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CHALLENGING ISSUES IN TRANSLATING CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Implicature is the act of meaning or implying one thing by saying something else. Conversational implicature define the context of language texts based on social incidents and human activities. The speakers engaged in conversation should be well aware of the implicature in order to make the communication process more successful. In this sense, the objective of this research is analyzing the problems of translating conversational implicature from source language to target language. Translators encounter different types of difficulties which are attributed to vocabulary, culture and idioms. One of the major difficulties translators have to face with is the translation of conversational implicature of a certain language to another language. This research discusses about the issues a translator deals with when translating implicature and the techniques used by translators to overcome that challenge of translating implicature. The study is mainly based on the utterances used by native speakers of English language and the specific phrases they use to define the context of the utterances. Words like “but, even and yet” are used to carry conversational implicature in English language. For instance, the sentence, “Even Warne scored a century” literally means that no one expected a century from Warne. Thus, the translator has to define the exact meaning of the implicature with reference to the situation and the terms used by the speaker. To conclude, the translator has the responsibility in being aware of the types of conversational implicature in the

process of translation and moreover, context and conversational implicature are challenging and valuable goals a translator needs to achieve in bringing forward a successive translation.

Keywords: Conversational Implicature, English, Translation, Context, Communication

INTRODUCTION

Language has its own different forms including colloquial languages, pidgins and creoles, and Lingua Franca. Besides, speaking, writing and thinking are also deeply connected with language in the means of communication. Language is influenced by many factors and these factors have been the major reasons for the existence of different languages all over the world. Culture, religions, beliefs, and social norms can be considered as the main factors which affects the language differentiation. Based on the so-called linguistic norms, there have been different uses of language in different environments. Meaning is known to be the most significant feature in language. Meaning is the base of language communication and if there is no existence of meaning, there will not be any possible communication by any means. This specific feature in language has helped language to introduce several important theories in linguistics. It is true that every language has its own structure and formation of sentences or syntax. However, the question is whether the surface meaning of a certain set of lexemes

is valid. This is where the implied meaning or context become functional in this certain field. Implied meaning is meaning which is not directly expressed. The most common use of implied meaning in language is the idioms. Yet, idioms are the most complex level of implied meaning in a certain language. When considering about implied meaning, there are many sub theories in the field of Linguistics. These were not discussed in the early era of Linguistics. Traditional Linguistics did not present theories related to implications though the fundamentals of meaning or context was basically studied in Semantics. The study of implied meaning of language comes under a separate field known as 'Pragmatics' which was introduced in the 20th century. Pragmatics consists of the most recent theories related to context which were not discussed in Semantics. This field was introduced because the need of moving beyond the surface meaning of a phrase or a sentence towards a new perspective of meaning arose in this period. Thus, conversational implicature was first introduced under Pragmatics where much attention is paid to the contextual backgrounds of the society and people. Conversational Implicature is one of the main forms of language which deeply connects with the cultural background of a certain society. Conversational implicature occurs when utterances are defined based on social incidents and human activities excluding the general language structure. Facts related to conversational implicature were first discussed by Levinson mentioning that these conversational implicatures were used in Western countries many decades ago. In that era, time was communicated according to acts such as distribution of newspapers and distribution of letters as they occurred at an exact time period of the day. In order to be well aware of the meaning brought forward through conversational implicature, the knowledge not only on

that certain language but also on the cultural background of the source language should be in the fluent level. This fact is of much importance for language users, specially translators, whenever the language is used. Translators are those who deal with the language every time. Their role is mainly based upon the language. They have to interact with different languages of different origins and cultures in engaging in the process of translation. Just the mere awareness of a certain language does not help the translator in bringing forward a successful outcome. Thus, translators encounter different problems when translating conversational implicature such as structure, vocabulary and idiom usages. As mentioned earlier, conversational implicature are bound with environmental and socio-cultural factors of a certain society. The main challenge that the translator deals with in translating aforementioned implied meaning is that different languages use different forms to express the same meaning. Based on this specific fact, the translator should have a better knowledge if the attempt is to bring forth the best version of translation of implied meanings. Thus, this research mainly focuses on the challenges faced by the translator in translating implied texts in cultural backgrounds. The translator is a person who has a better awareness of language, culture and linguistic aspects of language. The techniques used by the translator to overcome the challenge of converting implicatures from one language to another are discussed in the research to identify the approaches the translator uses in such challenging circumstances. Consequently, translating conversational implicature is an advanced task which requires proper presence of mind within the translator and this process is also considered as a procedure which tests the understanding of the translator on the socio-cultural, environmental as well

as linguistic phenomena of certain languages.

