Lexical Ambiguity in English and Central Kurdish

Assist. L. Almas Nasradeen AbdulRahman

almas.nasradeen@charmouniversity.org

Asmahan Abdulwahab Abdullah

asmhan.00946429@charmouniversity.org

Department of English Language, College of Education, University of Charmo,

Chamchamal, Kurdistan Region- Iraq

Abstract

Ambiguity could be either optional or obligatory which requires good knowledge and concerns of language use. This research plays a big role in determining the differences and similarities of ambiguity in both languages. This is an attempt to compare lexical ambiguity in English and Kurdish languages based on the linguistic study of both languages. Lexical ambiguity has its characteristics and types in each language. Although each language has its unique system and characteristics, they still have some similarities. The number of similar and different points is equal in both English and Kurdish Languages in types of lexical ambiguity. In contrast, there is a big difference in reasons that make lexical ambiguity between both languages, each language has it is own specific technique to resolve lexical ambiguity and uses different ways to clarify ambiguity.

Keywords: Metonymy, Polysemous Words, Lexical Ambiguity, Contextualizing, Stress,

1. Introduction

Ambiguity is an essential part of how language works, it makes language more efficient words with fewer syllables and easier pronunciation can be "reused" avoiding the need for a vast and increasingly complex vocabulary if languages were too precise and well defined so that every word referred to one thing only, they would be almost unusable and we would struggle to communicate ideas of any complexity. Ambiguity arises when a word or a statement has more than one meaning because of their pronunciations, their spellings or it may happen because of relative meanings of the words (Das, 2023).

Sometimes some people ambiguously express some of their ideas and sometimes they use different or various expressions to express their attitudes. Since ambiguity is used very commonly in human language. It is hypothesized that lexical ambiguity is a characteristic feature of the English and Kurdish languages. The main semantic characteristics of ambiguity in Kurdish and English languages are different and similar in several ways.

This research aims to study lexical ambiguity in English and Kurdish as a prevalent linguistic phenomenon in both languages. It aims to find out the situation where lexical ambiguity occurs whether optionally or obligatory and clarify the purpose behind the use of each one. Clarifying the extent to which the two languages are the same or different. Also, Identifying the areas of similarity and difference. It concentrates on comparing and investigating lexical ambiguity in the English and Kurdish languages. It is restricted to the types, sources, and ways of resolving lexical ambiguity with different examples from both languages

2. Lexical Ambiguity in English

As everyone communicates and socializes some misunderstandings come up which sometimes it is since what has been said is not clear enough or it has more than one meaning that needs to be clarified, as for the phenomenon where the situation or the statement has more than one meaning it is called ambiguity which is similar to vagueness, something that might not have any clear meanings is vague, therefor Ambiguity might happen while communicating due to a word that has more than one meaning, the structure of the sentence and combination of both (Maienborn et al., 2019).

Ambiguity comes from the Latin "*ambiguous*" which was formed by combining *ambi-* (means "both") and *guss* (means "to drive"). Ambiguity may be used to indicate something which has multiple meanings, or to a more general state of uncertainty.

That is why there can be different meanings of a single phrase. Many terms and sentences are unclear in natural language simply because multiple terms cover many distinct meanings, or give rise to different readings of similar structural elements, which means "an expression or utterance is ambiguous if it can be interpreted in more than one way" (Löbner, 2002: 39).

Ambiguity emerges when in the language system more than one interpretation is linked with a single word or sequence of words, this results in a different interpretation that can be caused by different meanings of one word, lexical ambiguity, or different structures of sentence and structural ambiguity, and this is by combining different semantic scopes – scope ambiguity (Chierchia and McConnell, 1990: 32). In another word, a sentence can be interpreted in a variety of ways, caused either by the multiple meanings of a word, lexical ambiguity, different sentence structures, structural ambiguity, lexical and structural ambiguity combination or semitone

variation (the tone variation appears in speaking that changes the direction of the sentence meaning) (Heim and Kratzer, 1998: 194).

2.1 Types of Ambiguity in English

The existence of multiple types of ambiguity has been proven by Chierchia and McConnell (1990: 3). Some types happen when the structure of the sentence gives more than one meaning - structural ambiguity, another type is an ambiguity that occurs when two quantifiers or similar expressions can take scope over each other – scope ambiguity. Some arise when a word has more than one meaning - lexical ambiguity.

