TRANSLATION OF MULTIPLE SENSES IN UNRESTRICTED TEXTS

Polat Ya., Bacak S., Zakirov A.

Ala-Too International University, Bishkek, e-mail: yahya.polat@iaau.edu.kg,
satylmysh.bacak@iaau.edu.kg, alymzhan.zakirov@iaau.edu.kg

This paper addresses the problem of how to identify the primary and secondary senses in translating the various senses. To discriminate senses, a translator should consider the characteristic of words that a single lexical item may have several meanings other than that which most readily comes to mind. These meanings are often called secondary meanings, or secondary senses. Our discussion will include how the the meaning is suggested by the word when it is used alone, when the word is said in isolation. It is the meaning learned early in life and is likely to have reference to a physical situation. Here we will describe how the same word may have a different meaning when used in context with other words. We will also discuss ambiguity caused by senses in translation.

Primary sense is the core, basic, literal meaning of a lexeme. A primary sense is generally the first meaning that comes to mind for most people when a lexeme is uttered alone. Usually it refers to an actual physical thing, an action, or a characteristic of a referent [1]. The primary sense is the meaning suggested by the word when it is used alone. It is the first meaning or usage which a word will suggest to most people when the word is said in isolation. It is the meaning learned early in life and is likely to have reference to a physical situation. But the same word may have a different meaning when used in context with other words.

A secondary sense is a meaning that is more abstract than a primary sense of a lexeme but still shares some of its semantic components. Because it has a different range of reference, its usage contexts and collocates are different from those of a primary sense. For example the word 'oksamak' in Turkish has a primary sense meaning 'to caress, to fondle.' As in the example "adam cocuğun basını oksadı", "The man caressed the child's head". However, oksamak can also mean; 'to resemble to someone' as a secondary meaning. "Fatma teyzesine oksuyor", means "Fatma looks like her aunt".

The "unpacking" of the concepts or meaning components contained in a word all deal with the fact that the same meaning may occur as part of the meaning of various words [2, 112]. In order to define the problem more clearly we can look at the ways of unpacking the word:

(a) By looking at Lexical items from the point of view of the meaning components of which a given word is composed.

(b) By contrasting one lexical item with another in a system.

(c) Pairs of words which have some meaning in common may be contrasted; whole semantic sets may be contrasted.

(d) Taxonomic studies, componential analyses, the study of antonyms and synonyms.

These ways given above are all about one sense of a given word, the primary meaning. However, most words have more than one sense.

For example the word *run* in isolation will mean something like move rapidly by moving the legs rapidly. But if the same word is used in the context of river as in the river runs, *run* has nothing to do with legs or rapidity, although the idea of motion is still there. Run in the context of river means to flow. Secondary senses are dependent on the context in which a word is used [2, 112].

Methodolgy

I collected the data and analyzed them descriptively by using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The analysis of this study took several steps. The data were numbered into a comparative chart, classified into a specific comparative chart to be the related data to the research subject, then the data were analyzed according to the theory used in this study.

Secondary meaning or secondary sense

A speaker of Turkish (Turkey) will tell you that "yemek" means to eat. This is the primary meaning. But a speaker of Turkish will also use this same word in phrases as shown below [3, 32]:

Examples:

Ayvayı yemek: (To eat quince) (Be screwed).

Basının etini yemek: (To eat smb's skin of the head) (nag at smb)

Damga yemek: (Be branded, to be sealed). (to blacken smb's name)

Feleğin sillesini yemek: (To be hit by heavens). (Come down in the world)

Halt yemek: (Make a great blunder). (To do sth improper)

Hazırdan yemek: (Spend the money you saved for you do not work)

İci icini yemek: (To be very anxious for sth bad will happen) (Eat one's heart out)

Kaymağını yemek: (To skim) (To get benefit from a good position)

Nane yemek: (Make a blunder) (Do sth stupid)

Papara yemek: (To be in the dog house) (To be told of, be reprimanded)

Basını yemek: (Cause the death of) (Get smb into trouble)

Bıcak yemek: (Be stabbed)

(bir is birinin) vaktini almak (yemek): (Steal smn's time)

Birbirini yemek: (Go at it hammer and tongs) (To eat each other)

(birini) ciğ ciğ yemek: (eat smn alive) (be violently angry at)

Translating the primary sense of a lexical item is usually much easier than a secondary sense. This is because the receptor language will often have a lexical equivalent for the primary meaning which very nearly matches the meaning of the lexical item in the source language. However, the secondary senses of those same two words will probably not match [2,113]: A native speaker knows immediately by the other words which occur in the phrase or sentence which sense of the word is being signaled. Learners of a second language often have a great deal of trouble to use a word in its many secondary senses.

