

Philosophical Interpretation of Lexical and Sentential Ambiguity in English-Arabic Translation

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ABSTRACT

Translation debates have continued to be passionately argued. The study of the connection between philosophy and translation on the one hand and ambiguity in translation on the other hand have both been growing. The connection between philosophy and translation is unavoidable and inevitable. Notwithstanding, philosophers have not tackled the question of translation directly; translation in general has been tackled indirectly by some philosophers. Ambiguity in translation is a fertile field to investigate. Translation of some written sentences is problematic since they are translated from different contexts in culture.

This paper aims to (1) study the connection between philosophy and translation on the one hand, and then (2) connect the philosophical interpretation of ambiguous sentences and their effect on the translation from English into Arabic. This paper also aims at (3) discussing the question that is hissing in the translator's mind in order to translate an ambiguous sentence: whether to lean on syntactic or semantic dis-ambiguation. As a result, this paper hypothesizes that lexemes meaning, interpretation, and thus translation is not only sentence bound but clear cotext and context bound.

Therefore, to test this hypothesis, in my research, the study selects some sentences from some research and dictionaries which are believed to be ambiguous. The examples I have selected may not cover all ambiguous English sentences, for ambiguous sentences are still turning up, however, I have tried to cover frequently used sentences. I will look at some common difficulties in the interpretation of lexical items. Then, the ambiguity of these sentences will be removed by using these sentences with the same ambiguous lexemes in clear cotext and context. After removing the ambiguity, the sentences will be translated into Arabic to show the impact of both cotext and context on translation.

Keywords: Philosophical Interpretation, Lexical Ambiguity, Sentential Ambiguity, English-Arabic Translation.

1. Introduction

In recent research, much attention has been given to the study of lexical and sentential ambiguity which are common in English/Arabic translation. Ambiguity in translation means multiple meanings. It is of two types, either semantic or syntactic. In the case of semantic ambiguity, we deal with ambiguous words, while in the case of syntactic ambiguity, we deal with ambiguous structure. However, the translation of semantic or syntactic sentences falls within the realm of philosophy, for the relationship between philosophy and translation is crucial because translation lies within the philosophical interpretation of a text. When we speak about translation that means we are within the paradigm of philosophy; translation is subject to philosophical debate.

Aside from the traditional definition of translation by Nida and Tiber which I will review later, and to clarify the connection between philosophy and translation, Friedrich Nietzsche, from a philosophical point of view, addresses the different implications of translation. He says that meaning is changeable. Douglas Robinson agrees with Nietzsche's opinion which says translation makes changes. Jacques Derrida claims that the possibility of translation is a basis of philosophy. However, with all these perspectives of philosophers and theories of translation and to clarify the connection between philosophy and translation, the signification of Ferdinand de Saussure is also worth mentioning.

2. Philosophical Controversy of Lexical and Sentential Ambiguity in Translation

Before getting deeper into the debate of the correlation between philosophy and translation, the sign, in the context of Ferdinand de Saussure's description, is a combination of the signifier (word) and signified (meaning or matter); the cerebral notion that links the signifier and signified is signification. The question needs to be raised here, how do we take for granted the notion that translation involves replacing the signifier of the source language (SL) with the signifier of the target language (TL)? However, in *Course in General Linguistics* Ferdinand de Saussure in Principle I: The Arbitrary Nature of the Sign, de Saussure affirms that the connection between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. He demonstrates that "Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: the linguistic sign is arbitrary" (67). There is no genetic relationship between signifier and signified. That means a signifier may represent more than one specific meaning and this may result in ambiguity in translation. As we will see later in this paper, for example, the word 'heavy' may be rendered into different Arabic meanings.

This instability in meaning is demonstrated in my reading of Friedrich Nietzsche. I have also been attempting to disclose the connection between philosophy and translation. The Nietzschean approach to translation considers meaning changeable. Nietzsche, in *Philosophical Writings*, believes that meaning is unstable, and the truth is an illusion:

What therefore is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms: in short a sum of human relations which became poetically and rhetorically intensified, metamorphosed, adorned, and after long usage seem to a nation fixed, canonic, and binding; truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they are illusions; worn-out metaphors which have become powerless to affect the senses; coins with their images effaced and now no longer of account as coins but merely as metal. (92)

For the Nietzschean approach to translation, metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms which were once used as truths to express meaning in a certain context in the past, sometime later are illusions. Because they were representations of expressions of certain meanings in certain situations; they are worn out, exhausted, and have become powerless.