In addition, the major type of ambiguity is semantic (or lexical) ambiguity which might be viewed in a sentence like "Visiting speakers can be awful", which is interpreted in two different ways. The first interpretation is "It is awful to visit speakers "whereas the second is "Speakers who visit are awful." This kind will be explained more in the below sections.

Structural Ambiguity

The structural ambiguity means that the structure of a sentence has more than one meaning and therefore may cause confusion, even though each word is clear' (Hurford and Heasley, 1983: 128).

Examples:

1.   "Josh kissed his wife, and so did Samuel". Samuel kissed John's wife or his own?

2.   "The passer-by helped the dog bite the victim". Is the person who passes by helping a dog to bite someone? or is the person who passes by helping another person (the victim) who has been bitten by a dog?

3.   "John said that Bill slipped in the kitchen". This sentence has two possible meanings; either John said it in the kitchen, or Bill slipped in the kitchen.

Scope Ambiguity

The ambiguity of scope is an uncertainty that arises when two quantifiers or similar expressions may extend over one another or are caused by the possibility of different semantic scopes in a sentence, more specifically, there is no ambiguity in single words or on the surface structure while the semantic aspect is undefined due to other elements (Cann,1993). Nevertheless, structural and scope ambiguity mechanisms are still somewhat different. The syntactic framework does not play such an important role in understanding semantic scope and the various deep structures still have the same surface structure that differentiates structural ambiguity from the distinct surface structures. Therefore, scope ambiguity may be viewed as a form of personal ambiguity.

Examples:

1.   "Every man loves a woman". (The more distinguished meaning of this sentence is that for every man, there is a woman, and it is possible that each man loves a different woman, but the sentence also has a second possible meaning which says that there is one particular woman who is loved by every man)

2. "Marry invited Susan for a visit, and she gave her a good lunch." (She=Marry; Her = Susan)

3. "Marry invited Susan for a visit, but she told her she had to go to work" (She = Susan; Her= Marry.)

4. "On the train to Boston, Gordon chatted with another passenger. The man turned out to be a professional hockey player." (The man = another passenger).

5. "Billie told Anny that he had decided to spend a year in Italy to study art."

6. "That would be his life's work." (That = art)

Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity is when a word has more than one meaning or when two different words (in writing) have the same pronunciation, having a word that might create uncertainty and confusion or create a situation that could be understood more than one way is a type of ambiguity that is called lexical ambiguity which there is a few types of lexical ambiguity.

There are three types of lexical ambiguity which are Homophony, Homography, and puns.

2.2 Types of Lexical Ambiguity

The three types of Lexical ambiguity in English.

Homophony

Homophony is "a term used in semantic analysis to refer to words (i.e., lexemes) which have the same pronunciation but differ in meaning." (Crystal, 1998:185).

Examples:

1.   "Cell" and "Sell" one is the basic structural, functional, and biological unit of all known, and the other is giving something in exchange for money.

2.   "Been" and "bean" *been* is a verb, while *bean* is a noun.

3.   "Yolk" and "yoke" *yolk* is the egg's nutrient-bearing portion, and the *yoke* is a wooden crosspiece.

4.   "Faint" and "feint" *faint* is losing consciousness for a short time and *feint* is the act of doing a distracting   movement.

5.   "To", "two" and "too". *to* is a preposition, *two* is a number and *too* is an adverb that means "also" or

"excessively".

6.   "Wail", "wale" and "whale" *Wail* is a cry of pain, *wale* is the raised mark left on the skin after the stroke of a whip and a *whale* is a very large animal that lives in the sea.

Homography

Homography is where the words have the same spellings but different meanings these words are called homographs.

Examples:

1.   "Live" The word *live* can be used for an event that happened in the moment of using that word or using the word in a question for it to mean a place that someone stays in it.

2.   "Bass" can mean a deep voice or a kind of fish.

3.   "Evening" means late afternoon or making more even.

4.   "Object" object has three different meanings a goal, something that can be touched or be seen, and a disagreement with someone's opinion.

5.   "Bow" means to bend at the waist, the front of a boat, or a pair of tied loops.

6.   "Present" is a gift, and offer as a verb and as an adjective in the meaning of something is in a certain place.

Puns

Puns are intentionally used in statements to give it an ambiguous meaning purposely which you could assume is a play of words and sometimes puns are used to create jokes. Pun is defined as "playing with the various meanings of words ". It is considered a main source of "ambiguity". The ambiguity comes from one word that has various meanings (Salzmann, 1998: 102)

Examples:

1.   "*I cannot remember which state my wife wanted to visit for our next vacation it is ok, Alaska*". Read the joke out loud "Alaska" sounds like "I will ask her."

