Investigating the Importance of Including Pragmatics within the Syllabuses of the Bachelor and M.A. Programmes

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ABSTRACT:

This study attempts to investigate the importance of including pragmatics as a discipline in bachelor and M. A. Levels for the problems it represents when it comes to translating English text into Arabic. The researcher used a questionnaire to test the hypothesis of this study which says "Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses". The sample of this study includes 30 teachers with experience in teaching translation. Those teachers are staff members at six Sudanese universities. In this study the statistic programme for social studies (SPSS) was used to analyze the results. The study reached into results that proved the necessity of including pragmatics in English language syllabuses in both bachelor and M.A. levels. Based on the above mentioned results, the researcher strongly recommends the administrations in the concerned colleges and departments to include pragmatics with its different aspects as a separate course. They are also advised to do further researches that ends in finding the fitting methods of including the aspects of pragmatics in the syllabuses.

المستخلص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بحث أهمية إدراج البراغماتية ضمن مقررات البكالريوس والماجستير، وذلك نظراً لما تمثله البراغماتية من إشكالات عند الترجمة من الإنجليزية إلى العربية، استخدم الباحث الاستبيان للتحقق من فرضية هذه الدراسة التي تقول"أن البراغماتية لم تضمن في المقررات بشكل كاف". تتكون عينة الدراسة من 30 أستاذاً ممن لهم خبرة في تدريس الترجمة لطلاب الماجستير وينتمي هؤلاء الأساتذة إلى ست جامعات سودانية. استخدم الباحث البرنامج الإحصائي للدراسات الاجتماعية (SPSS) لتحليل نتائج هذه الدراسة. تثبت النتائج التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة ضرورة إدراج البراغماتية ضمن مقررات البكالاريوس والماجستير. بناءاً على هذه النتائج، يوصي الباحث الكليات والأقسام المعنية بإدراج البراغماتية في منهج منفصل يشتمل على جميع مكوناتها. كما ينصح الباحث بضرورة إجراء دراسات إضافية تهدف إلى إيجاد طريقة مثلى لإدراج البراغماتية في المقررات.

INTRODUCTION :

Translators in general and beginner translators in particular face many obstacles when they translate from English to their own language (Arabic). These difficulties are caused by the different aspects and features of languages. Such as the obstacles that are of syntactic and semantic nature.The Sudanese students of M.A. in translation, as beginner translators tend to give the denotative meaning rather than the connotative meaning which require a pragmatic knowledge. Pragmatics as defined by Yule (1996, p:133) is "the study of speaker's meaning as a distinct from word or sentence meaning".. This study is considered to be extremely important as it attempts to diagnose the proposed pragmatic problems that actually face the beginner translators, in particular, the students of M. A. In translation when they translate from

English to Arabic. Due to the weakness in English in the previous levels, the majority of students are only able to deal with the literal and direct meaning of words and sentences (semantics) rather than the intended meaning which is represented in pragmatic aspects. Pragmatics is represented in many aspects, these aspects are such as: presupposition, implicature, politeness, culture differences, and speech acts). This study tries to give possible solution to the difficulties previously mentioned. It can also help designing new syllabuses which take pragmatics into consideration in bachelor and M.A. levels at Sudanese universities.

Translation and pragmatics are intertwined in terms of their contribution in communication process. Learners are expected to consider the relation between the two branches. More important, to what extent they are knowledgeable in both, and whether they put their knowledge into practice in their translation performance as well. This study also investigates the importance of including pragmatics in the syllabuses as well as the help it represents in conveying the typical message when translating from English into Arabic, that is not to forget the problems resulted from excluding pragmatics from the curriculum.

Research Questions

The key study question raised is:

1. To what extent is pragmatics included in the English language syllabuses?

Hypotheses

In this study the following hypothesis have been postulated:

1. Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses.

Objectives of the research

1-The aim of the present study is to shed some light on the importance of pragmatics in

translation and the indispensible role it plays, particularly when translating from English to Arabic. It also tries to seek teachers' opinions about the importance of including pragmatics in syllabuses. It is also to see whether pragmatics is actually included in English language syllabuses or not, and to what extent including pragmatics in the syllabuses, helps students to decode pragmatic aspects and contribute to the process of translation when translating from English to Arabic.

2. Literature review
introduction:

Translation is as old as human history. It has been widely used in the course of human interests of different nations. At the present time, the common interests of different nations and cultures is basically depend on translation. The activities of translation provide a great deal of information about the ancient cultures as well as the different present day cultures (Azziz & Lataiwish, 1999-2000) and help in widening intercultural exchanges. In Bassnett"s words (Bassnett, 2007:16), translation, can be seen as "the portal through which the past can be accessed". It opens up greater opportunities to remind contemporary readers about lost civilization. Translation is one of the most complicated areas in comparison to other branches of linguistics. One of its difficulties is the fact that understanding the linguistic components is not enough to translate conveniently. That is to say, the grammatical rules would be of no help and may be useless if the particular rules of use are not taken into consideration. Some learners, in particular, beginner translators, overlook the fact that translation is an act of communication which necessitates calling upon both the correct use of