Jacques Derrida, the postmodernist translation theorist, connects the question of translatability to philosophy. Derrida, in his answer to the question raised by Christie V. McDonald about the absolute meaning of ‘*pharmakon*’ between ‘*The living and the dead*,’ states in *The Ear of the Other: Text and Discussion with Jacques Derrida: Otobiography, Transference, Translation*, that “the origin of philosophy is a translation or the thesis of translatability so that wherever translation in this sense has failed, it is nothing less than the philosophy that finds itself defeated” (120). Derrida supports his argument with an example of the ‘*pharmakon*’ interpretation that makes it hard to decide whether to interpret it as ‘*poison*’ or ‘*remedy*.’ A translator may be lost in the status of the undecidability of meaning which we may compare to a moving sand (quicksand), which makes it hard to access what is called by some scholars the ‘*truth*’ and sameness of meaning and the same effect of the (SL) writer.

This sameness of meaning is questioned by Douglas Robinson, in *The Translator’s Turn* (1997). Robinson ponders “if translation is the transfer of meaning from one language to another intact, without change, without diminishment, then translation is impossible; meaning is always bound to sound, sensation, situation” (240). In rendering a text from one language into another, a text undergoes major changes to meet the conventions of the (TL) as well as to make the text accessible to the readers of the (TL). The meaning composed by a person in a certain context, for example, is a result of language construction that is subject to people’s understanding of conventions. This notion may not be different from Jacques Derrida’s assumption in *Limited Inc* (1988) as he suggests that there is “nothing [that] exists outside [its] context” (152). Therefore, whatever a translator is trying, he/she is only approximating the meaning.

On the contrary, Nida and Taber’s approach to translation (1982) insist on the importance of preserving the effect of the original language. They state:

translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source language message,

first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. Translation can be defined as a process which is a process of turning a message from one language into another or it can be determined as a product of this process, i.e. the translated text (qtd. Hatim & Mason, 1990).

The question that needs to be raised here is: how can a translator get the natural equivalent of meaning when there are differences among languages? These differences are inherited among different people and languages. Languages differ by the way they form and share meaning. This is because language is autonomous by nature. The connection between signifier and signified is arbitrary; every language interprets and expresses the meaning of the same reality differently. Things are identified in languages by the guidance of our own native language; this identification of things is varied according to our linguistic background.

Lawrence Venuti, in *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference*, keeps advocating the connection between translation and philosophy. He states that “only the experimental translation can signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text by deterritorializing the major language and opening the institution to new concepts and discourses” (123). The “experimental” here will make the translator aware of his/her role to establish more balance in the relationship between the (SL) and the (TL). Then, Venuti completes his idea and states that “by taking account of translation, philosophy does not come to an end, does not become poetry or history, but rather expands to embrace other kinds of thinking and writing” (ibid.). The important part of Venuti’s agenda is to make philosophers aware of the fact that there is a connection between translation and philosophy.

3. Lexical Ambiguity and its Problem

Facing ambiguous sentences throughout the work of translation is inescapable. To elaborate on the connectivity between philosophy and translation and lexical ambiguity, let me first introduce Martin Heidegger’s opinion in his book, *Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art*. He points out that “The most extrinsic form in which we encounter the ambiguity of the word is the ‘lexical’. In the dictionary, the meanings are enumerated and exhibited for selection. The life of actual language consists in the multiplicity of meaning” (143-144). A lexical word in a sentence may stand for several meanings beyond its actual meaning and this may cause problems for a translator.

This problem in the translation of lexical ambiguity, in some cases, may be classified as homonymous (unrelated meanings), when two or more words have the same spelling but meanings are irrelevant. In other words, a lexical item is correlated with at least two separate meanings. In some other cases, polysemous (a word or phrase has related senses), when the same word has many related meanings and are relevant to each other.



In general, the consequence of lexical ambiguity and its problems in translation has been tackled by many scholars. James Pustejovsky and Branimir Boguraev, for example, in their article, *Introduction to Lexical Semantics in Context*, clarify how readers may be deprived of exploring the aspects of meanings of other language cultures. They directly point out that “lexical ambiguity is one of the most difficult problems in language processing studies and, not surprisingly, is at the core of lexical semantics research. It is certainly true that most words in a language have more than one meaning, but the ways in which words carry multiple meanings can vary.” (1996:3). To elaborate on homonymous items, let us consider the following two general examples:

- a. لم اكن انوي انْ أُوذِيكَ.
b. اللونُ الاحمر يعنى توقف او انذار.

