The Challenges of Translation of Homonym

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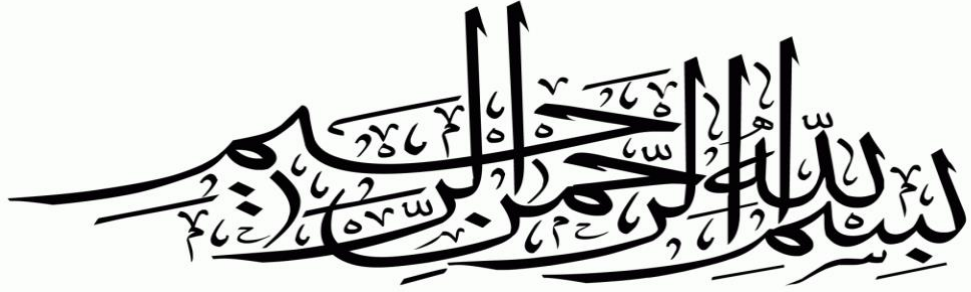
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(مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ ۖ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ) (النحل، ٩٦)

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate"

{Whatever you have will end, but what Allah has is lasting. And We will surely give those who were patient their reward according to the best of what they used to do.} (Al-Nahal, 96)

Dedication

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to

my beloved parents

my brothers & sisters

Acknowledgments

I would like to present my thanks fist to Almighty Allah, SWT, for giving us power, strength, and patience .

Secondly, my supervisor, Asst. Inst. Emad Farhood, for his guidance and for giving us the golden notes . Without his help, this research would not be completed .

Lastly, many thanks for my friends, relatives and classmates for helping me .

Abstract

Translators face many challenges when creating accurate, quality translations for clients. Translation is capturing the meaning of words from the source to the target language. Some of the challenges translators face when working on a project are: Homonyms. Homonyms are words that have multiple meanings that are spelled the same. They can make translation difficult depending on how they are used or placed in a sentence. For example: I left his glove on the left side of the bench.

Language Structure, translation is not transferring words for words, but it is the transfer of the meaning of sentences to the target language. Each language has different rules and structures that need to be followed in order to to maintain the same meaning. Without the correct language structure, it is easy for a sentence not to make any sense in the target language.

Idiomatic Expressions, the meaning of idiomatic expressions is different from the literal meaning. For example: I've been feeling under the weather. Translating these type of expressions are difficult for translators as there are not direct translations. Style, is the overall attitude, or feeling in a text. Recreating the same style is one of the most difficult tasks for translators. See last week's blog post here for more on style.

 It is important to be aware of some of the challenges of translating. At Same Day Translations, one takes great pride in his/her work in giving the reader the best combination of word choice, meaning and accuracy.

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Section One

1. Introduction

Homonyms are thought to be the source of a variety of linguistic phenomena, with a variety of repercussions such as misunderstanding and a lack of communication through language. To the best of my knowledge, there do not appear to be any other research studying this language effect among Arab students in general and Jordanian students in particular. This study aims to investigate one of the most important semantic phenomena, homonym ambiguity, and its impact on the translations of Jordanian undergraduate students studying Translation. Homonymy has been studied in lexical semantics, language instruction, psycholinguistics, stylistics, and computational linguistics, among other domains of linguistics..(Rabadi, 2015:27)

2. Definitions of Homonymy

Homonymy (from the Greek—homos: same, onoma: name) refers to the relationship between words that have the same form but different meanings, also known as homonymy. The term bank, as used in "river bank" and "savings bank," is a good example of a stock. Those objects are known as homonymous, and they have a common name but a different account of being corresponding to the name... Those items are referred to as synonymous if the name is well-known, and the account of being synonymous with the name is the same.(Nordquist, 2021: 1)

Linguist Deborah Tannen (2005) has used the term pragmatic homonymy or ambiguity to describe the phenomenon by which two

speakers "use the same linguistic devices to achieve different ends" (135). As Tom McArthur has noted, "There is an extensive gray area between the concepts of polysemy and homonymy" (2005, 25) .

Crystal (2008) states that homonymy can be illustrated as homographs, words that are spelt the same but have different meanings such as row (boat) vs. row (noise), and homophones, words that are spelt differently but have similar pronunciation as threw vs. through .

