. Some are transliterated, e.g. 'Paris or Schweinfurt green' أخضر باريس, 'Jade green' أخضر يجدي, 'Scheele's green' لون وسط بين الأصفر والأخضر, etc. and some are paraphrased, e.g. 'yellow-green' لون وسط بين الأصفر والأخضر, etc. These combinations may have partly resulted from transliteration.

### 5.3.2 Language-specific compounds

The compounds that are unique to Arabic or English are culture-specific compounds that denote different things, places, objects, natural phenomena, herbs, spices, concepts, plants, fruits, way of thinking and lifestyle. Among the language-specific compounds related to "green" are: green bone (fish), green dragon (plant), green footprint (environment), green gentian (herb), Green Mountains, green pound (economics), green run (skiing), greenlet (bird), green shoots (economy), putting green (golf), etc.

On the other hand, some of the language-specific compounds related to "akhḍar" are: Akhḍar aḥam أخضر أحم, akhḍar adgham أخضر أدغم, akhḍar aṭḥal أخضر أطحل (horse color), akhḍar awraq أخضر أوراق (the sky, firmament, or Paradise), al-baqla alkhadrā:ʔ البقلة الخضراء (plant), alqubba al khadrā:ʔ القبة الخضراء (the sky, firmament, or Paradise), khudr almana:kib خضر المناكب or khudr almara:bi<sup>c</sup> خُضْر المربع (a state of plenty), khudr almaza:d خُضْر المزداد (that which became green for being overused), etc.

Almost all of the Arabic-specific compounds belong to classical Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic, and are not commonly used by native speakers in everyday speech. Although these compounds do not have ready equivalents, they can still be transliterated or paraphrased. Translators can find another compound, word or any linguistic entity that conveys the same meaning expressed by the original, e.g. 'green shoots' can be rendered into الإنتعاش أو الإزدهار الإقتصادي, etc. In many cases, however, the meaning is not lexicalized in the other language. Translators can transliterate or paraphrase the meaning of the compound, e.g. 'alqubba al khadra:' القبة الخضراء' can be rendered into 'the sky or firmament', khudr almana:kib خضر المناكب or khudr almara:bi<sup>c</sup> خُضِرَ المراع can be rendered into 'a state of plenty', etc.

Now that the compounds are classified, it goes without saying that the English compounds including the words "green" are more than the Arabic compounds including "akhḍar". However, equivalent compounds exceed the number of language-specific compounds, which means that the compounds including "green" and "akhḍar" are more similar than different.

## 6. Meaning

In this section, the researcher explored the denotative and metaphorical meanings of the words "green" and "akhḍar" in an attempt to discover whether their direct and indirect meanings are denoted similarly or distinctly.

### 6.1 Denotative meaning

Arabic and English belong to two different cultures. Since any language is a reflection of its own culture, the words representing each language will undoubtedly denote different meanings, simply because the way both cultures perceive reality differs. However, regardless of the differences, there are some basic universal meanings that exist in all cultures, hence, languages.

"Green" and "akhḍar" denotatively mean *the color of growing foliage, between yellow and blue in the spectrum, of the color green, characterized by verdure and to become, make or dye green*. These are the denotative meanings that both words have in common. Related forms denoting these meanings include: "Green": ((n.) green, greenness, greenage, (adv.) greenly, (adj.) green, nongreen, ungreened). "Akhḍar": ((n.) khudra خُضْرَة, ?ikhḍira:r أَخْضِرَار, khada:ra خَضَارَة, takhḍi:r تَخْضِير, khudu:ra خُضُورَة, (adj.), akhḍar أَخْضَرَ, khadu:r خَضُور, khadra:? خضراء, khadir خَضِير, khadi:r خَضِير, yakhḍi:r يَخْضِير, yakhdu:r يَخْضُور, (v.) اخْضَرَ ?ikhḍarra, khadḍar خَضَّر, ?ikhḍawḍar اخْضَوْضَرَ, ?ikhḍa:rra اخْضَارًا, (adv.) khidran أَخْضِرًا).

Moreover, "green" and "akhḍar" denote special meanings, e.g. "akhḍar" has the derivative form "takhḍi:r تَخْضِير" which denotatively means *the time spent in planting and plowing the earth* and "green" (v.) denotatively means *to yearn or long*.