The word ‘*mean*’ has many distinct senses in English dictionaries. The two contrastive senses used in (1a) and (1b) would appear to be easily interpreted into Arabic. It is not difficult to interpret them. In (1a) the word ‘*mean*’ and according to the speaker, refers to what has happened was not on purpose or intended, while in (1b) ‘*means*’ is a sign of. To disambiguate the meaning of the homonymous items in the above sentences, an interpreter relies on the context. The strategy that is used to disambiguate them is what is referred to by Pustejovsky and Boguraev is “priming-based disambiguation strategy” (1996:2).

As contrastive ambiguity constitutes a challenge in semantic translation. The polysemous lexical items in the following sentences (2a) and (2b) I have quoted in Pustejovsky and Boguraev (1996:3), exhibit a complementary polysemy (association of one word with two or more distinct meanings), where the meanings are a demonstration of the same crux sense as it appears in different contexts. However, context, in some cases, may be inadequate to disambiguate lexical items in our daily discourse. What is required, to disambiguate ambiguous sentences is what is referred to by Alex Lascarides and Nicholas Asher (1993:51), a “semantics-based approach to sense selection.”

- a. لقد رفع المصرف سعر الفائدة البارحة. (2) a. The **bank** raised its interest rates yesterday.
b. إنَّ المَتَجَرَّ بالقرب من بناية المَصْرِفِ الجَدِيدِ. b. The store is next to the new **bank**.

Semantically speaking, the word ‘*bank*’ in (2a) is an institution where a person deals with financial issues, and ‘*bank*’ in (2b) is just a permanent construction of a building over a plot of land.

The problem of interpretation of lexical ambiguity may be more complicated in some cases and more problems in translation may surface. To clarify, in this respect, it is necessary to refer to Frank Robert Palmer (1981), as he states five homonyms for

the word ‘mail’ ‘armor’, ‘post’, ‘payment’, ‘halfpenny’, and ‘spot’ (Palmer 1981: 67). Colloquially, we may not be able to recognize the other readings of the word ‘mail,’ for they are variable to their syntactic and lexical environment interpretation. Languages with affluent lexical items and polysemous items may interchange in sentences causing confusion in translation; in other words, languages with ample vocabularies may create a real problem for a translator. Therefore, lexical items of a language are representations of expressions of certain meanings in certain situations. The following two examples quoted from online *Oxford Dictionaries* may illustrate this:

(3) a. Each Corinthian soldier wore a simple coat of chain mail.

a. ارتدى كل جندي كورنثي معطف بسيط مدرع.¹

b. You can order by mail.

b. يُمكنك الطلب عن طريق البريد.

As described by *Oxford Dictionaries*, ‘mail’ in (3a) means “armor made of metal rings or plates joined together flexibly,” while ‘mail’ in (3b) means “the postal system.”

The dilemma of lexical polysemous nouns is not the only problem of lexical semantics, however, an interpreter may face difficulties with lexical semantics of verbal polysemy. The following sentences I have quoted from Pustejovsky and Boguraev (1996:4) and translated into Arabic may illustrate:

(4) a. The rain began to fall.

a. بدأ المطر يسقط.

b. Mary began to feel ill.

b. بدأت ماري تشعر بالمرض.

In the above two sentences, the word ‘began,’ as polysemous verb of different unrelated meanings used in different contexts. It is basically clear that the verb ‘began’ in (4a) is synonymous to the verb ‘began’ in (4b), though the meaning seems to be essentially different in both sentences. However, the verb ‘cut’ in the following two sentences is not synonymous of each other as in (5a) and (5b) but carries two divergent meanings. To disambiguate a sentence, the semantic problem is the most complex pattern:

(5) a. The company cuts the costs of production

a. إنَّ الشركة قد قلَّلت من تكاليف الإنتاج .

b. The cook cuts the meat.

b. قام الطباخ بتقطيع اللحم.

In (5a) the verb ‘cut’ comes in the sense of ‘minimizing’ or ‘reducing,’ while in (5b) the verb ‘cut’ means ‘a piece of meat initially separated from the body of an eatable animal while butchering.’

4. Ambiguity and Context:

¹ نوع من الدروع القديمة يتكون من حلقات معدنية صغيرة مطرزة يرتديه المحاربين قديماً في الحروب.