language and correct usage in order to achieve an acceptable communication. The following lines shede the light on the definitions of translation as presented by scholars. According to Fasold and linton (in Bashar Maarich Mizaal Al-Ukaily(2011:7), translation is "a finite system of elements and principles that make it possible for speakers to construct sentences to do particular communicative jobs". Specific regulations of elements +principles = communication process. Hatim and Munday (2004:3) said that translation can be understood from points of view: that of a 'process' that related to the activity of changing a ST into a TT in another language, and that of 'product', i.e. a translated text. They (1991: 1) define translating as "an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purposes and different readers/hearers)". (Al-Ukany, 2011:7)). Catford (1965: 20)., for example, believes that translation is an act of replacing linguistic units from a source to a target language. He said, "translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)" He focuses on maintaining the "equivalence" between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT).

Cooperative Principles

So as to know how a particular language or a conversational structure is constructed, it's very important to consider Gricean's four maxims. Grice (1975) differentiates between the direct literal meaning (semantic meaning) and the intended meaning (pragmatic meaning). He believed that "there is no one- to- one correspondence or mapping between the linguistic form and the utterance meaning." (

Cited in Atlas,1989:146). As Grice says, people communication necessitates some sort of cooperation. That is, the two sides of conversation (speaker and the hearer) are expected to cooperate to come into an effective communication which is built on, what Grice calls "Joint effort". Grice suggests the notion of "cooperative principle" within which he discusses the four maxims that senders and receivers should respect when interacting with each others. These maxims are as the following:

• Quality – speakers should be truthful. They should say they believe to be true and should not say what they think is false, or make statements for which they have no evidence.

• Quantity – (the suitable amount of information) a contribution should be as informative as is required for the conversation to proceed. It should be neither too little, nor too much. (It is not clear how one can decide what quantity of information satisfies the maxim in a given case.)

• Relevance – speakers' contributions should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange.

3. Methodology

Research Subjects:

The sample of this study are taken from the teachers of English and Translation at six representative universities which are Sudan University of Science and Technology, University of Khartoum, Neelain University, Omdurman Islamic University, International University of Africa and Bahri University.

Research Tool:

The researcher used a questionnaire to conduct his study. The questionnaire given to English staff members with experiences in teaching translation at the above mentioned Universities. This questionnaire composed of two parts. Part A was devoted to collect factual information about

teachers. This part consisted of three questions. The first question one asked teachers to write down the names of their universities; question two asked them to name their academic job, in question three teachers were asked about their years of experience.

In Part B, the participants teachers were asked to determine their attitudes towards twenty statements by ticking the right box in front of each one. Here, the Likert Scale was used. The scale consisted of five options ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

Reliability and Validity of the Instument:

It is meant by the reliability of any test, to obtain the same results if the same tool is used more than one time under the same conditions. In addition, the reliability means when a certain test was applied on a number of individuals and the marks of every one were counted; then the same test applied another time on the same group and the same marks were obtained; then we can describe this test as reliable. In addition, reliability is defined as the degree of the accuracy of the data that the test measures. Here are some of the most used methods for calculating the reliability:

1. Split-half by using Spearman-Brown equation.
2. Alpha-Cronbach coefficient.
3. Test and Re-test method
4. Equivalent images method.
5. Guttman equation.

On the other hand, validity also is a measure used to identify the validity degree among the respondents according to their answers on certain criterion. The validity is counted by a number of methods, among them is the validity using the square root of the (reliability coefficient). The value of the reliability and the validity lies in the range between (0-1). The validity of the questionnaire is that the tool should measure the exact aim, which it has been designed for.

The researcher calculated the validity statistically using the following equation:

$$\text{Validity} = \sqrt{\text{Re liability}}$$

The researcher calculated the reliability coefficient for the measurement, which was used in the tools using (split-half) method. This method stands on the principle of dividing the answers of the sample individuals into two parts, i.e. items of the odd numbers e.g. (1, 3, 5, ...) and answers of the even numbers e.g. (2,4,6 ...). Then Pearson correlation coefficient between the two parts is calculated. Finally, the (reliability coefficient) was calculated according to Spearman-Brown Equation as the following:

$$\text{Reliability Coefficient} = \frac{2 \times r}{1 + r}$$

r = Pearson correlation coefficient

For calculating the validity and the reliability of the questionnaire from the above equation, the researcher was distributed about (10) and (15) for each of the test and questionnaires to respondents. In addition, depending on the answers of the pre-test sample, the above Spearman-Brown equation was used to calculate the reliability coefficient using the split-half method; the results have been showed in the following table:

Table (1): The statistical reliability and validity of the pre-test sample about the study questionnaire.

Hypotheses	Reliability	Validity
	0.68	0.82

We note from the results of the above table that all reliability and validity coefficients for pre-test sample individuals about each questionnaire's theme, and for overall questionnaire, are greater than (50%), and some of them are nearest to one. This indicates to the high validity and reliability of the answers, so, the study questionnaire is valid and reliable, and that will give correct and acceptable statistical analysis.