Homonyms can be classified to two major types in semantic analysis. First, total, full, absolute or complete homonymy which are words (lexemes) that have the same pronunciation and the same spelling, i.e. the identity covers spoken and written forms that make their forms identical which are grammatically equivalent. For example, bank a slope, bank a place for money, and bank a bench or row of switches. Second, partial homonymy or heteronomy or near homonyms. Thus, partial homonymy are words either identical in spoken form as homophones or in written form as homographs (Crystal, 2008). For instance, scene visual location and seen past participle of to see.

Examples and Observations

"Homonyms are illustrated from the various meanings of the word bear (animal, carry) or ear (of body, of corn). In these examples, the identity covers both the spoken and written forms, but it is possible to have partial homonymy—or heteronymy—where the identity is within a single medium, as in homophony and homography. When there is ambiguity between homonyms (whether non-deliberate or

contrived, as in riddles and puns), a homonymic clash or conflict is said to have occurred". (Crystal, 2008: 89)

Peer and Peep

"Examples of homonymy are peer ('person belonging to the same group in age and status') and peer ('look searchingly'), or peep ('making a feeble shrill sound') and peep ('look cautiously')".(Greenbaum&Nelson, 2009: 78)

3. Homonymy and Polysemy

"Homonymy and polysemy both involve one lexical form that is associated with multiple senses and as such both are possible sources of lexical ambiguity. But while homonyms are distinct lexemes that happen to share the same form, in polysemy a single lexeme is associated with multiple senses. The distinction between homonymy and polysemy is usually made on the basis of the relatedness of the senses: polysemy involves related senses, whereas the senses associated with homonymous lexemes are not related." (Murphy and Anu Koskela, 2010: 72)

Two Words, Same Form, Linguists have long distinguished between polysemy and homonymy. Usually, an account like the following is given. Homonymy obtains when two words accidentally have the same form, such as bank 'land bordering on a river' and bank 'financial institution.' Polysemy obtains where one word has several similar meanings, such as may indicating 'permission' (e.g., May I go now?) and may indicating possibility (e.g., It may never happen). Since it is not easy to say when two meanings are totally different or unrelated (as in homonymy) or when they

are just a little different and related (as in polysemy), it has been customary to adduce additional, more easily decidable criteria. (Lyons 1977:235).

4. Dictionaries' Distinction between Homonymy and Polysemy

Dictionaries recognize the distinction between polysemy and homonymy by making a polysemous item a single dictionary entry and making homophonous lexemes two or more separate entries. Thus head is one entry and bank is entered twice. Producers of dictionaries often make a decision in this regard on the basis of etymology, which is not necessarily relevant, and in fact separate entries are necessary in some instances when two lexemes have a common origin. The form pupil, for instance, has two different senses, 'part of the eye' and 'school child.' Historically these have a common origin but at present they are semantically unrelated.(Nordquist, 2021: 2)

Similarly, flower and flour were originally 'the same word,' and so were the verbs to poach (a way of cooking in water) and to poach 'to hunt [animals] on another person's land'), but the meanings are now far apart and all dictionaries treat them as homonyms, with separate listing. The distinction between homonymy and polysemy is not an easy one to make. Two lexemes are either identical in form or not, but relatedness of meaning is not a matter of yes or no; it is a matter of more or less." (Kreidler, 1998: 48)

No Clear Cut Homonymy

The trouble is that, although helpful, these criteria are not totally compatible and do not go all the way. There are cases where we may think that the meanings are clearly distinct and that we therefore have homonymy, but which cannot be distinguished by the given linguistic formal criteria, e.g., charm may denote 'a kind of interpersonal attraction' and may also be used in physics denoting 'a kind of physical energy.' Not even the word bank, usually given in most textbooks as the archetypical example of homonymy, is clear-cut. Both the 'financial bank' and the 'river bank' meanings derive by a process of metonymy and metaphor, respectively from Old French banc 'bench.' Since bank in its two meanings belongs to the same part of speech and is not associated with two inflectional paradigms, the meanings of bank are not a case of homonymy by any of the above criteria...Traditional linguistic criteria for distinguishing homonymy from polysemy, although no doubt helpful, in the end turn out to be insufficient (Allwood, 2003:28).