To elaborate on the contextual uses of a sentence, context, simply means the total atmosphere that surrounds a certain event. It is all the applicable elements that surround a linguistic utterance. The early roots of the study of context is tackled by the anthropologist B. Malinowski, in his article, *The problem of Meaning in Primitive Language*. Malinowski stresses the need to interpret speech in its context of situation:

A statement, spoken in real life, is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered. For each verbal statement by a human being has the aim and function of expressing some thought or feeling actual at that moment and in that situation, and necessary for some reason or other to be made known to another person or persons-in order either to serve purposes of common action, ... Without some imperative stimulus of the moment there can be no spoken statement. (307)

A word without its linguistic context is a figment of the past and stands for a mere lexicographical meaning. Context of situation is the setting of an event or statement where and when a sentence is uttered and which in turn determines the meaning of that sentence.

The meaning of a lexical expression can be understood more clearly in its context. Context works in terms of relevant factors of the elements that surround a lexical expression. A sentence in its context is characterized by its own conventionality which may not be available after some time if translated into another language. A lexical expression in a context may express a certain notion or understanding with a certain convention of a specific culture. That means sentences grapple with issues of conventionality.

Therefore, a meaning which is created with words or language is conventional and arbitrary; anyone who uses language constructs meaning differently. That is to say, our rational understanding of lexical items is related to our experience. Translation is the product of a certain context. Therefore, what helps an interpreter to decipher the meaning of a lexical item is what Marilyn Gaddis-Rose suggests in her book, *Translation Spectrum: Essay in Theory and Practice* (1981). She points out that “The translator should be aware of the other language(s) operating within the language of the text he is translating and be sensitive to the ways in which culture and history determine the conventions of conversion” (37). Therefore, translation is the product of a certain context.

5. Syntactic (Structural) Ambiguity:

The second type of ambiguity is syntactical (change in structure) which branches from English grammar; it is the arrangement of words that causes this ambiguity. This ambiguity happens because of an unknown and undecidable structure of a sentence. Syntactical ambiguity is attributable to a sentence structure; it is the case where a sentence in the (SL) can be translated into more than one sentence in the

(TL). The syntactic ambiguity of the following sentence I have quoted from Norman C. Stageberg (30) has resulted from the order of the lexical expressions which ultimately can be interpreted into more than one meaning:

They are canning peas. هذه البازلاء للتعليب. أو: يقوم هؤلاء الأشخاص بتعليب البازلاء.

As Stageberg demonstrates in his paper, “peas can be interpreted as a compound noun (i.e., peas for canning), or as a verb + noun object (i.e., They can peas). In spoken English, the voice separates the two meanings” (30). Such a sentence above, as we have seen, can be translated into more than one Arabic sentence with different meanings and this is a problem in translation.

Data Analysis and Discussion²

In my data analysis and discussion, I have tried to give a qualitative translation of some ambiguous sentences.

Text (1): It is heavy.

In this sentence two lexemes are ambiguous. They are the subject “it” and the subject complement “heavy”. As a result, it can be given different renderings such as:

إنَّه مُثْقَل	إنَّه كَثِيف	إنَّه دَسَم	إنَّها ثَقِيلَة	إنَّه غَزِير
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However, “it” can be disambiguated by specifying the subject and using it in different clear contexts:

1. The rain is heavy. المطرُ غَزِيرٌ
2. The table is heavy. المنضدة ثَقِيلَة.
3. The meal is heavy. الوجبةُ الغدائيةُ دَسَمَة.
4. The smoke is heavy. الدخانُ كَثِيف.
5. The sound /l/ is heavy. الصوت /ل/ ثَقِيل.
6. The man was heavy. كان الرجلُ سَمِيناً.
7. The clothing was heavy that night. كانت الملابسُ ثَخِينَة في تلكَ اللَّيْلَة.

Text (2): This is my book.

In the sentence above, the possessive pronoun “my” is ambiguous; therefore, it can be translated as follows:

هذا الكتابُ من تألِيفي	هذا الكتابُ ملكي
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(1) Some of these examples were taken from Hornby (1985) and Rundell (2000), and translated by the researcher himself. However, they are used in clear cotexts and contexts.

It can be disambiguated by using it in different linguistic contexts such as:

1. هذا الكتاب ملكي. اشتريته البارحة.
1. This is my book. I bought it yesterday.
2. هذا الكتاب من تألّفي . انتهيتُ من طباعته البارحة.
2. This is my book. I finished typing it yesterday.