4. Results:

Results of the Hypothesis:

The hypothesis of this study states the following: "Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses".

The aim of this hypothesis is to show that "Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses".

To test this hypothesis, we must know the trend of respondents' opinions about each statement from the hypothesis's statements. We compute the median, which is one of the central tendency measures is used to describe the phenomena, and it represents the cantered answer for all respondents' answers after ascending or descending order for the answers.

Table (2): The median of respondents' answers about the statements of the hypothesis: "Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses".

No	Statements	Median	Result
1	Pragmatics as a discipline is included in the English language syllabuses.	2	Disagree
2	Pragmatics is partially included in the English language syllabuses.	4	Agree
3	Pragmatics should be included at the Bachelor and M.A. levels.	5	Strongly agree
4	Pragmatics should be taught as a separate course.	5	Strongly agree
5	Pragmatics should be taught within other courses.	5	Strongly agree
	Overall	5	Strongly agree

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2014

The table no. (2) shows that:

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers of the 1st statement is (2). This value means that, most of the respondents' disagree that "Pragmatics as a discipline is included in the English language syllabuses".

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers of the 2nd statement is (4). This value means that, most of the respondents' agree that "Pragmatics is partially included in the English language syllabuses".

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers of the 3rd statement is (4). This value means that, most of the respondents' agree that "Pragmatic aspects do not affect the process of translation at all".

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers of the 4th statement is (5). This value means that, most of the respondents' strongly agree that "Pragmatics should be included at the Bachelor and M.A. levels.".

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers of the 5th statement is

(4). This value means that, most of the respondents' strongly agree that "Pragmatics should be taught as a separate course".

- The calculated value of the median for the respondents' answers about the all statements that related to the hypothesis is (5). This value, in general, means that mostof the respondents' have strongly agree to that is mentioned about the t hypothesis.

The results above do not mean that all the respondents in the sample agree with the statement because as mentioned in the tables no.(2) there are some respondents who disagree with the statements. So, to test the statistical significance of the differences among the answers of the respondents for the hypothesis, the chi-square test was used to indicate the differences for each statement of the hypothesis. Table no.(2) displays the results of the test for the statement as follows:

Table(3):Chi-square test results for respondents' answers about the statement of the hypothesis: "Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses".

No	Statements	Degree of freedom	Chi-square value
1	Pragmatics as a discipline is included in the English language syllabuses.	4	20.10
2	Pragmatics is partially included in the English language syllabuses.	3	18.33
3	Pragmatics should be included at the Bachelor and M.A. levels.	3	19.27
4	Pragmatics should be taught as a separate course.	4	19.33
5	Pragmatics should be taught within other courses.	4	16.52

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2014

According to the table, it is clear that:

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the 1st statement was (20.10) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (1%) which was (13.28). According to what is mentioned in table no.(3), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who disagree that Pragmatics as a discipline is included in the English language syllabuses".

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the 2nd statement was (18.33) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (3) and the significant value level (1%) which was (11.34). According to what is mentioned in table no.(3), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who agree that "Pragmatics is partially included in the English language syllabuses".

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the 3rd statement was (19.27) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (3) and the significant value level (1%) which was (11.34). According to what is mentioned in table no.(3), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who strongly agree Pragmatics should be included at the Bachelor and M.A. levels".

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the 4th statement was (19.33) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (1%) which was (13.28). According to what is mentioned in table no.(3-9), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who strongly agree that "Pragmatics should be taught as a separate course".

- The calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the 5th statement was (18.57) which is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (1%) which was (13.28). According to what mentioned in table no.(3-9), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who strongly agree that "Pragmatics should be taught within other courses".

From above results, we see that the hypothesis that states **"Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses"** is confirmed.

5. Conclusion

This study is entitled " Investigating the Importance of Including Pragmatics within the Bachelor and M.A. Programme Syllabuses".

. In this study the following two hypothesis were postulated:

1. Pragmatics is not included adequately in syllabuses.

The researcher used a questionnaire to investigate the above-mentioned hypothesis,. It is given to the teachers with experience in teaching translation.

According to their experience in teaching English besides translation the teachers reject the idea which says: pragmatics as a discipline is included in the English language syllabuses, although, they believe that it's is partially included in the English language syllabuses. The great majority of the participants agrees that pragmatics should be included at the Bachelor and M.A. levels. It also, deserves to be taught as a separate course, and not to be shuttered within other courses. When the above mentioned result is compared to the hypothesis of the study, it would be clear that the two hypothesis is confirmed.

6. Recommendations:

According to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1- Heads departments of English language at bachelor levels are strongly advised to include pragmatics in the syllabuses.

2- Pragmatics should be taught as a separate course.

3- The suggested syllabus of pragmatics should include: implicature, intercultural pragmatics, presupposition, politeness, and speech act.

4- Students should be trained to translate the different aspects of pragmatics.

5- Students should be provided with a background information of what pragmatics is and how it works.

6- Students should be taught how to differentiate between the literal meaning of the words and the intended meanings of the speakers or writers.

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