Literature review

Conversational implicature has been identified as a major theory in language related to pragmatics and the translator should have a vast knowledge on colloquial aspects of a language in translating conversational implicature. Implied meaning is one aspect of meaning that translators need to deal with. Translators may encounter situations in which the applied meaning in their own or another's translation does not sound right, but may lack the theoretical tools to distinguish between what is acceptable or what is not. (Wang, 2007) The intended meaning of a given word or a phrase can be understood precisely when it is a part of the composition of the sentence or text because a communication is not only using words or idioms that stand for beliefs, events or feelings but the way of using them in a particular situation. (Guessabi, 2013) In an attempt to pursue this goal, translations have been regarded as facts of the culture which hosts them, with the concomitant assumption that whatever their function and identity, these are constituted within that same culture and reflect its own constellation. (G. Toury, 1995) The main focus at the present time is on the way in which people relate words to each other within a context. More specifically, interest is centered on the two types of the meaning: (1) word/ phrase/ sentence meaning and (2) what a speaker intends to convey. (Grice, 1975; Levinson, 1983) Implicature is linked with culture. Presumably implicature may change the form of the text when one moves from one language (SL) to another language (TL). (Newmark, 1981) Culture plays an essential role in interpreting meaning of a certain text because culture reflects the way of thinking and behaving within a particular society. (House, 2009) Knowledge of sentence implicatures is a crucial component in linguistic

competence. Speakers unaware of them are likely to mislead their audience.

Various techniques to be used in translating implied meanings have been presented by several scholars, inclusive of employing words that are more specific than the words in the source language (SL) text in order to clarify the illocutionary force (Bourne,2002), adding footnotes (Henry,2000), or explicating the meaning when the translator/interpreter believes that the audience would have difficulty recovering what is implicitly conveyed (Jacobson,2004; Newmark,1981). The notion of implied meaning also explains one of the reasons that different translators translate the same text differently: translators have different perspectives and backgrounds, and do not perceive the same implicatures, use the same contexts, or assign the same weightings to implicatures: they do not perceive identical implied meanings from reading the original (Wang,2007). The translator is required to find out what is implicated, so as to convey the meaning of the original text in the most appropriate and acceptable form in the TL (Al Ananzeh,2015). Being an expert translator requires "a wide perspective upon the organization of the language as a system and be constantly aware of all the levels" (Chifone,2009). Transferring implicatures are more challenging than translating forms or semantics for the translator (Abdi,2009). As Abdi (2009) further explains, the context in which the utterance appears is a matter of importance that should be taken into account by the translator. The reason behind the difficulty of extracting the context of the utterance is the lack of pragmatic adeptness: A skillful translator should possess "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" (Thomas,1983). Thus, several studies related to the techniques of translating conversational implicatures and challenges that the translators

encounter in translating conversational implicatures have been done by several scholars over the past few decades. Translating different types of implicatures have been a challenging task for translators because of the pragmatic uniqueness they possess.

METHODOLOGY

The use of conversational implicatures differs from one language to another as every language does not have the same cultural influence over the society. Therefore, this research was based on various types of conversational implicatures used in different linguistic cultures. Qualitative research method was used as the approach of implementation because the data for the research were gathered from the day to day communication of people who belonged to different language speaking societies. Subsequently, the gathered data were analyzed to observe the implied meanings and, environmental and cultural factors that influenced the implicatures. Based on the observations, the role of the translator in converting conversational implicature from one language dimension to another was taken into consideration in order to identify the challenges and the techniques used by the translator in this procedure. After the completion of the analysis part, the evaluation process of the research was implemented. The environmental, cultural, social and ethnic aspects related to conversational implicature in different language cultures were evaluated. As the final step of the research, facts related to the environmental and socio-cultural influence over a society in using conversational implicatures were presented along with the most suitable and efficient techniques to be followed in providing the translated outcome in the most suitable manner based on the diverse cultural aspects of different languages.