2.   "Two silk worms had a race and ended in a tie", a "tie" can of course either be when neither party wins, but this pun also refers to the piece of clothing usually made from silk.

3.   "*I dropped an electron somewhere! -Are you sure? - Yes, I am positive*"

2.3 Causes of Lexical Ambiguity

Some factors cause lexical ambiguity; the causes will be explained below:

Polysemy

According to Hurford and Heasley (1983: 123), Polysemy is undeniably a main cause of lexical ambiguity, a case of polysemy is where a word has two or more closely related senses. 'Mouth' (of a river versus of an animal) is an example of polysemy as the two senses are clearly related by the concepts of an opening from the interior of some solid mass to the outside, and of a place of the issue at the end of some long narrow channel.

Another example of polysemy is 'guard' meaning either "a person who guards, sentinel" or "solid protective shield, e.g. round machinery" for both meanings contain the concept of protection against danger.

Polysemy is however distinguished from homonymy not only according to the standard of relatedness in meaning but also to that of etymology. The problem arising is, therefore, to decide when we have polysemy and when we have homonymy (Palmer, 1981: 102). When several words have the same forms from the same origin, but unrelated meanings, should they be treated as homonyms or polysemous words?

For example, "pupil" means "a person, especially a child who is being taught" and "pupil" means "the small background opening in the middle of the colored part of the eye", or the 'sole' of a shoe and the fish "sole", historically are from the same origin and as such are examples of polysemy, yet in the language of today they are pairs of unrelated words i.e., homonyms. Dictionaries, as in Jackson and Amvela (2000: 61), have to decide whether a particular item is to be handled in terms of polysemy or homonymy because a polysemous word will be treated as a single entry, while a homonymous one will have a separate entry.

It is obvious that whether the meaning of words is related or unrelated, the multiple meanings of words often give rise to lexical ambiguity. The sentence "The bachelor finally died" is lexically ambiguous due to the multiple meanings of 'bachelor' including "a man who has never married", "someone with a first degree" and "a young male unmated fur seal during the mating season".

In addition, a word may have both a literal meaning and one or more transferred meanings, which is the cause of the multiplicity of meanings or a polysemous word; the result is thus lexical ambiguity, one kind of transference of meaning is metonymy is the transference of meaning from one object to another based on the association of tangency of notions, i.e. instead of the name of one object or notion, we use the name of another because these objects are associated and closely related, "The kettle boils" instead of "The water in the kettle boils", "crown" instead of "monarchy".

Metonymy

According to Nguyen Hoa (2004, 113), The primary cases of metonymy that differ are when the container's name is used rather than the actual container, e.g., 'to drink a glass'; names of past of human body used as symbols, e.g., 'to have a good eye', 'kind heart'; the concrete used instead of abstract e.g., "from the cradle to the grave" the material used for the things made of it e.g., (canvass), "glass" the name of authors instead of their works e.g., (Shakespeare), (Picasso) and the part instead of the whole and vice versa e.g. (roof) for (house) or 'bike' for the part of a bike in "to repair a bike", another basic kind of transference of meaning is a metaphor the transference from one object to another based on the association of similarity between these two objects i.e.,

we call one object by the name of another because we compare these objects and find some common features between them. For example, a cunning person is commonly referred to as a fox. As a result, the following sentence is lexically ambiguous "He is a fox".

Of all kinds of transference of meaning, metaphor is the most familiar, the term "metaphor" refers to cases where a word appears to have both a literal and a transferred meaning that is easily and clearly identified, the easy and clear identification of meaning in a case of metaphor is its distinctive feature while in other cases of transference, it is not always clear which should be considered literal and which transferred. To illustrate, we assume that words such as "hand, foot, face, and eye" apply first to the body from which they deserve their literal meanings but in other cases such as "hand of the clock", "foot of the mountain", "face of a clock" and "eyes of a needle" they have their transferred meanings. (Nguyen Hoa, 2004: 108)

2.4 How to Clarify Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity is caused by words that have more than one meaning, the ambiguity is of course not likely to be sustained in a longer discourse than a statement, however when it occurs it may bring about confusion and even misunderstanding it is therefore necessary to avoid creating the lexical ambiguity.