Turkish	English
Asker kaleye yürüdü:	Soldiers marched to the castle
Dedemiz Hakka yürüdü:	Our grandfather has passed away
Dallara su yürüdü:	Water moving up to the branches

Any word used in a non-primary sense will probably not be translated by the word in the receptor language which is equivalent to its primary sense, but by a different word. For example, the primary sense of key would be translated into Turkish with "anahtar". But notice the following list which shows how they differ in translating secondary senses:

English to Turkish

key – **anahtar** (of a lock)

key – **sifre** (of a code)

key – **tus** (of a typewriter)

Turkish to English

anahtar – **key**

anahtar – **switch**

anahtar – **clue, clef, cipher, cotter, cock, spanner, interrupter, wrench, toggle**

Analyzing senses of words

The process for discovering the various senses of words is rather complicated but can be very crucial for making dictionaries, learning a second language, and may also be helpful to the translator when no dictionaries are available which give an adequate description of the senses of words in the language [4]. A translator who is truly bilingual in the source and receptor languages will usually recognize a non-primary sense. Nevertheless, there is always the possibility that a literal translation of a word may be used in a secondary sense. This literal translation sets up a strange collocation and wrong meaning [2, 113].

Step 1. Collecting data.

One must first collect as many examples of the use of the word as possible. If a person knows the language he can simply think of all the possible combinations with other words. If not, he will need to find the word in as many texts as possible. A concordance done on the computer will greatly speed up the search, learning a language, or hoping to make a dictionary, will want to begin early in his research to collect data on each word of the language, building up more words and more examples of their co-occurrence with other words. The goal is to list as many collocate as possible. For our purposes, we shall now assume that we have found the following [4].

Cam kırdı	Broke the window
Ayağını kırdı	Broke his leg
Cesaretimi kırdı	Discouraged me
Kalbini kırdı	Broke heart
Fiyat kırdı	Made discount
Tavlada pul kırdı	Hit a checker
Umudunu kırdı	Dashed my hopes
Direksiyonu kırdı	Turn the wheel hard
Kemiklerini kırdı	Broke his bones
Boynunu kırdı	Broke his neck
Dersi kırdı	played truant
Direncini kırdı	broke his resistance
Dümen kırdı	veered
Rekor kırdı	broke the record
Fındık (ceviz) kırdı	mess around women
Gurur kırdı	humiliated
Onur kırdı	insulted
Hatırını kırdı	offended, worried
Hevesini kırdı	dissuade,
Aşkını, sevkini kırdı	dishearten
İnadını kırdı	overcome his stub bornness (will)
Kabuğunu kırdı	broke the shell
Kesek kırdı	harrow
Kibrini kırdı	abase
Kirisi kırdı	got away
Kod kırdı	broke the code
Nefsini kırdı	mortify the flesh
Not kırdı	took points of a student
Pot kırdı	dropped a brick

Step 2. Sort the collocates into generic classes.

Each grammatical form should be analyzed separately. In this example, we have used only

intransitive verb forms. If the noun run occurred, this noun form would need to be separated and analyzed separately. One begins by making best guesses, refining the analysis as he goes.

(1) Human body: Leg, bone, neck

(2) Human senses: Courage, heart, hope, resistance, honor, pride

(3) Objects: Window,

(4) Run away: lesson (play truant), got away

(5) Change direction (car, ship): veer, wheel

(6) Decrease: note, price

(7) Having affair: mess with woman

(8) Mistake: drop a brick

(9) Game: Hit a checker

(10) Change sth: broke the shell

(11) Achievement: broke the record

Step 3. Regroup the contexts according to the collocates which belong to the same generic classes as follows.

3.1. Human body

(1) Ayağını kırdı: Broke his leg

(2) Kemiklerini kırdı: Broke his bones

(3) Boynunu kırdı: Broke his neck

3.2. Human senses

(1) Cesaretimi kırdı: Discouraged me

(2) Kalbini kırdı: Broke heart

(3) Umudunu kırdı: Dashed my hopes

(4) Direncini kırdı: Broke his resistance

(5) Gurur kırdı: Humiliated

(6) Onur kırdı: Insulted

(7) Hatırını kırdı: Offended, worried

(8) Hevesini kırdı: Dissuade,

(9) Aşkını, sevkini kırdı: Dishearten

(10) İnadını kırdı: Overcome his stubbornness (will)

(11) Kabuğunu kırdı: Broke the shell

(12) Kibrini kırdı: Abase

(13) Nefsini kırdı: Mortify the flesh

3.3. Objects

(1) Cam kırdı: Broke the window

(2) Kesek kırdı: Harrow

3.4. Running away

(1) Dersi kırdı: Played truant

(2) Kirisi kırdı: Got away

3.5. Change direction (car, ship)

(1) Dümen kırdı: Veered

(2) Direksiyonu kırdı: Turn the wheel hard

3.6. Earn or punish by decrease

(3) Fiyat kırdı: Made discount

(4) Not kırdı: Took points of a student

3.7. Having affair

(5) Fındık (ceviz) kırdı: Mess around women

3.8. Mistake: drop a brick

(6) Pot kırdı: Dropped a brick

3.9. Game

(7) Tavlada pul kırdı: Hit a checker

3.10. Penetrate a secret

(8) Kod kırdı: Broke the code

3.11. Achievement

(9) Rekor kırdı: Broke the recor

Step 4. List and label the senses of the words.