## 6.2 Metaphorical and idiomatic meaning

Although "green" and "akhḍar" convey the same general metaphorical meanings, there are many meanings denoted uniquely by each. They both metaphorically denote things that are of the color green, or have qualities and express meanings that normally associate with the color green.

Both "green" and "akhḍar" have forms denoting the following metaphorical meanings:

1. **Plants:** green growth or foliage, grass, plant parts eaten as vegetables, green fruits or green legumes. Forms denoting these meanings include: "green": 'greens' and 'greenery' (n.) and 'nongreen' (adj.). "Akhḍar": 'khudra' خُضْرَة, 'khadra:wa:t' خَضْرَاوَات, 'khudayra' خُضَيْرَة (n.), etc. However, some plants or things related to plants are uniquely denoted by either "green" or "akhḍar", e.g. "green": 'greening' which means *green apple* تفاح أخضر, 'greens' which means *the branches and leaves of plants used for decoration and 'green' which colloquially means marijuana of low quality*. "Akhḍar": 'khudriya' خُضْرِيَّة is a kind of green dates resembling glass, of a color that is admired, or a palm tree that bears good green dates, 'khadi:ri' خَضِيرِي means *pistachio kernel*, al?khḍara:n الأَخْضَرَان refers to *grass and tree*, etc.
2. **Animals that are greenish in color:** "green" is an adjective describing any animal of green color, e.g. 'green monkey', 'greenfinch', etc. As a noun, the derivative form 'greening' (of oyster) means *the process of becoming or the state of being green-gilled*. "Akhḍar", on the other hand, has different forms denoting different green animals: 1. Green birds: 'khadda:r' خَضَّار, 'khudayri' خُضَيْرِي, 'khudayra:? 'خُضَيْرَاء, etc. 2. Green poultry: 'khadra:' خَضْرَاء, 'khudār' خُضْر and 'khudr' خُضْر. 3. Green camel: 'alkhudrawa:ni' الخضرواني and 4. Green fly: 'ukhayder' أُخَيْضِر.
3. **Someone who sells greens**, e.g. "green": 'greengrocer'. "Akhḍar": 'khadda:r' خَضَّار, 'khudri' خُضْرِي, 'khudari' خُضْرِي. In addition, "akhḍar" has the derived form 'khudari' خُضْرِي which has the English equivalent *fruitier or fruit seller*. What is more, 'khadda:r' خَضَّار not only means 'greengrocer', but also denotes *someone who plants greens and legumes*.
4. **A place where greens are sold**, e.g. "green": 'green market'. "Akhḍar": 'khuda:ra' خُضَارَة and 'khadda:ra' خَضَّارَة.
5. **Green things in nature**, e.g. "green": 'green sea' (*a sea that looks green*), 'green-sea' (*a mass of water shipped on a vessel's deck*), 'green sky', 'green water' (*clear water*), etc. "Akhḍar": 'khadra:? 'خُضْرَاء (*green sky, or paradise*), 'khadr' خُضْر and 'yakhdu:r' يَخْضُور (*plentiful water*), and 'makhdu:r' مَخْضُور (*cheap wood that is cut and become green*), etc.
6. **Tender, fresh and blooming**, e.g. "green": 'greenness' and 'green grass'. "Akhḍar": 'khadir' خَضِير and 'khadira' خُضِرَة (adj.) denote *that which is soft, juicy, tender, or pleasant*; 'yakhdu:r' يَخْضُور and 'mikhḍara' مِخْضَرَة (n.) denote *tenderness and fineness*; 'akhḍur' أَخْضُر (adj.) describes *that which is soft in general; a tender and soft young man whose sideburns are growing and someone who is beneficent and generous*, etc.

