

Understanding the Meaning of Homonymous Words in Selected Quranic Verses from Pragmatic Perspective

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فهم معاني الكلمات المتجانسة في آيات قرآنية مختارة من منظور تداولي

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Abstract:-

Using homonymous words enables speakers/writers to make their interactions/ writings successful, effective and more agreeable with others to increase their influence in making key points and to reveal the ambiguity in the communication.

This paper starts with the introduction about this topic involving: the problems that the interlocutors face in their communication and how they solve the ambiguity of using such words by explicating specific terms that related to this subject throughout highlighting on various definitions of the term "homonymy" depending on a number of linguists. Additionally, the paper attempts to clarify the concepts of co-text and context of situation and their relation in interpretation of meanings of words by taking selected examples of quranic verses and presenting some conclusions by using descriptive method in analyzing the selected samples.

Key words: Homonymous words, co-text, and context of situation.

المخلص:-

إن استخدام الكلمات المتجانسة يُمكن المتكلمين أو الكتاب من جعل تفاعلاتهم أو كتاباتهم ناجحة وفعالة وأكثر مقبولة مع الآخرين مما يزيد من تأثيرهم ويكشف الغموض في تواصلهم. يبدأ هذا البحث بمقدمة حول الموضوع متضمنة: المشكلات التي يواجهها المتحاورون في تواصلهم، وكيف يحلون هذا الغموض الناجم عن استخدام مثل هذه الكلمات من خلال شرح مصطلحات خاصة متعلقة بهذا الموضوع وتبسيط الضوء على تعاريف مختلفة عن مصطلح "التجانس" بالاعتماد على عدد من اللغويين. علاوة على ذلك، يسعى هذا البحث لتوضيح مفاهيم النص المشترك و سياق الموقف وعلاقتها بتفسير معاني الكلمات عن طريق اخذ امثلة مختارة من الآيات القرآنية وتقديم بعض الاستنتاجات باستخدام طريقة وصفية لتحليل العينات المختارة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التجانس، النص المشترك، سياق الموقف.

1.Introduction

Linguistic meaning of words is categorized according to two main linguistic fields, semantics which refers to the literally meaning of words and pragmatics which refers to the meanings in which the semantic meaning must be understood to convey a comprehension of what an interlocutor meant in his/her communication. (Kearns, 2011, p:1). .

In addition, there are important roles of co-text and context of situation to comprehend the meanings of homonymous words where these words complicate the comprehension of meanings during the conversations. To achieve the aims of this paper, it should be enlightened the meanings of homonyms, grammatical, cohesive relations and collocations which perform an important part in determining the meanings of these words. For example, the word "رجالا" in the following verse:

قوله تعالى: "و اذن في الناس بالحج ياتوك رجالا" و على كل ضامر ياتين من كل فج عميق" (الحج/الاية ٢٧)

God Almighty said: "And proclaim to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage), they will come to you on foot and on every camel. They will come from every deep and wide mountain highway to perform Hajj". (Al-Hajj:27)

The word ("رجالا" - rijalan) has two different meanings. It can be men or pedestrians. Since the word ("رجالا") is proceeded by (الحج - Pilgrimage) which means a journey in the holy traditions of Muslims and this journey done by both men and women. So, this word ("رجالا") means walkers or pedestrians whether they were men or women.(Ibn Kathir,1992, p:239).

Holy texts as holy Qur'an include homonymy which is used as a theoretical background with reference to the context in languages.

2.Homonymy:

Cruse (2006:80) indicated that homonymy is used when different meanings are used by the same linguistic form, such as bank: (side of river or financial institution). The two banks are used to be homonyms. When two meanings are related to the same written form but have different spoken forms, then they called 'homographs', for

example: (lead) which means either the metal as a noun or lead to guide as a verb. When two words or more are pronounced by the same way, but they have different written forms, then they are called homophones, such as: (two, to, too).

Homonymy which is related to the same written form and unrelated meanings is homographs as bank while two words with different meanings and the same sound form, they form homophony as tail/tale, story/storey, threw/through, write/right, there/their, whole/hole. (Lobner, 2013, p: 44).

Researchers use the term homonymy when one form (written or spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings, as in the following examples: (bat: flying creature) or (bat which is used in sports), mole (on skin or small animal), race (contest of speed or ethnic group) and so on. (Yule, 2014, p:116).