DISCUSSION

Translation plays a major role in the field of Linguistics as translation was first introduced in the subject range of Comparative Linguistics. One might suppose that the role of the translator is just converting a text of a certain language into another language. In contrast, translation is not merely about converting a text into a different tongue. Being a secondary as well as a creative task, translation is at present considered as the bridge which connects different language cultures. Translators themselves follow their own set of rules and they have some limitations to deal with while engaging in the process of translation as well. In this process, producing the perfect translation is the most significant task of the translator. Complicating the task of translation, translation of conversational implicature is found as a quite challenging task to implement. The reason behind translation of implicature is considered as a formidable task is that implied meanings execute different ideas in different contexts. The challenges in translating implicatures, techniques to be followed together with an original and modern classification on conversational implicature are presented in this chapter of the research.

CHALLENGES

1 Accuracy

Understanding the accurate context of a text is one of the major tasks of the translator. Dealing with a foreign language without proper knowledge could always be a risky task. Being a translator is about dealing with different language cultures in translating. The main challenge translator faces is that comprehending the accurate definition of a certain phrase or a sentence. As mentioned earlier, meaning is the most prominent factor of language related to translation so that the correct

transmittance of the meaning to the target audience is one of the major tasks that the translator has to cope with in the process of translation. Conversational implicatures brings forward hidden meanings or intentions. In translating conversational implicature the translator has to understand the situation as well as the context brought forward from the implicature. With a better identification of the implied meaning, the translator should convert the source text into the target language in the best manner that matches to the culture, language forms and society of the target language. Thus, the proper understanding of the essence of the conversational implicature of a certain society is of much significance to the translator.

2 Contextual Identity

Contextual identity literally means finding a contextually similar phrase in the target language. It is a common fact that every language has its own characteristics bonded with the culture and society. The lexemes and morphemes used in a language to deliver a certain implied meaning might be completely non-identical to the lexemes and morphemes used in another language to deliver the same message in terms of syntactic and morphological backgrounds. In such situations, the ability of using language efficiently is one of the most vital things that the translator should take into consideration. The replacement phrase used in target language in translating conversational implicature of the source language is a task which needs perfect observation. The reason is that the exact denotation should be distributed without any injustice to the intention of source language text. Thus, search of contextually equivalent phrases in target language is a task which should be perfected by the translator in order to do the justice for the original context.

3 Socio-cultural Awareness

Knowledge on the socio-cultural and lifestyle icons of the source language society is a major fact that should be considered in translating implicatures. Language is not considered as a thing which is just based on a certain set of rules on which the language is basically formed. Language has a deep connection with the people, society as well as culture. Language has been evolving time by time based on the different social, psychological and cultural factors followed in different ages of time. Likewise, translator should possess a third eye in seeing and understanding the socio-cultural and lifestyle icons of a society where the source language is used. This mere factor is certainly one of the factors which is highly important in producing a successful translated version of the source text. It is the duty of the translator to comprehend the beliefs, and thought patterns of the source culture. Conversational implicature is a theory bonded with the culture, society as well as people. Thus, the awareness of source language culture is far more important in the translation process of implicatures. In such types of occasions, translator acts not only as a translator but also as a scientist.

4 Language Fluency

Through conversational implicature, the speaker tries to convey a certain intent in the mind using a coded utterance. The listener should be able to understand the accurate idea that the speaker intended. Thus, conversational implicature is a relative process which means a different idea using or saying something else. In other words, conversational implicatures are indirect speech acts. Understanding these so-called implicatures requires a fluent level of the language in order to identify the most accurate meaning. Fluency of language is an essential factor in translation which helps to identify the language patterns used in both written and spoken forms. The fluency of source language and the target language is quite

important in translation. The requirement of a good command of language for the translator is essential to understand the idea of the source language and transfer the context to the best version of context that perfectly suits the target language. All things considered, the efficient use of both source and target language helps the translation process to be an elegant work of language.