7. **Not mature, ripe or fully processed**, e.g. "green": 'green bananas' (*unripe*), 'green wood' (*freshly filled, not dried*), 'green wine' (*raw, harsh and acid*), 'green meat' (*freshly slaughtered or still raw; not smoked or cured*), 'greenware' (n.: *pottery, ceramic which is not yet fired*), 'green pelts' or 'green hides' (*not cured or tanned*), 'green cement' or 'mortar' (*freshly set and not completely hardened*), etc. "Akhḍar": 'اِخْتَضَرَ' and 'اِخْتَضِرَ' (v.: *to take greens while they are fresh and tender, to pasture upon while still fresh, juicy and green before it attains full height, to eat something while it is green (unripe), to deflower a girl before she attains puberty, to mow the grass while it is still green, or to take an untamed camel, in a refractory state, bridle it and drive it*), 'اِخْتَضِرَ' (v.), mukhtadīr مُخْتَضِر (adj.: *died young*), 'mukha:ḍara مُخَاضِرَة' (n.: *is the selling of greens when are unripe*), 'khaḍr خَضْر' (n.+v.: *that which is cut green, or to cut off*), 'akhḍar أَخْضَر' (n.: *wood that has not dried yet*), 'akhḍar أَخْضَر' (adj.: *unripe*), 'mikhḍar:ر مَخْضَر', khadīr خَضِر and khudayr خُضَيْر (n.) or 'khaḍi:ra خَضِيرَة' (adj.) all denote *a palm tree of which the dates fall while unripe and green*, 'khaḍi:ra خَضِيرَة' (adj.) also means *a woman who recurrently miscarriages*.
8. **A place rife with greens**, e.g. "green": 'green' (v.: *to create parks and other areas with trees and plants in a city*), 'green fields' or 'green hills' (n.: *covered with herbage or foliage*), 'greens' (n.: *grassy land, a piece of grassy ground constituting a town or village common*), 'putting green' (n.: *sports, an area of grass cut short around a hole on a golf course*), 'bowling green' (n.: *sports, an area of very smooth short grass on which the game of bowls or lawn bowling is played*), and 'greens' (n.: *a shooting range for archery*). "Green" is also used as a proper noun when it combines with names of places that contain or used to contain an area of grass, e.g. 'Bethnal Green'. "Akhḍar": 'khaḍar:ر خَضَار' (adj.: *has plenty of trees*), 'khaḍir خَضِر', khudr خُضْر, khaḍi:ra خَضِيرَة, yakhḍu:r يَخْضُور, makhḍara مَخْضَرَة and khadira خَضِيرَة (adj.: *a place rife with greenery*).
9. **Young and vigorous**, e.g. "green": 'green age' (*young age*), 'green old age' (*freshness and vigor of mind and body late in life*), 'greenness' (n.: *Vigor and liveliness*), 'greening' (n.: *a restoration of youthful freshness and vigor*). "Akhḍar": 'akhḍar أَخْضَر' (adj.: *A tender and soft young man whose side beards are growing*), 'اِخْتَضِرَ' (v.: *died young*).

Having listed the similar metaphorical meanings of "green" and "akhḍar", it is obvious that both words mostly denote different specific things related to the general metaphorical meaning in common. Furthermore, sometimes "akhḍar" denotes meanings that are more semantically extended. For example, the meaning of 'اِخْتَضَرَ' becomes *to mow the grass while it is still green and to eat something while it is green to deflower a girl before she attains puberty, or die young* 'اِخْتَضِرَ'. Other times, English seems to be more semantically extended, e.g. only "green" is semantically extended to denote greeny areas specially designed for sports, e.g. 'putting green', 'bowling green', etc. It is also worth mentioning that in the above examples from 2 to 9, "green"

is mostly used as an adjective describing anything with the color green, that which is tender, fresh or blooming, something that is not mature or ripe, etc. while "akhḍar" has, besides its original form functioning as an adjective, many derived forms that are used as nouns, verbs or proper nouns denoting the same meanings.

Despite the similarities, each word denotes special metaphorical meanings not denoted by its equivalent. "Green" expresses the following meanings:

1. Things or concepts related to the environment, e.g. 'green' (adj.: *issues and political movements related to or are concerned with the protection of the environment*, e.g. 'green movement', 'green party', 'green worker', etc.), 'green' also means (adj.: *beneficial to the environment or harms the environment as little as possible*, e.g. 'green recycling policies', 'green computers', etc.), or (adj.: *favoring, advocating, promoting or supporting environmentalism*, e.g. 'green consumer'), 'the Greens' or 'the Green Party' (n.: *is a party whose main aim is the protection of the environment*, 'green' (v.: *to make somebody more aware of issues connected with the environment or make something appear friendly towards the environment*), 'outgreen' (v.: *to surpass in environmental activism or consciousness*), and 'greening' (n.: *the process of making or becoming more aware of environmental considerations*),
2. Finance and economics: 'Green' and 'greenback' colloquially mean *money*, 'green pound' denotes *a unit of account that is adjusted in accordance with fluctuations between the currencies of the EU nations and is used to make payments to agricultural producers within the EU*, and
3. Sexual intercourse (colloquial).
4. "Green" is also used as an adjective to denote the following meanings:
  - a. *Lack of experience or training*, e.g. 'green worker', 'green trainer', etc.,
  - b. *Mild or temperate weather*, e.g. a green climate,
  - c. *Lack of sophistication or worldly experience; naïve*,
  - d. *Have a sickly or pale appearance*,
  - e. *Pleasantly alluring*,
  - f. *Recent or new*, e.g. green wound, and
  - g. *Working as it is expected or working properly*, e.g. all systems are green.