There are two ways to clarify lexical ambiguity (disambiguating) such as contextualizing and providing grammatical   environment.

Contextualizing

One way to disambiguate any ambiguous word or sentence is to provide additional contexts. The context includes information contained within the text or discourse in which the word appears together with extra-linguistic information about the text (Leech, 1974: 77). Context may eliminate certain ambiguities or more than one meaning in the message, and it may indicate the referents of certain types of words we call deictic expressions "this, that, here, there, now, then, etc." and of other expressions of definite meaning such as "John, I, you, he, it, the man".

As is presented above the sentence is lexically ambiguous because "bachelor" is polysemous, thus it is with a piece of information "old" that the sentence can be clarified. "The old bachelor finally died".

The "old bachelor" cannot refer to fur seals because such bachelors are by definition young. In this case, together with the information "old", the distinctive features of each meaning of "bachelor" may help to disambiguate the sentence.

Providing Grammatical Environment

It is also delightful to note that the grammatical environment can help to eliminate lexical ambiguity, especially

that resulting from partial homonymy (Lyons, 1995:57), it has been added in the sentence below before found to yield:

"They have found hospitals and charitable institutions" The ambiguity disappears as found here is the past participle of "find" meaning "discover", and "He found hospitals and charitable institutions" Found here is the past form of "find" meaning "discover".

The ability to clarify lexical ambiguity of grammar can also be shown in the following example:

The sentence, "He lies all the time" contains lexical ambiguity which is caused by the word "lie" meaning either to say something that one knows is not true or to have or put one's body in a flat or resting position on the surface. The sentence will not be ambiguous if we use the verb in the past simple tense. The verb "lie" means to say something that one knows is not true, has the past form *lied,* and when it means to have or put one's body in a flat or resting position on a surface, its past form is *lain*.

3. Lexical Ambiguity in Kurdish

Indeed, ambiguity is not a local issue or phenomenon but is dealt with as a general phenomenon it exists in all languages not only the Kurdish language. Ambiguity as a semantic phenomenon can be seen in a tangible way in all languages, ambiguity is a linguistic term that is used to those words and expressions that hold more than one possible meaning.

This chapter is an attempt to introduce ambiguity in the Kurdish language mentioning the types of lexical ambiguity and its causes and also the ways of clarifying it. All statements used in this chapter are supported by providing examples from reliable sources.

Ambiguity as a linguistic phenomenon has been defined in many different ways by linguists; Dzay, states that ambiguity inside a word means having a word or a morpheme while reading or hearing they make multi meanings in the mind of the listener or reader, it means the word has more than one- meaning (2009:89).

Ambiguity is a linguistic term used for all those words, phrases, and sentences that have more than one meaning, in the Kurdish language this phenomenon appears in some fields like phonology, morphology, and syntax (Nawxosh and Khoshnaw, 2009: 227). Also Amin for the definition of ambiguity says: that ambiguity in language occurs when an utterance gives more than one meaning (2004:93). If a word or a phrase has more than one interpretation, it would be clear that the word would be ambiguous (Hama, 2013:3).

Muhammad believes that existing ambiguity in language is very significant and necessary, it shows strong evidence for saying that language is live because at the beginning there was a specific word for each thing, but later on when a word could convey more than one meaning then ambiguity appeared (2009: 138).

3.1 Types of Ambiguity

Ambiguity has two basic types lexical and structural ambiguity.

Structural Ambiguity

Structural ambiguity is created when a structure embodies multiple interpretations (Crystal 1998: 230). It relates to morphology and syntax. This type of ambiguity is not created by having homonymy and polysemy, but it is created because a certain phrase or a sentence gives more than one meaning (Nawxosh & Khoshnaw,

2009: 231) structural ambiguity has three types:

Constructional Ambiguity

This type of ambiguity mostly appears in phrases and sentences and the structure of phrases has a main role in creating this ambiguity.

For example:

Em pyawane bkujn. (Kill thess men).

It has two meanings

Êwe em pyawane bkujin. (Kill these men).

Em pyawane pyaw kujn. (These men are the killers).

The ambiguity of this sentence *(Em pyawana bkujn)* happens because of the word *(bkujn)* which holds two meanings.

1-*(bkujn)* = b+root of verb+ (n) attached pronoun= subject noun.

2-*(bkujn)* = b+root of verb+ (n) attached pronoun =command verb.