Text (3): I went to the bank.

In this sentence, the lexeme “bank” is ambiguous; therefore, it can be rendered in different ways.

ذهبتُ إلى المصرفِ	ذهبتُ إلى شاطئِ النهرِ	ذهبتُ إلى الرابيةِ	ذهبتُ إلى مصرفِ الدمِ
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However, it can be disambiguated by using this sentence in different contexts such as:

1. ذهبتُ إلى المصرفِ لصرفِ الصَّكِّ.
1. I went to the bank to cash this cheque.
2. ذهبتُ إلى شاطئِ النهرِ مع عائلتي لقضاء عطلتنا الأسبوعية.
2. I went to the bank of the river with my family for spending our weekend.
3. ذهبتُ إلى التخوم التي تقعُ بين حقولِ الرزِ التابعة لنا.
3. I went to the bank that lies between our rice fields.
4. ذهبتُ إلى مصرفِ الدم في المستشفى لفحص فصيلة الدم.
4. I went to the hospital's bank for a blood test

Text (4): It is running.

A close inspection of this example reveals that this sentence is ambiguous. It has more than one interpretation and; therefore, it can be given more than one rendering.

يَرَكُضُ	يَعْدُو	يَسِيرُ	يَعْمَلُ	يَصُبُّ	يَتَوَقَّفُ
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This ambiguity can be removed by specifying the subject and using the verb “run” in different clear contexts.

1. لقد توقفت الأعمال، وتوقف المصنُّعُ عن العملِ. ولم يعد يَنتِجُ السلع.
1. The works have ceased **running**. The factory has closed. It is no longer producing goods.
2. تسير حياته بصورة سلسة وطبيعية الى الوقتِ الحالي.
2. His life has **run** smoothly up to now.
3. تنطلق الحافلات كلَّ عشر دقائق.
3. The buses **run** every ten minutes.
4. انتشرت الأنباء مثل النار في الهشيم.
4. The news **ran** like wildfires.
5. تصب الأنهار في البحار.
5. Rivers **run** into the seas.

6. The tears ran down her cheeks.

انهمرت الدموع من على خديها.

.6

7. The film ran six months.

استمرَّ عرضُ الفلم ستة أشهر.

.7

8. I can't afford to run a car.

8. لا أتحمّل قيادة السيارة.

9. His nose is running.

9. ينزلُ الرشحُ من أنفه.

10. I cannot run this company.

لا أستطيعُ إدارة هذه الشركة.

.10

Text (5): I wrote a letter.

1. كتبتُ رسالةً.

2. كتبتُ حرفاً.

Text (5) has a different interpretation because the word “letter” is ambiguous. However, this ambiguity can be removed by making the context clearer.

1. I wrote a letter to my friend yesterday

1. كتبتُ رسالةً إلى صديقي أو صديقتي .

البارحة

2. The teacher taught the letter “A” in his lecture.

2. درّسَ المدرس تلامذته الحرف (أ) في محاضرتِهِ.

3. The number of my letter box is 19992.

3. رقم صندوقي البريدي هو 19992

4. He was a man of letter.

4. كان اديباً.

5. John is a lettered young.

5. جون رجلٌ شابٌ ملثمٌ بأنواع المصادرِ والكتبِ.

Text (6): I lost my glasses.

This sentence is ambiguous because the word “glasses” can be given different interpretations; therefore, it can be given the following renderings.

فقدتُ أقداحي	فقدتُ نظارتي
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However, this ambiguity can be removed by making the context clearer; therefore, the sentences and their renderings will be disambiguated.

1. I lost my glasses; therefore, I am unable to read.

1. فقدتُ نظارتي لذلك لم يعد بوسعي القراءة.

2. I lost my glasses; therefore, I have no glass to drink water with.

2. فقدتُ أقداحي لذلك لم يبق لي قدح لشرب الماء.

3. The sailor had two glasses. The first one was broken. So he used the second one.

3. كان للبحار تسكوبان. تهشمتُ الأولى. لذلك استخدمتُ الثانية.

Text (7): He fired.

This sentence is ambiguous because of the lexeme “fired.” It has different meanings and because of absence of clear cotext and context, it can be given the following renderings depending on its multiplicity of meaning, e.g.