Similarly, "akhḍar" exclusively denotes the following:

1. That which is grayish, black or tawny, e.g. 'khadrā:ʔ ḫḍrāʔ' (adj.: *black*). 'khadrā:ʔ ḫḍrāʔ' also collocates with 'kati:ba (battalion) kṭībiyya' to mean *a battalion where most soldiers are wearing iron, so it looks black*, 'khudār ḫḍr' (n.: *dark grey*), 'akhḍar ḫḍr' (adj.: *someone who is tawny, meaning that he/she is of pure Arab race since Arabs are of tawny complexions. It also describes a grayish black, brown or tawny horse*), 'akhḍar ḫḍr' (n.: *the night*), 'khudra ḫḍr' (n.: *denotes a horse that is grayish black or tawny, a type of dark green dates, blueness and brownness*), 'ikhḍarra ḫḍr' (v.: *when it collocates with 'night' it means becomes darker*), 'ikhḍarra ḫḍr' (v.: *become black*),

2. Blessing, ease and comfort, e.g. 'khudayra' khunayra' (n.), 'akhḍar' khunḍar' and 'khadrā:ʔ' khunḍarā' (adj.), 'khuddir' khunḍir' (v.: *to be blessed with something, usually a trade or a handicraft*), 'akha:dir' akhḍir' (n.: *gold, beef and wine*),
3. *A bucket used for a long time until it greened*, e.g. 'khadrā:ʔ' khunḍarā' (n.),
4. *Root or origin*, e.g. 'khadrā:ʔ' khunḍarā' (n.), 'ʔikhtadar' ikhtunḍar' (v.: *To uproot, to cut off a thing entirely, or to cut off the green branches of a palm tree with his claws*),
5. *Milk mixed with so much water; as some say, milk and water in the proportion of one third of the former to two thirds of the latter*, e.g. 'khaḍa:ra' khunḍarā' or 'khaḍa:r' khunḍar',
6. *To be spent uselessly or be made to no avail*, e.g. 'khiḍr' khunḍir' (n. + adv.),
7. *To polish a sword until it shines*, e.g. 'takhḍi:r' takhḍir' (verbal noun),
8. *To sell by retail*, e.g. 'khaḍḍar' khunḍar',
9. *Soft dung of a cow*, e.g. 'khaḍi:r' khunḍir' and 'khaḍu:r' khunḍur',
10. *A mullato*, e.g. 'khudayriya' khunḍiriyā' or 'khudairi' khunḍiri' (adj.),
11. *Claw*, e.g. 'mikḥdar' mikḥunḍar',
12. *The majority of people*, e.g. 'khadrā:ʔ' khunḍarā' (adj.), e.g. "خضراء قريش" khadrā:ʔ Quraish",
13. *To bear, take up a load or burden* e.g. 'ʔikhtadar' ikhtunḍar' (v.),
14. *Eye disease*, e.g. 'alʔukhayḍir' alʔukḥayḍir', and
15. *To cut down*, e.g. 'khaḍar' khunḍar', 'ʔikhḍarra' ikhtunḍarra' (v.: *to be cut down*).

It is quite clear now that although "green" and "akhḍar" denote somehow similar denotative meanings and many general metaphorical meanings with slight differences, they also denote entirely different and special metaphorical meanings. Translators and learners need to be aware of these differences in order to properly translate a text from Arabic into English or vice versa, and communicate effectively.

Being a universal color, the denotative meanings of "green" and "akhḍar" are easily translated and learnt. Similarly, the general metaphorical meanings will not be very difficult to render because the same idea exists in the other language, e.g. although 'green meat' cannot be translated literally, it can be rendered into 'الحم طازج'. The association of "green" with "freshness and rawness" is not something new to the Arabic language.