Many linguists differentiate between homographs which means meanings of the same written word, and homophones which means meanings of the same spoken word. For example, as homographs: (lap: circuit of a course) and (lap: part of body when sitting down); and as homophones (the verb ring and the noun wring); (the verb bear and the noun bear); (not, knot). (Saeed,.2016, p:60)

3. The Co-Text

Richards and Schmidt (2010, p:140) declared that co-text means: " those texts that occur together with or prior to a text and that influence the meaning of a text". Co-text is used to realize texts, assumptions that are made about preceding texts which present a context for comprehension the text.

Co-text is the linguistic topic by which an interlocutor could recognize the word or sentence meaning. For instance, the word (aljamal- الجمل) means (thick rope) in the following verse:

قوله تعالى: "لا يدخلون الجنة حتى يلج الجمل في سم الخياط". (الاعراف/٤٠)

God Almighty said: " and they will not enter Paradise until the thick rope goes through the eye of the needle.....". (Al-A'raf:40). Here, the role of co-text can simplify the meaning of (aljamal) by recognizing words that come after it (eye of the needle). The grammatical organizations and what is called in Arabic collective words that can give fixed signal by which interpretations are clarified.

Abdul-Razaak (1996, p:13-14) stated that co-text performs a role of presenting the intended meaning of words, phrases or sentences. Especially in the holy Qur'an, many sentences, phrases or words are alike to each other in forms, but with different meanings. Linguists can't realize these differences without the co-textual factors as coming back to the previous verses or sentences.

The language cannot be interpreted unless it is said with others in communication. The words are used in a specific arrangement. Consequently, some words may be utilized in one form more than other words. A word may have different meanings and may be utilized in various situations. The intended meaning of words appears throughout the speech and through giving the linguistic form in the middle or at the end of a linguistic form because it is interpreted according to its collective meaning. (Al-Siyuti, 1998, p:287-288).

4. Context of Situation

This term is "a concept developed by Malinowski and Firth as a means of explaining the working of language in society" by which the participant begins to declare the relations between: utterances, situations and environments in which statements are said or could be said. (Robins, 1965, p :27).

Because of the actual meaning of words that derived from the context and its elements, the specialists in this field anticipate that the words have utilizations and have not limited meanings or descriptions. For this reason, a single lexeme (a word) has not perfect denotation or ideal meaning. When a specific word is used in certain linguistic form, this word will be comprehended according to the context of situation and the co-text in which occurs. Generally, the context is regarded as an important component that linguists depend upon to identify actual interpretations of words and sentences by the speakers and listeners depending on environmental factors. (Al-Vabaydi, R.,1988:25).

The real meaning of words is achieved by a linguistic framework including a number of linguistic and non-linguistic elements as sentences, words, semantic meaning, pragmatic meaning, and the background knowledge which are exchanged by speakers and listeners to be recognized as the whole utterances. (Fajaal, 2003, p:1).

Generally, according to Cutting (2005, p:3-4), there are three kinds of context:

The first: The situational context that means what interlocutors can comprehend about things around them. It is the immediate physical co-presence, the situation in which the communication is taking place at the talking.

The second: Background knowledge context, which means what communicators are known for each other and the world. This kind divided into two sorts which are either cultural general knowledge that most people have in their minds of life or interpersonal knowledge which is special knowledge about the history of interlocutors and their life.

The third: contextual context, "the context of the text itself, that means what speakers know about what they have been saying".

Finally, context of situation as Richards and Schmidt (2010, p:127) stated that context of situation is: "the linguistic and situational context in which a word, utterance or text occurs". Utterances meaning is recognized not only by the literally meaning of words but also by the (context/situation) in which these words occur.

In other words, the researchers can recognize two main sorts of context: The first one is physical context that indicates the location because the researchers depend on the words themselves such as the word (Bank) on specific wall that will refer to a building as a "financial institution". The second one is linguistic context which is known as co-text of a word in which other words used in the same phrase or a sentence. So, when the word (Bank) comes to be used along with other words like steep or river, the researchers have no problem to decide which type of bank is meant (an edge). (Yule, 2014, p:127)

5. The Significance of the Context:

The word, that is related to other words, comes either before or after them and its meaning depends on this environment. So, this is what linguists called the context. The relationship between all these elements is alive and provides certain marks to understand the occurred meaning. It is regarded as a spark to comprehend the words meaning. Consequently, the meaning is just known during the

context of linguistic elements such as: the position in which most semantic elements are found in the area of other elements. (Makram, 1996, p: 23).