5 Misjudgment

Misjudgment is having the risk of direct translating a context. Translation has the literal meaning of converting a text in source language to the target language. This does not mean that translation is a word-to-word replacement process. Translator has to respect the language structure, context, and intention especially in terms of source language along with the target language in translating conversational implicature.

Ex: The classroom is so hot.

According to the above-mentioned example, the statement of the speaker is "The classroom is hot." Based on this statement, the listener should be able to understand that he/she should turn up the air conditioner. This is simply the ideation of conversational implicature and this point is of much importance when translation is considered. Conversational implicature consists of hidden meanings. Only the surface meaning should not be considered in these types of language patterns and there is a deep meaning which should be identified clearly to distribute the accurate translation to the target audience. Translating conversational implicature is a process which requires experience, proper control and understanding of language as well as a clear mind set. Inexperience in the field and the poor command of language create the risk of direct translating of conversational implicature in language in which the translation policies will be destroyed. The analytical knowledge of the translator should be properly used in

such environments as the final outcome should be a mere success of translation process.

Techniques

Translator has to act as a linguist in several occasions in order to understand the precise linguistic phenomenon in a certain text. This aspect of a translator is highlighted specially in translating conversational implicature. This is because the translator has to use various types of linguistic techniques in order to successfully bring forward the relevant implied definition of a text. Different techniques related to Linguistics are taken into consideration in the process of translation. They can be listed as follows:

1. Borrowing
2. Adaptation
3. Transposition
4. Modulation
5. Equivalence

1 Borrowing

From the earliest time of language origin, words from different languages were adapted to certain languages to make the use of language easier. The impact for this process is mainly the cultural and social influence over a nation created by a certain nation. Thus, almost every language has been using loan words which have the origin of other different cultures. The adaptation of words from other languages is known as "language borrowing." This theory is also known as "lexical borrowing." This is one of the most common techniques used in translation. There are languages in which the terms and words used have their own cultural specifications. When translation is considered, translating these types of cultural terms or words is certainly a challenge. To overcome such situations, the translator tends to engage in language borrowing as strategy of translating culture-based terms. Conversational implicatures belongs to culture-based terms category in the linguistic norms. The

translator makes the choice of using the same term in the target text in situations where any equivalent for the term could not be found in the target language. On one hand, language borrowing allows the translator to use a term of a particular culture in a text based on its registers. On the other hand, language borrowing helps two cultures to create an interlink between their cultural and social environments. Thus, this common technique used in the process of translation helps not only in creating a successful translated version of the source text but also to create a linguistic bond between two separate cultures.

2 Adaptation

Linguistic adaptation is a phenomenon where language representations change in response to language output. This mainly influences on the phonological, lexical as well as syntactic structure of a language. This linguistic phenomenon is one of the major techniques used in the process of converting one language to another. Adaptation assists translation with the process of expressing an idea of a different cultural setting. In translation, adaptation occurs when something specific of a certain language culture is presented in a different way which makes it more familiar to another language culture. This specific technique is based on the environment and the society. When conversational implicatures are taken into consideration with regard to translation, adaptation is more applicable as those implied utterances and sentences deals with the environmental and social aspects within a certain society.

A: The time may be about 12 pm right?

B: No. The church bells weren't even rung.

The above example clarifies the environmental influence on conversational implicature. The church bells in Catholic churches are rung exactly at 12 pm daily to alert the devotees to gather in the church. Aforementioned is a

conversation done regarding the time and the answer for the relevant question has been implied with a non-directive answer. However, this conversation is understandable for the two speakers as they have the knowledge on that specific incident. Therefore, this process changes the cultural reference when alternatives are not available in the target language culture for the replacement or substitution of the source language terms.

3 Transposition

Every language has its own grammatical structure which basically helps create utterances and sentences required to fulfil the purpose of communication. Transposition is bound with the grammatical structure of a certain language in which main consideration is paid to the placement or the position of the grammatical categories. For instance, the phrase 'patatas bravas' in Spanish changes its semantic appearance into 'spicy potatoes' when translated into English language. More specifically, the position of the noun and adjective in Spanish is completely different from the placement of the noun and adjective in English language. The translator should be aware that there is the possibility of replacing a word class in target language with any alteration of the source context. Thus, this technique could be applied to translate implied meanings of a certain language as well as this oblique translation technique could be used not only in structural backgrounds but also in conceptual frameworks. As conceptual frameworks of a certain language depend upon its socio-cultural aspects, direct translation does not suit in such occasions. This is because the responsibility of the translator is to bring forward the accurate meaning without doing any change in the meaning. Thus, transposition is a useful technique in translating texts which consist of implied meanings.