أوقدَ	طردَ	الهَبَّ الخيالَ	أطلقَ النارَ	اثارَ المشاعرَ	غَضِبَ	يمطرَ بوابِلَ من الأسئلة / يستمر
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However, this ambiguity can be removed by using the lexeme “fire” in good sentences with clear cotext and context. As a result, disambiguated renderings can be given, e.g.

1. The man **fired** his stove. 1. أشعلَ الرَّجُلُ مَوْقِدَهُ.
2. The director **fired up** the feeling of his team. 2. لقد أثارَ المخرجُ مشاعرَ فَرِيقِهِ.
3. The boss **fired** his secretary. 3. لقد طردَ الرئيسُ سكرتيرَهُ.
4. The book **fired** his imagination. 4. لقد ألهَبَ الكتابُ خيالهَ.
5. The hunter **fired** his gun. 5. لقد أطلقَ الصيادُ بُندقِيتهَ.
6. I am ready to answer your questions. Fire away 6. أَنِي مُسْتَعِدٌّ لِلْإِجَابَةِ عَلَى أَسْئَلَتِكَ. فَأَمْطُرُنِي بِوَابِلٍ مِنْهَا.
7. She fires up at the least thing. 7. هِيَ تَغْضَبُ لِأَتْفَعِ الْأَسْبَابِ.

Text (8): This foot.

This phrase is ambiguous because of the lexeme “foot.” It has different meanings and because of absence of clear cotext and context, it can be given the following renderings depending on its multiplicity of meaning.

هذا القدمُ	هذا المخلَبُ	هذا السفحُ	هذه القاعدةُ	هذا الكعبُ
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However, this ambiguity can be removed by using the lexeme “foot” in good sentences with clear cotext and context. As a result, clear and disambiguated renderings can be given, e.g.

1. A dog's foot is called a paw. 1. يُسَمَّى قَدَمُ الْكَلْبِ بِالْمَخْلَبِ.
2. This project is on foot. 2. هَذَا الْمَشْرُوعُ قَيَّدَ الْإِنْشَاءِ.
3. It is nice to see you on your feet again. 3. يَسُرُّنِي أَنْ أَرَاكَ وَافِقًا عَلَى قَدَمَيْكَ ثَانِيَةً. أَوْ يَسُرُّنِي أَنْ أَرَاكَ فِي وَضْعٍ مَالِي حَيِّدٍ ثَانِيَةً.
4. George is very tall. He is six feet high. 4. جُورْجٌ طَوِيلُ الْقَامَةِ. وَطَوْلُهُ ثَمَانِيَةُ أَقْدَامٍ.

5. He goes to school on foot. 5. يذهب إلى المدرسة مشياً على القدمين.
6. Zeki's foot was broken. 6. لقد انكسر كعبُ زكي.
7. This is the foot of the cat. 7. هذا هو مخالب القطّة.
8. Write your note on the foot of the page. 8. اكتب ملاحظتك في ذيل الصفحة.
9. We were near the foot of the mountain. 9. كنا قريبين من قاعدة الجبل.
10. The foot of the hill was green. 10. كان سفحُ التلّ اخضرًا.
11. To put one's best foot forward. 11. يَبْذُلُ قصارى جهده. (يَبْذُلُ كل ما في وسعه).

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I have clarified how philosophy is connected to translation. I have connected the philosophical interpretation of ambiguous sentences to translation. Ambiguous sentences are either syntactic or semantic. As for the data analysis of my examples, I have revealed that the meaning of any lexeme may not be specified by using it in a sentence, this is because the translation of what is called the 'original' is not an easy mission to render into one clear specific meaning equivalent to the original. This vagueness of the 'original' is because of the lack of a clear understanding of it and the surrounding circumstances, the 'original' is vague unless we have a clear understanding of its context.

Therefore, the meaning of a lexeme in a bare sentence is difficult to decide unless both cotext and context are clear. This clarification can be achieved through expanded and lengthened sentences (see our examples from 1 to 8 with their renderings). This leads us to say that rendering any sentence depends on the interpretation and context of that sentence. The study also reveals that these ambiguous lexemes are either homonymous or polysynonymous. In translation, the figures of speech that were used in the past may not have clear meaning or the same effect in present-day activities. The way we constitute meaning to express our thoughts is essential to our understanding of reality. Therefore, without clear understanding of context and cotext of a sentence a translator may resort to the approximation of meaning. That is to say, translation generates changes in meaning.

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