6. Data Analysis

The specific meaning of homonyms words in the verses that the researchers will deal with- that have more than two different meanings- should have a relationship with other sentences, phrases or words of co-textual factors. In specific, some of these homonyms are used in other verses in absolutely different meanings. So, the researchers will deal with a number of words and show its meanings in lexicons and books of interpretations as the following:

The word	It's meanings	A lexicon / a book of an interpretation
1- امة	Owned woman, group of people, mother, every gender of animal, generation, religion, method, style, way, period of time, religion man or leader.	Al-Tibyan fi Tafsir Al-Qur'an
2- الفتح	The faith, judicature, starting, physical opening, the victory	Intermediate Dictionary
3- الجهاد	-Fighting disbelievers with hands, tongues, or money.	Lisan Al-Arab Dictionary
	-Flat and hard ground.	
	-The fruit of Arak.	
4- الطائف	-Imaginations or visions in dreams -The whispering of Satan	Lisan Al-Arab Dictionary
5- العين	-Sense of sight or vision	
	-The well or the spring	
	-The care -The spy	
The word	It's meanings	A lexicon / a book of an interpretation
6- الكبد	-The suffering or the hardship	The Intermediate Dictionary
	-An organ on the right side of abdomen below the diaphragm	
	-Grudge	
	-The intent to ask for something	
	-The amidst thing or the most of it -The type of the grass	
7- الجمل	-Camel	Lisan Al-Arab Dictionary
	-Thick rope	

8- الحميم	-Intimate -Boiling water	Verbal accompaniment in the Holy Quran
9- ايمان	-Faith -The right side - Swear	Verbal accompaniment in the Holy Quran
10- كفار	-The unbelievers -Farmers	The comprehensive of the provisions of Qur'an

This paper will deal with the previous words as examples to show their meanings depending on context or co-textual elements that they occurred in:

1. The meaning of " أمة – auma " as in:

قوله تعالى : "ولئن أخرنا عنهم العذاب إلى أمة معدودة" . (هود: ٨)

God Almighty said: "And while we delayed their torment to a known duration". (Hood: 8). The word (auma) here comes to mean (the time) depending on what comes after and before it. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 5, p: 408)

قوله تعالى : "إن إبراهيم كان أمة" (النحل: ١٢٠)

God Almighty said: "Abraham was a prophet...". (An-Nahal: 120).

The lexeme (auma) here came to mean Imam who is to be emulated. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 6 :395).

قوله تعالى : "بل قالوا إنا وجدنا آباءنا على أمة" . (الزخرف: ٢٢)

God Almighty said: "Rather, they said, we found our fathers on a religion". (Al-Zukhruf: 22).

The word (auma) here came to mean: religion or sect. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 9, p :152).

قوله تعالى : "ولما ورد ماء مدين وجد عليه أمة من الناس يسيقون" . (القصص: ٢٣)

God Almighty said: "And when he had received the water, he found a group of people to water". (Al-Qasas: 23). The word (auma) here came to mean: a group of people. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 8, p: 109).

قوله تعالى : "ومن قوم موسى أمة يهدون بالحق وبه يعدلون" . (الاعراف: ١٥٩)

God Almighty said: "And from the people of Moses is a nation guiding the truth, and by it they adjust". (Al-A'raf: 159), the word (auma) here came to mean: group and sect. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 5, p :6).

Thus, the researchers find that the word (auma) which is a common term, came in each of these verses with a different meaning determined by the context in which it was mentioned.

2.The meaning of (الفتح – alfath) as in:

قوله تعالى: "ولما فتحو متاعهم.....". (يوسف:٦٥)

God Almighty said: "And when they opened their belongings". (Joseph: 65). The sentence (they opened their belongings) means physical opening that removes the belongings from the luggage. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 6, p :150).

قوله تعالى: "قالوا أتحدثونهم بما فتح الله عليكم.....". (البقرة:٧٦)

As in the words of God Almighty: "They said, that you talk to them what God has conferred upon you". (Al-Baqarah: 76).

