



Cihan University Sulaymaniyah
Translation Department

Kurdish - English Translation

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Linguistic problems in Translation



- Linguistic problems: the differences between the original and the target languages create linguistic difficulties. No two languages, to a great extent, are identical, since languages usually differ in terms of grammatical constructions, idiomatic expressions, and conditions.

Linguistic Problem examples



English and Kurdish are two different languages, and they belong to different families or groups. The English language, for instance, belongs to Germanic group of languages, while Kurdish belongs to the Indo-European languages. This difference between the two languages poses problems in the translation process in some respects, such as word order, passivation, etc. which ultimately affects the capability of retaining meaning.



To exemplify the linguistic problems, here is an example taken from source text one (ST1) and target text one (TT1) which shows the differences in terms of word order between English and Kurdish languages. More specifically, the English has the (SVO) word order, while the Kurdish has (SOV) in which the verbal element is shifted to the end.

an official at the Ministry of Health, said one civilian was killed in the blast and seven others had been brought to two hospitals in the capital.

بەئێژێکی وەزارەتی تەندروستی راپێیاند کە سێکی مەدەنی لەم رووداوە طیانی لە دەستداوە و حەوت کەسی تریش بە برینداری بۆ نەخۆشخانە طوازاو نەتەو



Phrase Translation

One of the problems, in traditional or direct oral translation, is that "not all phrases in one language have equivalent phrases in another language" in such cases, dictionary translation would not provide a proper or meaningful translation. For instance; in the case of verb phrase (VP) as Crystal defines verb phrase as "a type of verb consisting of a sequence of a lexical element plus one or more particles", Kurdish VP contains only one main verb while in English, it is two parts which are auxiliary/ modal and main verb. In addition, Kurdish linguists agreed on defining a sentence as "a sequence of words that provide a full perfect meaning that has a symbol at the end" . that definition to be generalized in all sentences of Kurdish language since there should be a sentence consisting of a phrase alone as in:

. مرد = (s/he passed away) $S \rightarrow VP \rightarrow v$.

Translate the following lines into English language:



- باوكم هة ذارة ، باثيريشم ، من مندالم نية ، بة لكو هة ذاري كو تايي ثي بيت .
- طة ورة ترين شكؤ لة ذي اندا ئة وة نية كة شكست نة هي نين ، بة لكو هة ستانة وة وية دواي هة ركة وتنيك .
- كاتت سنوردارة ، لة بة رئة وة بة فيروئي مة دة بة ذياني ئة واني تره وة . بة دؤطما مة خة لة تي ، كة بة ئة نجامي بيركدنة وة وية كة ساني تر دة ذي .
- عة قلة طة ورة كان باس لة بيروكة كان دة كة ن ، عة قلة مامنا وة ندة كان باس لة روودا وة كان دة كة ن ، عة قلة بضوكة كان باس لة خة لك دة كة ن .
- وا بذي كة سبة ي دة مري ، وا فير بة كة هة تاهة تايه دة ذي .

1. My father was poor

My grandfather as well

I don't have kids

So that poverty will end □

2. The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

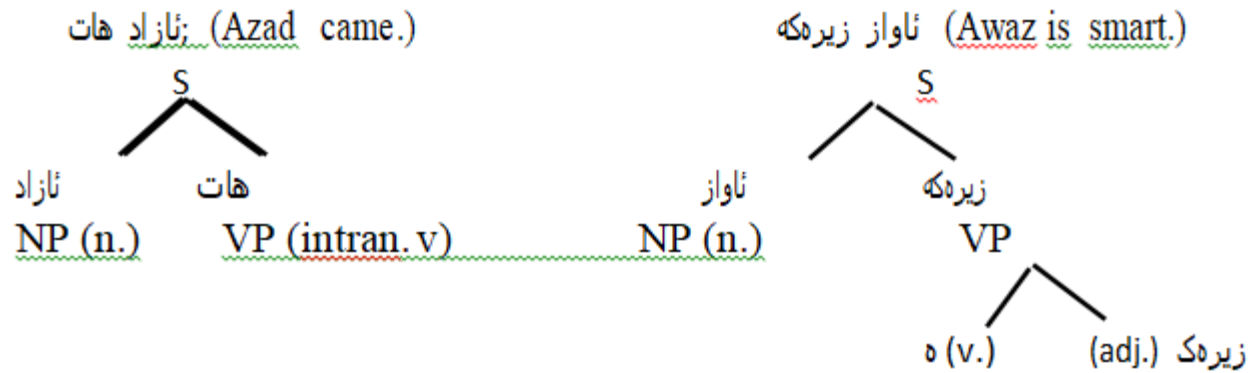
3. Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people's thinking.


4. Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.


5. Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. □

□

- that the rule of “S= NP + VP” cannot be applied in all Kurdish sentences, while this tackles only those with non-transitive verbs or those with “weak” verb. As in:



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- We can see another problematic issue for machine translation. Many states that Noun phrase in Kurdish language can be modified or post modified by ordinal number and still with the same meaning, while in English language it is not acceptable to be post modified by ordinal it is rather to be cardinal number.
 - First lesson: ﻳﻪﻛﻪﻡ ﻭﺍﻧﻪ
 - Lesson one : ﻭﺍﻧﻪﻳﻲ ﻳﻪﻛﻪﻡ

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- provide that there is a problem with Kurdish noun phrase as compared to English. The cardinal numbers that pre-modifies the noun will not pluralize the noun, For example:

یهک = one, سێ = three.

one man came (یەك ئیاو) هات

three men came (سێ ئیاو) هاتن

Three persons went to the city سێ کەس ضوونة شار

While in English the noun will be pluralized as in:

He has one sister and three brothers



- **Differences in Tenses**

Tenses that exist in English language may not exist in Kurdish language. For example, in Kurdish language there is no form for differentiating present simple, present continuous, and future simple. As in :

ئەو دێ = S/he comes.

S/he is coming.

S/he will come.

Pragmatic problems in translation



Pragmatic problems: pragmatic issues point to any problems concerning time, place and context. The most effective way to represent pragmatic issues is by the way of state institutions which names and associations are not the same in two different cultures (e.g., American State Departments vs. British Ministries).



These problems that appear stem from the fact that the commutative situation of the source text is different from that one in which the translation text is produced.

Therefore, the translator encounters several difficulties regarding pragmatics in translating the texts. Translating proper names is considered as a problem in this kind, which arises very often in the English texts. To support this opinion, Nord (1997) claims that translating proper names is difficult and problematic. Here is an example taken from source text two (ST2) and target text two (TT2) :

The 62nd Annual disarmament conference organized by the United Nations held its closing ceremony on Friday (September 11) in Mexico City, Mexico.

دويني هيني 11 ية لول لة شاري مة كسيكوي ثابتة ختي ولآتي مة كسيك شة ستو دووة مين كؤنفرانسي سالآنة ي ضة كداملين كة لة لاية نة تة وة ية كطرتووة كانة وة

ريكة خريت كؤتايي بة كارة كاني هينا




Lets provide an example:

Get up Kurdish people , sleeping is unbeneficial for you.

لەخەو هەلسن میللەتی کورد خەو زەرەرتانە

Here, the metaphor is لەخەو هەستەن = wake up, which means don not be silent, be aware, revolute...etc. In addition, there is another obstacle for MT that is a tough task to the machine to provide a suitable meaning in the right position. This problem is called "ambiguity". One Kurdish word may have many different English meanings or vice versa.



There is ambiguity in a language according the word and sentence level. Look at the ambiguity in the syntactic level as:


گه لاویژ ههلهات.

له شیرهکه نهگهریم.

To understand the ambiguity in syntactic level, the purpose of using words in those sentences should be considered. To show the exact meaning some other phrases should be added to the sentence since for Kurdish language in the first sentence (گه الویژ) means (A proper noun/ A Kurdish month), (ههلهات) means (escape/ appear) and the second sentence in English means (I am searching for the milk/sward.) so the word (شیر) stands for (milk/ sward).

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Similarly, let's provide a Kurdish sentence that has double meaning: (پێ = leg/
ability)

- تيم دەشکي
- I have ability to break it.
- My leg is breaking.
- My leg will break.
- My leg breaks.

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- Also putting stress on different elements of same sentence may cause ambiguity, for example:

1. هةر ضواربان هاتن the all four came.

2. هةر ضواربان هاتن only four of them came

- Also sometimes the same sentence may contradict in meaning when it is translated. As in:

1. نةرؤي دةتكوادم If you don't go, I will kill you.

2. نةرؤي ، دةتكوادم Don't go, or I will kill you (If you go, I will kill you).

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- A comma in a sentence may change the meaning of it. As in:

- خۇشكە ، كەتان ذني كاميانە ؟ The sister (Katan) is the wife of whom?

- خۇشكە كەتان ، ذني كاميانە ؟ Your sister is the wife of whom?

In the above sentences, the first sentence is about someone whose name is (Katan = كەتان) which is a proper name, while in the second sentence the speaker or writer means (someone's sister i.e your sister = خۇشكە كەتان)