

## **The Significance of Teaching Anaphora in Translation**

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### **Abstract**

Without a doubt, translation is essential for making communication between people of different cultures possible. As far as if it should be centered on formal aspects of the text or on its content. The debate should take into account the purely functional feature of translation. Not all translations occur in the same context nor do they have the same objective. This fact demands such versatility from the translation professional that it frequently requires specialization of the translator.

As is well-known, English and Arabic belong to different language families, and it is only natural that they may pose great difficulties and challenges for experienced translators, let alone beginners such as my students. Anaphora may be the most challenging area between the two languages. The above study of anaphora only describes the tools for cohesion in English, for no thorough studies have been conducted in Arabic.

**Key Words:** Anaphora; Teaching; Translation; Meaning

### **Introduction**

Language is an expression of culture and individuality of its speakers. It influences the way the speakers perceive the world. This principle has a far-reaching implication for translation. If language influences thought and culture, it means that ultimate translation is impossible. The opposite point of view, however, gives another perspective. Humboldt's "inner" and "outer" forms in language and Chomsky's "deep" and "surface" structures imply that ultimate translation is anyhow possible. (Yule, 2001: 27)

Linguistically, translation is a branch of applied linguistics, for in the process of translation the translator consistently makes any attempt to compare and contrast different aspects of two languages to find the equivalents.

Translation, involving the transposition of thoughts expressed in one language by one social group into the appropriate expression of another group, entails a process of cultural de-coding, re-coding and en-coding.

"Translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structure of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible, but not so closely that the TL structure will be seriously distorted (McGuire, 1980: 2).

"The general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form; whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardization or whether one or both languages is based on signs, as with sign languages of the deaf." Brislin (2009: 1).

Since translation is, above all, an activity that aims at conveying meaning or meanings of a given-linguistic discourse from one language to another, rather than the words or grammatical structures of the original, we should look briefly at the most significant and recent developments in the field of study of "meaning", or semantics. Our interest here lies in the shift of emphasis from referential or dictionary meaning to contextual and pragmatic meaning. Such a shift represents a significant development, particularly relevant to translation, and to communicative register-based approach to translation.(Zaky,2000:1)

This paper discusses the importance of teaching coherence in translation on the textual level. Test scores for a school year of Class One before and after teaching are compared to illustrate the point.

### **The importance of the knowledge of Anaphora**

Each language has its own patterns to convey the interrelationships of persons and events; in no language may these patterns be ignored, if the translation is to be understood by its readers (Baker, 1992:27). The topic of coherence... has always appeared to be the most useful constituent of discourse analysis or text linguistics applicable to translation. (Newmark, 1987:295).

### **What is Anaphora?**

Anaphora is the use of a word or phrase that was used earlier in a text or conversation is called anaphora. Grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence. For example:

(a) A: Is Shadin coming to the party? B:

Yes, she is.

There is a link between Shadin and she and also between coming and is.

( b) In the sentence: If you are going to Baghdad, I can give you the address of a good hotel there.

The link is between Baghdad and there.( Richards,2000:12,45)

Anaphora is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which link various parts of a text. These relations or ties organize and, to some extent, create a text, for instance, by requiring the reader to interpret words and expressions by reference to other words and expressions in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs. Anaphora is a surface relation and it connects together the actual words and expressions that we can see or hear.(Shi,2005:1)

Halliday and Hasan(1976) identify five main anaphoric devices in English: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion.

## **Hypothesis**

As is well-known, Arabic and English belong to different language families, and it is only natural that they may pose great difficulties and challenges for translators, especially for beginners such as my students. The formal and serious teaching of anaphora might to a great extent help the students' consciousness in translating between the two languages.

## **Description of the experiment**

### **Participants**

The participants in the experiment were the fourth-year students in the college of education for women/university of Baghdad, where I was appointed by the department to teach the course of Translation (2002-2003).

### **Method**

Although I had been reading translation material rather comprehensively, I realized a high proportion of it was theoretical and thus was not very useful or valuable to my students none of whom were interested in theories. My students showed their interest in my way of teaching those skills rather than theoretical works. So I had to pay more efforts to fulfill their needs. I pondered the possible reasons and finally reach the conclusion that teaching textual anaphora might significantly improve their ability to do translation. This was what stimulated me.