The meaning of the word (alfath) came in the sense of the moral conquest with what God has given and granted you of goodness and knowledge.

(Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 1:377).

قوله تعالى: "ويقولون متى هذا الفتح إن كنتم صادقين.....". (السجدة:٢٨)

As in God saying, Glory be to Him: "And they say when is this conquest if you are honest". (Al-Sajdah: 28).

Here, the word (alfath) means the sense of victory, or Judgment on reward and punishment. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 8 :235).

3. The meaning of (الجهاد – aljihad) as in:

قوله تعالى: "والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا.....". (العنكبوت: ٦٩)

God Almighty said: "And those who strived for us, we will guide them our paths". (Al-'Ankabut: 69).

The word (aljihad) in this verse is a common term, which is called striving the soul in establishing the laws of Islam, and it is called fighting against the enemies in defending of the lands of Islam, and

the verse was interpreted in both meanings. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol. 8, p :173). Additionally, there are other meanings of this word depending on co-text and context of situation. (see page 8).

4. The meaning of (الطائف - altaayif) as in:

قوله تعالى : " و طاف عليها طائف من ربك وهم نائمون " . (القلم : ١٩)

God Almighty said: "Then there passed by on the (garden) a visitation (fire) from your Lord at night and burnt it while they were asleep". (Al-Qalam:18).

The homonymy (طائف - altaayif) has many different meanings which have no relations to each other. They can be illustrated in the lexicon as: anger, craziness, phantom, a group of people, surrounding object or punishment. In respect to co-text, the perfective form of the verb (طاف) is derived from the noun (altaayif - طائف) which its meaning is (come on) that refers to something visited the men's garden at night.

Preferably, the prepositional phrase (عليها - on it) is considered as an adverb of place that suits punishment to come on it. So, the word (طائف - altaayif) comes here to mean " the visitor at night). (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 10:68).

Whereas, it comes to indicate a completely different meaning in another verse in a different surah and context. This can be manifested by the following verse:

قوله تعالى : " ان الذين اتقوا اذا معهم طائف من الشيطان تذكروا فاذا هم مبصرون " . (الاعراف/ايه ٢٠١)

God Almighty said: "Those who are the pious, when an evil thought comes to them from Satan, they remember Allah and they then see aright". (Al-'A'raaf:201).

The word (طائف - altaayif) in this verse means (devilish thoughts), because it is followed by (من الشيطان - from Satan). This prepositional phrase indicates which meaning of (طائف) is intended by collocating it with "Satan", that it means a false or a sin caused by Satan. (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 5:58).

5. The meaning of (العين - aleayin) as in :

قال سبحانه وتعالى : " فيها عين جارية " . (الغاشية / اية ١٢)

God Almighty said: "There in which will be a spring of water". (Al-Ghaashiyah:12).

This verse sounds to have a descriptive relation with the previous verse and following verse which describe Heaven that Almighty Allah prepares it for believers. This situation conveys the reward and beauty of that Heaven.

The word (العَيْن - aleayin) in Arabic means: an eye of human and animal, heavy clouds, the best of men, the best of something, similar to something, spy, ... etc. The co-text here refers to the meaning of (spring of water) because there is a reference to a place somewhere in the surah. That, it is attributed to the verse: "In a high Heaven- في جنة عالية". (Al-Tuusi, 2010, vol 10, p:277).

The place is represented by "In a high Heaven - في جنة عالية". Therefore the pronoun in the prepositional phrase "there in" - فيها points to a place, then a spring of water needs a place to be in.

6. The meaning of (كَبِد - kabit) as in:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: "لقد خلقنا الانسان في كبد". (البلد /ايه ٤)

God Almighty said: "Verily, we have created, human beings into toil and struggle".

(Al-Balad:4)

Almighty Allah has created humans in toil and struggle with their life, but if the humans suffer from hardships, they must exercise patience, since Allah will make his way smooth for them. The word (كَبِد - kabit) means toil and struggle. (Ibn 'Ashoor,2000:310).

This verse means that human is created in sorrow and she/he is born to strive and struggle, then, Almighty Allah will make her/his path smooth and easy if she/he commits patience and endurance.

The word "كَبِد - kabit" refers to other meanings as: the liver, the side of human body, up to something, in the middle of something, and straightfulness. The co-text refers that the word "كَبِد - kabit" comes as a prepositional phrase which refers to an adverb of manner to show how humans are created and live in their life.