What can be a bit challenging is translating the different meanings of "green" and "akhḍar" because they express meanings that are not normally expected. However, some compound words expressing ideas related to environmentalism like 'green-collar' 'ذوي الياقات الخضراء', 'green tax' 'الضريبة الخضراء', 'green economics' 'اقتصاد أخضر', etc. kind of emerged to the Arabic language and do not sound weird. Likewise, 'greenback' or 'green papers' are translated literally and semantically into 'خضراء الظهر' or 'دولار أمريكي' and 'ورقة خضراء' or 'الدولارات, المال, النقود' respectively. As for the compounds that are unique to each language, the awareness of the differences between the words enables translators and learners not to render the meanings literally; it will often sound informal and widely unacceptable. Until these words have direct equivalents, translators can

simply render their meanings, e.g. 'green climate' can be translated into 'جو معتدل', 'green wound' into 'جرح جديد', etc.

In addition to their metaphorical meanings, "akhḍar" and "green" are used idiomatically to express unique cultural meanings that reflect how differently reality is viewed by people belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages, and also mirror their thoughts, beliefs and attitudes. Idioms are culture-specific fixed expressions that by frequent use acquired figurative or indirect meanings. Idioms cannot be understood directly from the literal meanings of their constituent parts, which makes them very difficult to translate and challenging to learn. Nevertheless, sometimes the context in which idioms are used can give hints about their meanings. The fact that idioms are culture-specific makes the probability of finding similar idioms in which the words in question are used very unlikely. However, few similar idioms do exist, e.g., 'Have a green thumb or green finger' 'يد خضراء', 'to give someone/somebody the green light' 'يعطي أحدهم الضوء الأخضر أو إشارة البدء' and 'to get the green light' 'يأخذ الضوء الأخضر'. The researcher assumes that the Arabic equivalents of the last two idioms are literally translated from English because although they are listed in modern bilingual dictionaries, none was listed in Arabic classical dictionaries.

The idioms that are specially expressed by "green" are listed and explained in Table (1) below.

Table 1: Idioms involving the word 'green'

Idioms Related to "Green"	Meaning
Do you see any green in my eye?	Do you think I am naïve?
Florida Green	An amber/orange light at an intersection in Florida meaning that people treat this light as if the light was still green.
Folding green	Paper money.
Go green!	To do more of that which protects nature and the environment.
Green around/about the gills	Looking sick.
Green as grass	Very green.
Green stuff	Money.
Green with envy	Jealous and envious.
Green-eyed monster	Jealousy, jealous.
Greens	A green uniform.
Little green man	Stereotypical/ humorous description of space aliens.
Sure as God made little green apples	Absolutely certain.
The rub of the green	Have good luck in sports competition.
To greenwash something	To deceptively make policies/practices that seem more environmentally friendly.
To keep someone's memory	To pay tribute to someone's memory.

green	
Wearing of the green	To wear green clothing on St. Patrick's Day.

Similarly, "akhḍar" expresses a lot of special idioms, among which are the following:

Table 2: Idioms involving the word "akhḍar"