4 Modulation

Various languages include various ways of expressing ideas in the process of communication. Those phrases are different in terms of words and terms used, but the phrases carry out the same meaning in each language. This is what modulation literally means in the field of Linguistics.

“Laisser tomber”

The above-mentioned phrase is a common phrase used in colloquial French language. It literally means “drop it” when the surface meaning is considered. However, the hidden or implied meaning of this phrase means “never mind” in the colloquial French usage. Thus, this clarifies that different languages use different phrases to express a unique meaning. The main fact happens in these types of scenarios is that the semantic relation is altered and as a result, the point of view is altered according to the usage based on the social framework. This is why modulation is a technique which could be used essentially in translating conversational implicature. The phrases used in the source language to indicate conversational implicature are definitely unequal to target language in every linguistic aspect. This fact mainly depends upon the cultural platform of the speaking societies of the relevant language. The translator creates a change in the point of view without obstructing the meaning using a characteristic phrase related to target culture through modulation. This is called a successful technique in translation because the target readers get the ability to have the sense of closeness and naturalness of their language when the translated outcome is read. All in all, translators have the skill of using such techniques in issuing a promising translated version of the source text.

5 Equivalence

This technique can be found commonly in translation of idiomatic expressions. Equivalence is a principle related to translation as the translators should

convert the meaning of the original or source text with a higher level of comprehension on both the source and target languages accompanied by equivalence. Having equivalence taken into consideration, it does not only mean the contextual similarity of the terms used but also translating according to the social and cultural beliefs of the target language. The accurate idea of the term ‘equivalence’ is the equivalence of meaning, but not the terms or phrases because every language varies based on the lexemes and phrases used in the language.

“To call a spade a spade”

The above common idiomatic phrase in English language means ‘calling something as the way it is.’ However, the phrase used in French language to imply the same meaning is “Il faut appeler un chat un chat.” A difference in the lexical structures of the two languages could be seen visually. More importantly, the equivalence of the implied meaning could be seen in both the languages. This is the contextual similarity between different languages which is considered as a fundamental of the translation process. Thus, translating such implied contexts requires a well-advanced knowledge in finding the equivalence in translation.

Modern Perspective towards Implicature

Paul Grice, the pioneer of introducing the theory of conversational implicature theory, mainly discussed about the philosophical connection between logic and conversation with relation to the meaning of utterances. Thus, Grice introduced four main maxims of conversational implicatures namely maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relation (relevance) and maxim of manner. From his theory, he focused on the characteristics of expressing an utterance and he proclaimed that every implicature relates to different types of maxims. He discusses about implicature as

a whole under different characteristics of utterances. Implied meanings are used to convey different messages in different contexts. The way of conducting language differ from one context to another. Thus, implicature could be seen in different forms which specifies different intentions and the whole process of implicature could be categorized into different types according to the messages conveyed. In this chapter, an original classification of Conversational Implicatures are presented based on the specific features related to implied meanings. Conversational Implicatures are used to convey different types of messages in a periphrastic manner than the literal meaning which are used to talk about different sets of incidents as well. Different language societies have their unique styles of expressing implemented meanings. Consequently, based on the changes of state of implied utterances, conversational implicature could be categorized into four major types according to the pragmatic and contextual differentiations of each implicature type.

1. General Implicature
2. Cultural Implicature
3. Time Implicature
4. Idiomatic Implicature

General Implicature

General Implicature is the use of regular sets of words or lexemes in order to imply a different meaning of an utterance. This type of Conversational Implicature is the basic category of implicature. In other words, General Implicature is the most basic form of implied meaning. Word and phrases used in regular conversation are used in order to give an indirect or implicit meaning.

A: Will he come to the meeting today?

B: No, his car broke down.