Despite the structure of phrases also stress has a great role in creating structural ambiguity (Muhammad. D. H, 2006:83)

For example, the word *(bkujn)* is ambiguous because of stress, if we put the stress on the first syllable it becomes a (command verb), but if we put the stress on the second syllable it becomes a (noun person).

Derivational Ambiguity

This type of ambiguity occurs when the structures of a sentence have various interpretations (Hama, 2011:36).

Derivational ambiguity has some similarities with Transformational Ambiguity specifically in the quality of analyzing and interpreting the ambiguity. Still, the specialty of ambiguity and distinctive features can be seen in using the materials (words, affixes) in different social and linguistic contexts (Qadr, 2000:37).

For example:

MiriŜikeke amadeye bo xiwardin. (The hen is ready to eat).

This sentence has two different meanings

MiriŜikeke amadeye bo ewey bxurê. (The chicken is ready for eating).

MiriŜikeke amadeye bo ewey nan bxwat. (The hen is ready to eat food).

In the first sentence, there is not any subject so the *chicken* is the object of the sentence; in the second sentence, it has the subject which is the *hen.*

Transformational Ambiguity

This type of structural ambiguity depends on deep structures which means it relates to the original structure of sentences, Lyons supports this statement by saying that if a sentence has two deep structures it is said that this sentence is ambiguous (1997:3-4). Transformational ambiguity appears as a result of transferring a construction from two different constructions it means that at the beginning there are two deep structures

then they take one surface structure (Palmer, 1981).

For example:

- Pêm deŜkê. (I can break it).

This sentence was transferred from these two constructions:

1- Qaçm deŜkê. (My foot will break).

2- Min detwanim biŜkênim. (I can break it).

Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity is different from structural ambiguity which appears by existing structural relations, lexical ambiguity as its name reveals relates to the word itself also it constructs when a word gives more than one meaning. They believe that lexical ambiguity is superior to structural ambiguity and it is also more important and widely used than the other one (Nawkhosh & khoshnaw, 2009:236). According to Ali (2011;92), each material that conveys two or more meanings is said that ambiguous, most of the words in the dictionary are used for different purposes and the differences in the meaning of (words, and sentences) are a reason for making confusion in meaning for listener or reader. Radford in defining lexical ambiguity says that this type of ambiguity is constructed by having Hyponymy and polysemy in the (words or affixes) of language. (1982:5). Lexical ambiguity does not occur through grammatical analysis of the words, but it is created by expanding the field of meaning of dictionary units (Crystal, 1998).

Ali (2011:92) suggests a way to solve or fix that ambiguity created due to having some linguistic phenomenon with words in a language he believes that it can be fixed by explaining the relation between the form and meaning of the words.

Sue (1994:20) indicates two types of lexical ambiguity which are category lexical ambiguity and complete lexical ambiguity (Cited in Nawkhosh & khoshnaw, 2009:236).

3.2 Types of Lexical Ambiguity

Category Lexical Ambiguity

This type of ambiguity mostly focuses on parts of speech of the words, in the Kurdish language has some words that can take many different roles in a variety of sentences which means some words can be nouns in a sentence and also can behave like an adjective or an adverb in other sentences although this phenomenon can be seen only in some words in the Kurdish language. For example, each of these words *(Jwan, Ŝirin,* and *Nasik)* represents more than one part of speech. (Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009:236)

 For example:

- (Jwan)

Noun like adjective

Ĵwan jwane. (Ĵwan is beautiful).

Noun like adverb

Ĵwan jwan dedwê. (Ĵwan speaks nicely).

In addition, it has some other words in the Kurdish language like *(Azad, wshyar, and Rzgar)* that can take different roles like Adjectives, personal nouns, and also Verb in various sentences. For example, *(Azad)* stands for three different parts of speech.

For example, *(Azad)* stands for three different parts

1-personal noun	*Azad qutabyeki zireke*. (Azad is a clever student).
2-Adjective	*Ŝery azady Êraq. (The war of freedom of Iraq)*
3-verb	*Dwênê mamostakeman azad bu. (My teacher was released yesterday).* *(Ibid)*

Complete Lexical Ambiguity

This ambiguity constructs when a word gives more than one meaning, it belongs to both fields semantics and also pragmatics at the same time because it relates to the meaning and also the context of using the word so it is called semantic and pragmatic ambiguity. This linguistic phenomenon mainly appears in polysemy, homonymy, and hyponymy because it relates to the word.