Idioms Related to "Aḥḍar"	Meaning
Shāb muḥṭaḍer شَاب مُحْتَضِر	He died young.
Fulān aḥḍar el-qafā فَلَانُ أَخْضَرَ الْقَفَا	Said to someone whose mother is black.
Aḥḍar al-baṭn أَخْضَرَ الْبَطْنَ	The weaver; so called because his belly rubs against the board
Aḥḍar al-nawājed أَخْضَرَ النَّوَاجِذِ	He who eats onion and leek.
Ḥuḍr al-manākeb حُضْرُ الْمَنَاقِبِ	In a state of abundant productivity and fertility.
Ḥaḍrā' al-ddeman حَضْرَاءُ الدِّمَنِ	A Woman that looks beautiful in the outside, but perverted in the inside.
Al-amru baynana aḥḍar الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَنَا أَخْضَرَ	Our relationship is new, we are not friends yet.
Ḥuḍr al-mazād حُضْرُ الْمَزَادِ	1- That in which little water remained for a long time until it greened, or 2- Potbelly.
Aḥḍahu ḥaḍeran maḍeran أَخْذَهُ خَضِرًا مَضِرًا	Take something without cost or while tender and fresh.
Huwa laka ḥaḍeran maḍeran هُوَ لَكَ خَضِرًا مَضِرًا	1- It is for you, may it be attended with enjoyment and wholesome results. 2- Easily, agreeably and pleasantly.
Dahaba damuhu ḥaḍeran maḍeran ذَهَبَ دَمُهُ خَضِرًا مَضِرًا	He died in vain, uselessly or his blood went unrevenged.
Fulān nafsuhu ḥaḍrā' فَلَانُ نَفْسَهُ خَضِرَاءُ	Describes a man who is childish.
Aḥḍar al-janāḥayn طَارَ عَنَا أَخْضَرُ الْجَنَاحَيْنِ	The night.
Fulān aḥḍar فَلَانُ أَخْضَرَ	He/she is generous and beneficent.
Atat al-nār ʿala al-aḥḍar wa al-yābes أَتَتْ النَّارَ عَلَى الْأَخْضَرِ وَالْيَابِسِ	The fire ruined everything.
Shajara ḥaḍrā' شَجَرَةٌ خَضِرَاءُ حَاوِلَ أَنْ يَشْعَلَ النَّارَ فِي	Tender.
Eḥḍarra wajhuhu	He frowned and his face hardened.

أخضرَّ وجهه	
Aḥḍar al-jelda أخضرَّ الجلدَة	He became in a state of plenty. It literally means his skin became green from carrying the produce of his land.
Al-ḡazū ḥulwun ḥaḍer الغزو حُلُوْ خَضِر	Predatory warfare is sweet and refreshing.
Aḥḍara lahu fe kaḍa أخضرَّ له في كذا	Was made easy for him to do it.
Eḥḍarrat ṣeḍāruh/shāb aḥḍar أخضرت عذاراه أو شاب أخضر	His sideburns blackened.
Abāda Allahu ḥaḍrā'ahum أبَادَ اللهُ خَضْرَاءَهُمْ	To pray that God destroys the majority and the black ones among them, destroy their family tree from which they branched, or annihilate their lives, comfort, bliss and productivity.
Rama Allahu fe ṣayne fulān be al- akḥḍar رَمَى اللهُ فِي عَيْنِ فُلَانٍ بِالْأَخْضَرِ	Praying that someone gets an eye disease called "akḥḍar" .
Laysat le fulān beḥaḍera ليست لفلان بخصرة	Does not even have wet grass to eat.

Having analyzed the idioms related to "green" and "akḥḍar", it goes without saying that rendering these idioms is challenging to translators. However, it is not impossible. Baker (2011:76-85) suggests four strategies to solve the problem of translating idioms. These strategies are: using an idiom of similar meaning and form, using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form, translation by paraphrase and translation by omission.

Taking the collected idioms of "green" and "akḥḍar" into consideration, some idioms do have equivalent idioms of similar meaning and form, e.g. 'to give someone/somebody the green light يعطي أحدهم الضوء الأخضر أو إشارة البدء', etc. The majority can be paraphrased or are semantically rendered, e.g. 'أخضر النواجذ' he who eats onion and leek', 'green as grass شديد الخضرة', 'has green fingers مزارع', 'green youth يافع أو يافع', 'green old age شيخوخة كلها صحة ونشاط', etc. Baker (2011:75-76) sums up the factors on which the translation of idioms depends: "The way in which an idiom or a fixed expression can be translated into another language depends on many factors....Questions of style, register, and rhetorical effect must also be taken into consideration."

### 6.3 Connotative meaning

Words either carry positive, negative or neutral connotations. With regard to "green" and "akḥḍar", they connote one neutral meaning, that is: *The color green or anything greenish in color*. They also connote many similar positive meanings, e.g. *growth, nature, tenderness, that which is rife with plants or characterized by verdure and greenness, religion (it is the color of Islam and is associated with the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him), respect, sacristy,*

*reverence, and heaven. In Christianity, it is associated with Christmas, Saint Patrick's Day, baptism and the feast of the Eucharist), tenderness, youth, vigor freshness, blooming and that which is pleasant* ("The Many Meanings of Green", 2014). They also denote special positive meanings, e.g. "green" positively denotes: *That which is new, mild or related to environmentalism, finance and money* while "akhḍar" positively denotes *origin, ease, comfort and blessing, that which is soft, generous, beneficent or black (of pure Arab race)*.