5. Translation of Lexical Relations

Because translation is one of the most visible representations of interethnic and interliterary existence, it serves as a medium of communication. The term "translation" is well-known and widely understood, but it requires clarification and terminological definition as a designation of a specific type of human activity and its outcome. It means: 1) a mental act in which a speech work (text or oral utterance) made in one language (FL) is recreated in another language (TL); 2) the result of this

process, i.e. a new speech product (text or oral utterance) in the translating language.(Madedova, 2021: 135)

There are numerous theories of translation, which to one degree or another affect the problem of its adequacy. Thus, Jackson Matthews writes about high-quality literary translation: "The translation as a whole must follow the content exactly and in form it must follow the original; moreover, something of his own should appear in him, namely, the voice of the translator" (Abramova, 2014: 88)

There are four basic requirements for a translation that must:

1) convey meaning;
2) convey the spirit and style of the original;
3) have ease and naturalness of presentation;
4) create an equivalent impression

The phenomenon of lexical homonymy is extremely harmful for a high-quality translation, primarily because the translator does not always understand the text's dual meaning. The dictionary is the most important tool in the translation process. When a translator encounters difficulty in revealing the meaning of a word or phrase, the translator first consults a dictionary. It should be mentioned that a translator's ability to use a dictionary is critical to their work. The goal of translation is to create a relationship of equivalence between the original and the translated text (so that both texts carry the same meaning).(Madedova, 2021: 135)

At the same time, there are distinctions between written translation, which entails the transfer of meaning from one language to another in writing, and oral translation, which entails the transmission of meaning

from one language to another audibly or by gestures (in the case of sign language). Translation is a difficult task in and of itself. Furthermore, in actuality, the translator must overcome impediments that make the translation process much more difficult. Homonymy is one such stumbling block. Lexical homophones are the most often used in the English language, and dictionaries only list homonyms that differ in spelling but sound the same, i.e. phonetic homonyms.(Madedova, 2021: 135)

Homonymy is a contentious linguistic subject among Arab linguists despite the fact thatit could not be denied by them. Arab linguists have disagreed on its existence in Arabic such as Ibn Dorstoya in his book "Sharhu al Tafsil" denied it by interpreting the examples of homonyms in a way that excludes them from being categorized under homonymy. They might consider one of the homonym meanings is real, and the other meanings are metaphorical. For example, the word "wajd" has several meanings like „to find", „anger", or „to love". Such Arab linguists would state that this word might seem to have several meanings but actually all these meanings are related to one thing. In contrary, other Arab linguists such as Al Aṣmaʿy and Abu ObaidahMuʿammar bin Al Muthana headed for its frequent existence as they provided a range of undoubted evidence were among this party (Shahin, 1980: 48)

6. Forms of homonyms in Arabic

1. Homonyms for a variety of root morphemes

This is the first sort of homonymy, and it means that the meanings of two words are interchangeable. The base morphemes of homonymous words are distinct. "arrajuluqailun," for example. uhran" (lit. "the man talked at noon"), where the term "qailun" is homonymous with "uhran." It could be

used to denote the meaning of saying (i.e. the speech uttered by the tongue). derived from the Arabic root "qawl"), or napping (i.e. a short sleep throughout the day). However, the word "uhran" appears in the afternoon, which is derived from the Arabic root "qail." The first meaning is explained by the context. This feature was dubbed "Co-occurrence" by Firth (1957). (Rabadi, 2015: 29)

2. Homonyms that are metaphorical

When two similar words have different meanings by migrating from their original place into the extension of the meaning, this form of homonymy happens. "La yash" is a phrase. shamsanwa la bardanraunafiljanaturaunafiljanaturaunafiljanaturaunafiljanaturauna (Lit. translation: They won't be bothered by the sun or the cold. paradise). "Shamsan" is the same word, which means "very hot" and "a" in Arabic. Ibn Manour (1994) defines a planet as "a heavenly body." The term "la yashrauna" is, however, a misnomer. used in conjunction with a negative particle and the words "janatu" and "bardan" to convey the language context, which is most likely the first meaning. When Lyons (1995) discussed deixis, he pointed out that the language context and the context of the text are both important. (Rabadi, 2015: 29)

3. Particles that are homogeneous

This kind denotes the employment of linguistic particles for various purposes, such as negation particles, question words, relative pronouns, and prepositions, among others. As a result, at times A particle could replace another, or it could be a noun in a position or an article.