At the beginning of the second term of their fourth year I put more emphasis on syntactic and systematic comparison between Arabic and English in phonological, morphological, syntactical and contextual aspects with a little practice as exercises, mainly on anaphora, and then I evaluated and assessed their assignment. After three months the term came to an end and I produced the exam paper on the same level in terms of complexity. The exam went very smooth for I did my best to organize it accurately and strictly and graded the students' work as fair as possible. Then I retrieved from my files the records of Class One's exam scores from the last term (when anaphora was not studied) and compared them with those from the second term. I obtained the following results.

## **Findings**

**Table 1.** Scores for Class One, End of 1<sup>st</sup> Term

Students Number	S	C	O	R	E	S
1	73	72	72	65	68	64
2	61	71	65	57	62	58

3	56	58	71	60	67	78
4	68	87	64	68	75	59
5	74	62	63	61	61	52
6	70	50	66	84	62	62

**Table 2.** Scores for Class One, End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Term

85	61	76	86	70	71
68	89	67	63	74	79
76	60	73	78	72	58
67	59	87	73	77	55
69	75	67	70	68	71
78	77	64	74	60	64

**Table 3.** A contrast of the central tendency between the two cases

	Mode	Median	Mean
1 <sup>st</sup> .	66	66	66
2 <sup>nd</sup> .	64	69	69

In terms of deviation, another table can be produced.

**Table 4.** A contrast of deviation between the two cases.

	1 <sup>st</sup> .	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Variance	73.14	64.58
Standard Deviation	6	5

The relationship between the variance and the standard deviation is that the standard deviation is the square root of the variance. The standard deviation is one of the most important statistical measures (Wood,1986:27). It indicates the typical amount by which values in the data set differ from the mean and no data summary is complete until all

relevant standard deviation of after the second semester is smaller than that before which means after is better than before, not the opposite.(Shi,2005:3)

## **Analysis**

### **Conjunctions**

Includes the use of formal markers to relate phrases; clauses; sentences and paragraphs to each other. The use of conjunction does not instruct the student to provide missing information either by searching it elsewhere in the text or by filling structural slots. On the other hand, conjunction identifies the way the writer wants the reader to realize what is about to be said to what has been said before. Conjunction reflects one of a small number of general relations is summarized below, with examples of conjunctions which can realize each relation.

1. **continuatives:** now, of course, well, anyway, surely, after all.
2. **causal:** so, consequently, it follows, for, because, under the circumstances, for this reason;
3. **adversative:** but, yet, however, instead, on the other hand, nevertheless at any rate, as a matter of fact;
4. **additive:** and, or also, in addition, furthermore, besides, similarly, likewise, by

### **Substitution and ellipsis**

Unlike reference, are grammatical rather than semantic relationships. In substitution, an item is replaced by another item:

*Do you like music?*

*I do.*

In the above example, *do* is a substitute for *like music*. Items commonly used in substitution in English include *do*, *one*, and *the* same.

Ellipsis involves the omission of an item. In other words, in ellipsis, an item is replaced by nothing. This is a case of leaving something unsaid which is nevertheless understood. It does not include every instance, in which the hearer or reader has to supply missing information, but only those cases where the grammatical structure itself points to an item or items that can fill the slot in question. Here is an example:

*Daniel brought some carnations, and Ted some sweet peas.* (Brought in second clause is ellipted.) .

## **Reference**

The term **reference** is traditionally used in semantics for the relationship that exists between a word and what it points to in the real world. The reference of "table" would therefore be a particular table that is being identified on a particular occasion. In Halliday and Hasan's model of cohesion, reference is used in a similar but more restricted way. Instead of denoting a direct relationship between words and extra-linguistic objects, reference is limited here to the relationship

of identity which exists between two linguistic expressions. For example, in *Mr. Lance has resigned. He announced his decision this morning.*

The pronoun *he* points to Mr. Lance within the textual world itself. Reference, in the textual rather than the semantic sense, occurs when the reader has to retrieve the identity of what is being talked about by referring to another expression in the immediate context. The resulting cohesion lies in the continuity of reference, whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time. So, reference is a device which allows the reader or hearer to trace participants, entities, events, etc. in a text.

### **Lexical Anaphora**

Lexical anaphora refers to the role played by the selection of vocabulary in organizing relations within a text. A given lexical item cannot be said to have a cohesive function *per se*, but any lexical item can enter into a cohesive relation with other items in a text. It can be said that lexical anaphora covers any instance in which the use of a lexical item recalls the sense of an earlier one. Halliday and Hasan divide lexical cohesion into two main categories: reiteration and collocation. Reiteration, as the name suggests, involves repetition of lexical items. A reiterated item may be a repetition of an earlier item, a synonym or near-synonym, a super-ordinate, or a general word. For example:

There is a man climbing that wall.