The above example emphasizes the General Implicature according to the above classification. The question directed by A is “Will he come to the meeting today?” and in response, the reply of B is

“No, his car broke down.” With that certain phrase, B tries to emphasize that the they are speaking about is not coming to the meeting. To put it simply, B implies the idea of “He is not coming to the meeting” by using a different set of words.

Cultural Implicature

The term ‘Cultural Implicature’ defines the use of culturally specific terms, symbols and signs related to a certain culture to imply or express a certain message. This type of implicature differs from one culture or community to another as the culture within communities are different in many aspects. Such cultural terms execute the dissimilarities between cultures in the perspective of meaning because of their categorical features which they belong to.

Trumped

The above word is a frequently applied phrase in the English culture which belongs to sports field. Though this term bears a meaning related to sports, the meaning could be altered according to the used environment or situation. ‘Trumped’ carries out the hidden meaning of ‘defeated by someone’s better move.’ These types of words are used frequently in the society and they are more metaphorical rather than being literal in the regular usage. This is more specific to the English culture and as a result, this cannot be directly translated into the target language. This is the specialty of these terms as they represent a unique culture. In view of these circumstances, relevant techniques pertaining to translation should be followed by translators, i.e. finding the unique equivalent in the target culture.

Time Implicature

Time Implicature is the use of specific words related to social phenomena to express time. This certain type of implicature is bound with activities, routines or incidents of a certain culture or a nation. Words related to work, society

and leisure are used in this type of implied meaning as well.

A: Is it time for lunch?

B: No, the church bell hasn't even rung.

In this incident, the first speaker inquires whether the time for lunch has come. The response of the second speaker is 'No, the church bell hasn't even rung.' It demonstrates the relationship between the lunch time and the ringing of the church bell. The two speakers are aware that the church bell is rung exactly at the beginning of the lunch time. Thus, the time has been expressed with the reference of a social event.

Idiomatic Implicature

Idioms are the specific sets of words or phrases which is used to express a special meaning beyond the surface meaning. Thus, the use of specific words or phrases to imply a hidden meaning is known as 'Idiomatic Implicature.' Additionally, idioms vary based on the cultural influence. In such implicature, the concealed or deeper meaning needs to be extracted over the surface or literal meaning.

I really dislike going to that night club, but whatever floats your boat.

The idiomatic phrase used in the above utterance is 'whatever floats your boat.' This phrase carries out the hidden meaning of 'makes someone happy.' Accordingly, the speaker suggests that he/she is ready to do whatever makes the other person happy. The speaker implied the relevant meaning rather than expressing it directly. Idiomatic phrases are unique to a certain culture and they differ from one linguistic subculture to another in the aspect of language. However, regardless of the terms or words used, the meaning of the idiomatic phrases of each language is the same. In other words, the contextual background is quite similar though the lexical difference could be seen.

Conclusion

Translator copes with different types of texts bound with different social norms and cultures. Because of this reason, the translator has to use different techniques in order to do justice for both source and target cultures. This research was mainly based upon one of the most common semantic expressions used in day to day communication names as "conversational implicatures" and the approaches which the translator uses in translating conversational implicatures in different cultural and social settings. The foundation for the implementation of the research was the implied meanings used in various social environments. Conversational implicatures from a number of languages were referred in the research to identify the challenges faced by the translator in translating so-called implicatures. Translation of conversational implicature plays an important role in the field of translation as these phrases or sentences include an implied or hidden meaning to be considered. This is the reason that the translator has to engage in this process with a vast semantic awareness than in standard translation process. Translation techniques related to Linguistics are considered significant in such circumstances because of the socio-linguistic background and features which could commonly be seen in conversational implicatures. Thus, the translator's knowledge on Linguistic theories related to translation are considered vital in the translation of implied meaning so that the idea of the message could be recognized with clarity and accuracy. With all these factors taken into consideration, it is quite comprehensible that the process of translation is not merely a task which replaces a certain set of words in one language with the use of words in another language, but translation is an advanced procedure which deals with the social, cultural and ethnical characteristics in diverse language cultures. To conclude,

translating conversational implicature is considered as a task which measures the linguistic capability as well as the socio-cultural awareness of languages within the translator.

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