Alternatively, some particles may be employed to convey a distinct meaning, such as to perform another purpose .(Rabadi, 2015: 30)

4. Words with multiple meanings that are homonomic (polysemy)

This idea refers to a word having many denotative interpretations that are not metaphorical. This can be explained by the fact that there is a homonymous term. rather than the metaphoric one that is characterized by the development, to a specific motive. There is no relationship between the two words in its use, which is wholly different. One of them could be derived from another ancient language, or each word could have a distinct meaning. However, they are only superficially similar in appearance. (Rabadi, 2015: 30)

5. Using derivations in unexpected places

Using a derivation to relate to two separate meanings is referred to as this type. In one location, a word may be an active participle (ism fa'il) and an adverb in another. For example, "ihtiramumaqamialustathiwajibun" (lit. "respecting the standing place of")

A teacher is required.), where the word "maqami" (standing place) is homonymous with the word "maqami" (standing place). the definitions of dignity, magnificence, and position, as well as the definition of rank. (Rabadi, 2015: 30)

6. Homonymy resulting from the use of different parts of speech

This form of homonymy refers to nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and other components of speech. This sort of homonymy should be distinguished from the first type. The first kind depicts the source of two

words, whereas the sixth type depicts the difference between two words as a result of each word's connection to a portion of speech that is incompatible with the correspondence of the other. The sentence "shajarabainahumkhilafun" (lit. translation: "A shajarabainahumkhilafun") is an example of the sixth category. There has been a dispute between them), which includes the eponymous word "shajara" as well as a plant having a stem, or the notion of dispute in opinions(Rabadi, 2015: 30- 31)

Section Two

1. The Translation of Homonym

The phenomenon of lexical homonymy is extremely harmful for a high-quality translation, primarily because the translator does not always understand the text's dual meaning. The dictionary is the most important tool in the translation process. When a translator encounters difficulty in revealing the meaning of a word or phrase, the translator first consults a dictionary. It should be mentioned that a translator's ability to use a dictionary is critical to their work. The goal of translation is to create a relationship of equivalence between the original and the translated text (so that both texts carry the same meaning). (Madedova, 2021: 137)

Homonymy is one of the most common causes of ambiguity, because homonyms contribute to both meaning expansion and pronunciation consistency, and their absence or neglect can lead to considerable misunderstandings of spoken communications. This is the risk, since when students of Translation perceive the speech, they may convert it into one of its many interpretations without giving it much thought or thoroughness. As a result, they may follow it, resulting in tainted outcomes.(Madedova, 2021: 138)

Prather and Swinney believe that "ambiguity is ubiquitous in language ; it exists at every level of processing (from acoustic/phonetic to semantic to structural " (1987 , 291) . Newmark mentioned seven types of ambiguity :grammatical,lexical, pragmatic , idiolectal, cultural referential, metaphorical i.e phonology , graphology , and lexicology (1988 , 218). This research focuses on the lexical ambiguity which occurs when "a word

has two senses which are both equally effective (pragmatically and referentially) in the relevant stretch of language"

(Newmark , 1988,219) ." Lexical ambiguity is not a homogenous phenomenon, but rather that it is subdivided into two distinct types , namely homonymy and polysemy"(Newmark , 1988,219) . Thus , it is not an easy task to find the exact equivalent for homonymous word ."Equivalent is considered as the closest possible approximation to ST meaning " (Newmark , 1988,219) .

2. Analysis of homonymy errors

This section deals with the analysis of errors committed by fourth year students studying Translation in translating Arabic homonymous words to English. This study tackled these errors depending on three stages: error detection, error description and error interpretation. the errors are attributed to the types of Arabic homonymy discussed earlier in the study(.Rabadi, 2015: 35-36)

2.1 Errors due to multiple root morphemes

Students did not pay attention to the differences in the derivation of the target words. If they have checked the etymology of each word, the differences between them would have been clarified. Thus, the students might – more carefully – consider such words, and this would have led them to the fact that it is necessary to check these words before translating the sentence. For example, the root of the word "qaˁil" (Lit. translation: said) in the sentence "arrajuluqaˁ Ilunẓuhran" (Lit. translation: The man had a nap at noon) might be (qaila) or (qawla), where the meaning of

speech (alkalamu) is derived from the root (qawla), and the meaning of a nap is derived from the root (qaila).