Moreover, "green" and "akhḍar" denote similar and special negative meanings. The similar negative meanings that both denote are: *Immaturity, rawness and that which is unripe* whereas the exclusive negative meanings that each denote are: "Green" negatively denotes *marijuana, envy and jealousy, that which is not fully processed, inexperienced, naïve or have a sickly appearance*. "akhḍar" negatively denotes *seaweed and chameleon*.

In this regard, Ilyas (2001) investigated the connotations of ten colors in both Arabi and English. As far as the color "akhḍar" and its English counterpart "green" are concerned, he found that the two colors have the same main connotation, that is 'life', but they differ in other connotations. The Arabic color "akhḍar" was found to have four positive connotations ( life, beauty, serenity and faith); whereas the English color "green" has four positive connotations (life, youth, safety and appropriateness) and two negative ones (naivety and envy). The difference between Ilyas' study and the current one is in terms of methodology. Ilyas' study was based on the responses of 100 students to a questionnaire that provided them with types of connotations from which they had to choose in addition to their own intuitions. In contrast, data for this study were culled from different written sources as stated above.

Being aware of the different connotations each different meaning of "green- akhḍar " has is one of the essential semantic assets of every skilled translator. Since these words spring from two different cultures, translators and learners should be aware of the connotative meanings each word has. This awareness enables them to convey not only the meaning of the word, but also the emotional dimension this word originally invokes in its users. That is also how the translator can be faithful to the original text. This accentuates the fact that translation is not merely the process of rendering the meaning of texts, but also their cultural and emotional dimensions. According to Lado, words that have widely different connotations are ranked as difficult to translate (Lado 1957). Upon collecting the data related to the connotative meanings "green" and "akhḍar", the words do not seem to have widely different connotations, so they are, hopefully, not problematic for translators. This finding also corroborates Ilyas' findings regarding the connotations of both color terms.

## 7. Conclusion

Having classified the data and pointed out the similarities and differences between "green" and "akhḍar", it can be concluded that:

1. Whereas "akhḍar" has much more inflected and derived forms, "green" has more compound forms. However, the majority of these compounds have

Arabic equivalents. Although bilingual English-Arabic and Arabic-English dictionaries list few compounds, they include, in most of these few cases, not only the denotative meanings of the compounds, but also the idiomatic meanings.

2. As far as the denotative meaning is concerned, "green" and "akhḍar" almost express the same few denotative meanings.
3. "Akhḍar" and "green" express some common metaphorical meanings, but each word expresses more special metaphorical meanings not expressed by its counterpart.
4. Since idioms are culture-specific fixed expressions, the majority of the collected idioms are special to each word in question. Nevertheless, some idioms do have equivalents in the other language.

### **7.1 Implications**

The findings of this lexical contrastive analysis between "green" and "akhḍar" can hopefully benefit translators, lexicographers, foreign language teachers and learners. The present study attempted to make the similarities and differences between the words in question more explicit for the aim of making translators, teachers and learners more aware of the morphological structures, meanings and usages between words that hold universal meanings like color terms. Novice translators and learners would naturally assume that "green" and "akhḍar" denote only a color without being aware of the many denotative, metaphorical as well as cultural meanings both words denote. The words share some surprisingly similar meanings and many other unique ones.

The cultural meanings and culture-specific idioms are interesting to learn, yet are most challenging to translate. Translators should always know which technique is best used to solve any problems that may arise with special attention to the stylistics of the text. This awareness restrains learners and translators from directly transferring their native habits to the target language and applying the language-specific grammatical restrictions to the target language, as they are more consciously aware of the intricate linguistic and cultural differences.

On the other hand, more contrastive studies need to be conducted. The number of contrastive studies at this level of language is scanty and deserves more attention. Once there is an adequate number of lexical contrastive analyses, foreign language teachers can incorporate these analyses into special courses.

Finally yet importantly, the fact that the number of monolingual dictionaries of collocations and idioms is limited and almost nonexistent in Arabic, while abundant in English, is disappointing. The researcher appeals to lexicographers to include the new Arabic compounds, and new levels of emerging meanings in Arabic monolingual as well as bilingual dictionaries. Moreover, composing special monolingual and bilingual dictionaries of collocations and idioms would not only enrich the number of Arabic reference

books, but would also be a useful tool for foreign language teachers, learners and translators.

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