*The girl is going to fall if she doesn't take care. (Repetition)*

*The student's going to fall if he doesn't take care. (Synonym)*

*The child's going to fall if he doesn't take care. (Super ordinate)*

*The idiot's going to fall if he doesn't take care. (General word)*

Reiteration is not the same as reference, however, because it does not necessarily involve the same identity.

Collocation, as a subclass of lexical cohesion in Halliday and Hasan's model, covers any instance which involves a pair of lexical items that are associated with each other in the language in some way. (Woods, 1985:27-29)

Halliday and Hasan offer the following types of association as examples, but admit that there are other instances where the association between lexical items cannot readily be given a name but is nevertheless felt to exist.

Various kinds of appositeness of meaning: e.g.

man/woman ;

love/hate;

order/obey.

Associations between pairs of words from the same ordered series: e.g.

Tuesday /Thursday;

August/December;

dinar/fits .

Associations between pairs of words from unordered lexical sets: Part-whole relations:

Car/break; body/arm;  
Bicycle/wheel. Part-  
part relations:  
mouth/chin;  
verse/chorus;  
Co-hyponymy:  
white/black(color);  
chair/table(furniture).

Associations based on a history of co-occurrence (collocation proper) e.g.

Rain, pouring, torrential, wet; hair, comb, curl, wave; etc.

Lexical anaphora is not a relation between pairs of words as the above discussion might suggest. On the contrary, lexical cohesion typically operated through lexical chains (such as *socialism, communist, East*). (Shi, 2005:1-6)

## **CONCLUSION**

Translation is one of the oldest human practices both in its written and oral forms. Without a doubt, translation is essential for making communication between people of different cultures possible. As far as if it should be centered on formal aspects of the text or on its content. the debate should take into account the purely functional character of translation. Not all translations occur in the same context nor do they have the same objective. This fact demands such versatility from the translation professional that it frequently requires specialization of the translator.

As is well-known, Arabic and English belong to different language families, and it is only natural that they may pose great difficulties and challenges for experienced translators, let alone beginners such as my students.

Anaphora may be the most challenging area between the two languages. The above study of anaphora only describes the tools for cohesion in English, for no thorough studies have been conducted in Arabic.

The conscious and purposeful application of cohesion tools to translation practice has been proved of great use in English-Arabic translation in my class, while the Arabic-English translator faces different types of challenge and therefore may need different tools, which will be discussed in a separate research.

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### اهمية الجنس في تدريس الترجمة

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### خلاصة

الترجمة هي واحدة من أقدم الممارسات البشرية في أشكالها الخطية والشفوية على حد سواء دون أدنى شك، والترجمة أمر ضروري لجعل التواصل بين الناس من مختلف الثقافات ممكن وبقدر ما إذا كان ينبغي أن تركز على الجوانب الشكلية للنص أو على محتواه. فالنقاش ينبغي أن يأخذ في الاعتبار طابع الوظيفية البحتة للترجمة. لا تحدث كل الترجمات في السياق ذاته ولا تتجه نحو نفس الهدف. إن هذه الحقيقة تتطلب براعة في استخدام القاموس و في كثير من الأحيان يتطلب القاموس التخصص في الترجمة. هو معروف، إن العربية والإنجليزية تنتمي إلى عائلات لغوية مختلفة، وأنه من الطبيعي أن يشكل ذلك صعوبات وتحديات كبيرة للمترجمين ذوي الخبرة، ناهيك عن المبتدئين مثل تلامذتي الجنس قد يكون المنطقة الأكثر تحدياً بين اللغتين الدراسة المذكورة أعلاه عن الجنس توضح فحسب الأدوات اللغوية المطلوبة لتحقيق التماسك في اللغة الإنجليزية، علماً بأنه لم تجر أي دراسات مستفيضة باللغة العربية حول هذه الظاهرة. وقد ثبت من نتائج التطبيق الدراسة من أن أدوات التماسك المطلوبة لممارسة الترجمة من فائدة كبيرة في الترجمة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية في عينة الدراسة، في حين أن الترجمة من العربية إلى الإنجليزية تواجه أنواع مختلفة من التحديات وبالتالي قد تحتاج إلى أدوات مختلفة، والتي يتطلب مناقشتها في بحث منفصل.