Once the data is reorganized by the generic classes of the collocates, it is much easier to see the senses of the word. For animate beings with legs, the meaning seems to be to move oneself from one place to another rapidly; for liquids, simply to flow, for vines, the meaning is to grow, etc.

Sense 1: Changing the form of body in an unwanted way.

Sense 2: Changing the human senses

Sense 3: Changing the form of objects.

Sense 4: Running away from responsibility

Sense 5: Change direction

Sense 6: Changing value

Sense 7: Changing the value of heart

Sense 8: Mistake

Sense 9: Game

Sense 10: Penetrate a secret

Sense 11: Achievement

Translating the Various Senses

If the above analysis were of the receptor language word, that is, if one were translating into English, the analysis would point up the necessity of including, in the context of run, a collocate from the generic class mentioned in order to insure the correct meaning. When the meaning is signaled by the context in which the word occurs, it is very important that the context be built into the translation.

The word "ucmak" occurs in the following contexts, each signaling a different sense of the Turkish word. It is possible to restate the meaning in Turkish.

Kus uctu: A bird flew

Ucak uctu: Plane took off

Gaz, buhar uctu: Gas, steam evaporated

Rengi, benzi uctu: He grew pale

Catı uctu: The roof structure was uplifted by the hurricane

Toprak, evin üstüne uctu: Soil eroded over the house

Patlamadan dolayı bina havaya uctu: Building exploded

Sacları havada ucuyor: Her hair was flown in air

Araba cok hızlı gidiyor, ucuyor: The car was very fast

Yarın istanbul'a ucuyorum: I am flying to İstanbul tomorrow

Yok oldu sanki havaya uctu: Lost, disappeared suddenly

Sevincten havalara uctu: He was very very happy

Uyusturucu almıs ucuyor: He tripped out
Bizim kitaplar ucmus: Our books were stolen
Cennete uctu: Flew to haven, died

The idea of "flying in a presentable form" is common to all the senses. The common thread of meaning shows that we are dealing with a single word rather than with two or more separate words [4, 97], but each sense will result in a different form for the translation.

A secondary sense will almost always need to be translated by a different word than the word which denotes the primary sense. In English there are many synonyms of the word powerful". They include *strong, muscular, muscly, sturdy, strapping, robust, brawny, burly, heavily built, athletic, manly, well built, solid;* and others. All belong to a common semantic set and can be contrasted and components of meaning analyzed as presented in the previous chapter. The nuclear component of each would be POWER. "Tiger" has the contrastive component "animal, wild"; "King" has the contrastive component of being a human, authority, etc. That is, each of these contrasts with the others in the semantic set. But in addition, each of these words has a primary sense and a number of secondary senses. Some of them are being used in a secondary sense when they are included as part of the semantic set, POWERFUL BEING. For example, "king" has the primary meaning of head of a country. However, it also has a secondary meaning of "the most important chess piece". A word may be a member of various semantic sets. In some, it will be used in its primary sense and in others in one of its secondary senses. This, of course, adds to the complications of translation.

In the display which diagram the senses of the word "powerful", notice that ten senses have been identified. (The kind of analysis which leads to this type of charting is described in [5, 99-113].

In the analysis of the English word "powerful", the senses are numbered at the bottom with the primary sense "strong" as number six. In the discussion of secondary senses above, we showed how the sense is signaled by the collocates that go with the word. However, it may not always be a specific word that signals the meaning but the presence of some signal of the components of meaning within the word when used in that sense. For example, to signal the sense of "woman", rather than "shark" for "powerful" something in the context must signal "human" rather than "wild water mammal" since "wild" (powerful) is not the primary meaning of powerful.