To overcome this problem in this aspect, students have to be trained on how to check the etymology of Arabic words by looking at the triple (three-letter) or quartet (four-letter) root, and how to know whether the origin of the letter (alif) ا: is (wau) و: or (ya). ي: "They also have to check the letters which are added to the root of the verb to derive different words with different meanings. They also have to be familiar with the use of Arabic dictionaries.

2.2 Errors due to metaphorical homonyms

Students did not take into account metaphor, which is when a word has a meaning in theoriginal position and then it is moved through extension into another meaning. Here, the students had to rely on the context. For example, in the sentence "la yashˈ ýraunafiljanatushamsanwa la bardan" (lit. translation: they will not feel in paradise nor sun or cold), the verb "yashaur" (lit. translation: feel) is compatible with "heat, coldness, warmness, happiness, joy and sadness" forthese are moral matters which are not material like (sun or day). This indicates that in thissentence the sun was not meant to be, however, the homonymous word „sun‟ usedmetaphorically, because its presence indicates heat.

To resolve this aspect, students have to consider the linguistic context because thesentence contains indicative clues which make it possible to know whether the use is denotative or metaphoric. Moreover, they have to check Arabic dictionaries such as "al Wasit Dictionary" in order to be familiar with the original meaning.

2.3 Errors due to homonymic particles

Some Arabic particles have multiple functions and are used to provide different meanings. The participants were not aware of such a linguistic issue. For example, the preposition "ba" بـ: "might have the meaning of "fi" (فَ:lit. translation: in) in a sentence like "naṣrukumbilm„araka" (lit. translation: your victory in the battle). It might also mean "ma"(مـع: „lit. translation: with) in a sentence like "atba„ahumu al ustadhu bi ṭulabih" (lit. translation: the teacher was followed with students). It might also mean "min" (مـن: lit. translation: from) in a sentence like "„ainunyashrabbiha" (lit. translation: a spring where they drink from). It might also mean "ila :"(إلـى Lit. translation: to) in a sentence like "qadaḥsan bi" (lit. translation: he made goodness to me). Another example is the particle "ma"which can be used as a question word, exclamatory word, negation word or a relative pronoun.

The context is likely to determine the suitable meaning. For instance, the sentence "ṣalabahu fi jidha al nakhlati" (Lit. translation: he was crucified in a trunk of a pamlm tree), the meaning shows that the preposition "fi" (Lit. translation: in) refers to the preposition "„ala" (Lit. translation: on) because it is impossible to think that someone might be crucified inside a truck .

General knowledge would serve to infer the crucifying on a trunk of a tree not inside it.Students have to be introduced to an important phenomenon in Arabic language which is

particle function shifting. The focus should be placed upon different types of particles, and this should be supported with an empirical study of practical examples taken from real-life situations.

2.4 Errors due to polysemy

Students did not consider – though it is hard to note – polysemy where some words havedifferent meanings denotatively not metaphorically. One reason behind this is that such homonymous words might have a foreign origin. This means that the two words are notconnected to each other. For example, the word "thaqib" is derived from the root "thaqaba" (lit . translate: breach), but in Kananah language, it means "moši""(Lit . translation: shining). Another example is the word "bardan" (lit. translate : cold) which has another meaning in Huthail language which is sleeping. It is recommended to prepare an extended list which includes the most popular Arabic polysemous words used in all fields such as fields of arts, humanities or sciences, then to collect them in a simplified dictionary.

2.5 Errors due to homonymy of different parts of speech

Students did not pay attention to the fact that a derived word might indicate two differentmeanings. For example, an active participle might replace a passive participle and vice versa, or an active participle might replace a masdar-type abstraction such as the word "nadhirun" (lit. translation: presage) which might mean (the person who warns) in a sentence like "ja"aalrasulunadhiranliqaumihi" (lit. translation: the prophet came as a presage to his people). This might stand as a masdar-type abstraction in a sentence like "innahadhaali„lananadhirunlirasibina" (lit.

translate: this announcement is an alert for failed students) which is similar to the previously mentioned word "maqam. (Rabadi, 2015: 35-36)

Conclusion

Homonymy as a main cause of lexical ambiguity in languages, it is frequently acquainted With the obstruction of communication and generating difficulty to the native language speaker. As a result of this lexical ambiguity. In conclusion it's found that the ambiguity of Arabic homonyms affected negatively the results of translation Students, while the prepared annex positively affected their results.

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