(Al-Azhari,2001:3089).

7. The meaning of "البروج - alburuj" as in:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: "و السماء ذات البروج " . (البروج /ايه ١)

God Almighty said: "By the heaven holding the big stars". (al-buruj:1)

Al-Saadi (2014, p:243) stated that the word (البروج – alburuj) refers to different meanings. Since the word is preceded by (السماء - the sky), so, it means groups of stars or Planets that are obviously contained in the sky. This meaning is recognized in terms of the collocation (السماء). In addition, (البروج – alburuj) can be signs, palaces, or towers as in the following verse:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: "اينما تكونوا يدرككم الموت و لو كنتم في بروج مشيدة" . (النساء/ايه٧٨)

God Almighty said: " Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in palaces built up strong and high ". (Al-nisa:78).

Here, the word (alburuj) means palaces because the context in which it is occurred.

8. The meaning of "الحميم - alhamim", Al-Saadi (2014:243) declared that the word (alhamim) means either close friend or boiling water as in:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: " ما للظالمين من حميم و لا شفيع يطاع " . (غافر /ايه ١٨)

God Almighty said: " There will be no close friend, nor an intercessor for the polytheists and wrong-doers who could be given heed to ". (Al-Ghafir:18).

In this case, the word (alhamim) means a friend or akin because the context in which it is occurred. Moreover, this word can be used in the meaning of boiling water. For example, in the next verse:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: " ثم صبوا فوق راسه من عذاب الحميم " . (الدخان /ايه ٤٨)

God Almighty said: " Then pour over his head the torment of boiling water ". (Ad-Dukhan:48).

9. The meaning of "ايمان - ayman" as in:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: "ولا تجعلوا الله عرضة لايمانكم ان تبروا و تتقوا" . (البقرة /ايه ٢٢٤)

God Almighty said: " And make not Allah's excuse in your oaths against your doing your good and acting piously and making peace among mankind ". (Al- baqara:224).

The word (ayman) here comes to mean a swear or oaths since it is preceded by the word (Allah) and the context in which it is coming.

قال سبحانه وتعالى: "ثم لأتيناهم من بين أيديهم و من خلفهم و عن إيمانهم و عن شمائلهم".
(الأعراف /ايه ١٧)

God Almighty said: " Then I will come to them from before and behind them, from their right and from their left.....". (Al-A'raf/17). The word (ayman) means the right side of the body. (Al-Saadi ,2014:245)

10. The meaning of " الكفار - alkufaar" as in:

قال سبحانه وتعالى: " كمثل غيث اعجب الكفار نباته " . (الحديد /ايه ٢٠)

God Almighty said: " it is as the likeness of tillers after rain, there of the growth is pleasing to the farmers ". (Al-Hadid:20).

Alkufaar, here, means tillers or farmers where there are words such as rain and growth which gave the meaning of tillers.(Al-Qurtubi, M. 1964:255)

قال سبحانه وتعالى: " ان الذين كفروا و ماتوا و هم كفار اولئك لعنة الله و الملائكة و الناس اجمعين " . (البقرة /ايه ١٦١)

God Almighty said: " Verily, those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers, it is they on whom is the Curse of Allah and the angles and of mankind combined ". (Al- baqara:161).

Here, the word (Alkufaar) means disbelievers because the words that they came after the word (Alkufaar) as 'on whom is the Curse of Allah and the angles'. (Al-Qurtubi, M. 1964:188). Therefore, the previous examples represent homonymous words which have two or more meanings.

7. General Conclusions:

By analyzing the former examples of the various contexts. The following points are the most important conclusions that the paper has arrived at:

First: Homonymy is a common phenomenon in both English and Arabic. A comprehensive definition of homonymy based on form as well as functional basis.

Second: The co-text, collocations and Context of situation have a great effect and a crucial priority for specifying the meanings of homonyms words.

Third: Cohesive relations among words are significant to connect words to homonyms meanings as collocations.

Fourth: This paper could be useful to linguists, particularly those concerned with English and Arabic contrastive studies, and to learners of both languages.

Fifth: The paper could also be useful to literary critics, and lexicographers of dictionaries who translate Holy texts as Holy-Quran into both languages.

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