"Powerful" has at least ten senses. But the meaning will be signaled only if the translation into English has built into the context the semantic components that will trigger the meaning. If not, the wrong meaning may result even when the right word is used. For example, if we use the collocate "woman" for the context, the meaning would still be ambiguous. It could refer to her body power, or a wealth of her. If an English said, "they have a powerful media", it would immediately be understood that their media has a lot of influence on people of that country. If someone said, "There is a powerful leader in our country", it would immediately signal a man, since it must be animate. The collocate *powerful leader* signaled this. The choice of meaning is signaled by including in the context some other lexical item which will activate the semantic components indicated at the nodes of the chart. The king had a powerful time on his throne is understood to be a rule over people because the throne indicates this sense. John saw a powerful bite in the body would mean tracks because of the collocate body.

Powerful								
Animate								Inanimate
God	Man				Animal			Nature
Absolute	Natural	Wealth	group	Authority	Wild		domestic	Water, rain flood
One	children	man	army	police	land	Water	ram	wind hurricane
1. Omni potent	man	woman	media	King	Tiger	Crocodile	rooster	earthquake
	2. Sturdy	3. Wealthy	4. Influential	5 Authoritative	6. Strong	7. powerful	8. Fast	9. Devastating

The two main rules about secondary senses are

1) the secondary senses of the source language can probably not be translated literally but will need to be understood in order to find a good equivalent, and

2) the secondary sense of words in the receptor language will only mean what they are intended to mean if the context includes collocates which will signal the sense desired.

Ambiguity Caused by Senses not Clearly Signaled

Something is ambiguous when it can be understood in two or more possible senses or ways. If the ambiguity is in a single word it is called lexical ambiguity. In a sentence or clause, structural ambiguity [6].

It is important to know the meaning components of the primary sense. For example, in the Chuj language of Guatemala, the word *say* turned out to be a problem for the translator. The word *say* was used in the sentence, "The people said, "This man is God". "In the story where this was used, the man was not God. The people said it, but it was not true. However, what the translator did not know was that the word *say* in its primary sense includes the component of the truth. The word *say* in Chuj means to say the truth; that is, the unmarked meaning. In order to indicate that what they said was not true, *say* must be marked. So it had to be translated "The people said falsely, "He is a God", to avoid wrong meaning [4, 115].

It should also be noted that lack of context will lead to ambiguity in many cases example, the sentence "study like your brother, do not be lazy!" is ambiguous. It could mean that his brother is hard working or lazy. The ambiguity comes because of the two senses, and lack of context to make it unambiguous. It would be possible to simply say "study like your brother, do not be lazy" or "study, like your brother do not be lazy!" Here, change of comma, changes the meaning of the sentence.

No equivalent lexical items will have the same senses from language to language. Even primary meanings that look the same at first may have additional components that can distort the meaning if used without care. One of the most important things in translation is to be sure that the context is sufficient to mark the meaning desired. Ambiguities often arise when the translator knows only one or two senses of a word and does not know the context needed to signal the correct meaning.

Notice the three Turkish sentences below:

1. Kol yedi (he ate meat)
2. Kol gerdi (he protected)
3. Kol bastı (soldiers swooped, busted, raided)

The first means that he ate the meat of the front arm, the second that he protected someone and the third that police or soldiers raided a house or some place. All of them use the word *kol* which has the primary sense of *arm*. This is the unmarked meaning which all native speakers would give as the meaning of *kol*.

When Zahir Faryabi a Persian poet was praising the king Kılıcharslan, he said "when contemplating to kiss his feet, they had put the seven heaven under his feet like a stool. But Kılıchaslan's one foot was shorter. Zahir's enemies told him that "the poet meant that you were lame, limping. So they made him butcher the poet [7, 14].

Conclusion

Above we have talked about the problem of how to identify the primary and secondary senses in translating the various senses. We have considered the characteristic of words that a single lexical item may have several meanings other than that which most readily comes to mind. We have seen the examples of secondary meanings, or secondary senses.

We have discussed how the the meaning is suggested by the word when it is used alone, when the word is said in isolation. How meaning learned early in life and is likely to have reference to a physical situation. We have described how the same word may have a different meaning when used in context with other words.We have discussed ambiguity caused by senses in translation.

References

1. http://www.glossary.sil.org/term/secondary-sense.

2. Larson M.L. "Meaning Based Translation" University Press of America. New York, 2012. – 589 p.

3. Barnwell K. "An analysis of strategies used in translating the short story". High Wycombe: Summer Institute of Linguistics. 1980.

4. Beekman J., Callow J. "Translating the Word of God". Zondervan Pub. House, Jun 1, 1974 – Religion. – 399 p.

5. Eugene A.N. "Toward a Science of Translating" Leiden, E.J. Brill Netherlands, (1964) 331 p.

6. Quiroga-Clare C. "Language Ambiguity: A Curse and a Blessing" Translation Journal, Literary Translations. (2003) http://translationjournal.net/journal/23ambiguity.htm.

7. Shirazy S. "Bostan ve Gulistan" İstanbul, Cagaloglu, 1984. 473 p.