For example*:*

1- *la mnaĺeke bigerê. (get away the children)*

Is an ambiguous sentence because of the word *(legeran)* which is a homonym and holds two different meanings?

A - *(lêgeran)*	*get away*
B- *(lêgeran)*	*looking for*

2-*Dergakem girit.   Closing the door*

It is an ambiguous sentence because of the word (girt) which is Polysemous and it has two means- *(girt) means closing*

- *(girt) means catching*

-*(girt) means closing*   (Ali, 1998:61)

3.3 The Reasons that Make Lexical Ambiguity

It is clear that in all languages the main source of existing phenomena that relates to meaning is a word, also in the Kurdish language there are some reasons that cause Lexical ambiguity like (homonymous and polysemous words, stress, lexical reason, and differences in dialects).

Homonymous

Homonymy originally is a Greek word that means the same pronounced or same sound, it consists of those words that have the same form of reading and writing, but they only different in meaning (Ali, 2011:92). Nawxosh and Xoshnow define homonymy in the same way, in their opinion homonyms are those words that have the same form of spelling or pronouncing or having both same spelling and same pronouncing. (2009:238). Generally, homonymy has three types: Homophone, Homograph, and Complete homonymy.

Homophone

It includes those words that have the same pronunciation, but different spelling. For example

Ŝir (1) means milk

Ŝir (2) means sword   (Hama, 2011:5)

Homograph

It includes those words that have the same spelling with different pronunciations (Fattah, 1990:170). For example

The word *(duru)* is Homonym

 Duru (1) (Hypocrite person)

 Duru (2) (Two-faced, two sides)   (Dzay, 2009:89)

Complete Homonymy

It consists of those words that are pronounced and spelled in the same way, but they are only different in meaning. (Fattah, 1990:170)

For example

The word *(Azar)* is Homonym

 Azar (1) (March which is the third month)

 Azar (2) (Pain and ache)

Polysemous Words

Polysemous words are those words that have more than one meaning or they are a unit in the dictionary with a bunch of meanings, they can be guessed its meanings through semantic signs (Mahwi, 2009:138). The word polysemy originally is a Greek word, it came from (poly) which means multi, and (semy) which refers to meaning (Allaf, 2009:138). According to (Abdulla, 2007:193) polysemy as a linguistic phenomenon can be seen in most languages, but the quantity and scale of outspread in language depends on the type of language, he also believes that existing polysemy in the language is very crucial and necessary it is a reason for enriching language and reducing the number of words and also it has a great role in keeping language away from complexity. In addition to describing the significance of polysemy in language Fattah says that polysemy is one of the important features of language he believes that without polysemy it should have a certain meaning for each word (Fattah,1990:174).

Examples:

For example the word *(friŜte)* means *(angel)* is Polysemous because it has two meanings.

A-(Frishta)   Angel.

B-(frishta)   very good person.   (Abdulla, 2007:196)

The word *(roj)* is Polysemous and it has two meanings.

A-(roj)   the sun.

B-(roj)   days of the week.   (Dzay, 2009:89)

Phonological Reason (Stress)

The phonological reason that causes lexical ambiguity is mainly constructed via stress, this ambiguity appears only in the written form of the word by uttering or speaking the ambiguity will disappear (Muhammad. D.H,

2006:86).

Examples:

The word (*brayaty)* is ambiguous.

A- /*brayaty*/   *Ew bray ewe. (That is his brother)*

B- /*brayaty*/   *Brayaty.   (Brotherhood)*

If the stress is on the first syllable it means (*his brother*), but if the stress is on the second syllable it means (*brotherhood*).   (Hama, 2011:6)

The word (*wrda)* is ambiguous because of stress.

A- /' *wrda*/   *bçwk.*

B- /*wrda'*/   *Paray wrda.*

If the stress is on the first syllable it means (*small*), but if it is on the second syllable it refers to (*coin*)
.   (Ibid)

Dialectal Differences

An important reason for creating lexical ambiguity in the Kurdish language is the differences between dialects, it has a big role in creating ambiguity inside language because sometimes a word or an expression is used to express something in one place, but in another place or dialect another word is used to refer to the same thing (Muhammad. 2D. B,016:40).

Examples:

For example, in Garmian the word (befr) refers to(ice) which is made by humans but in Sulaimany the word (sehol) is used instead of bafr to refer to the same thing.

In Garmian_____*befr*

In Sulaimany_____*sehol*   (Ibid)

Another example is in Kurmanjy dialect the word (xunav) refers to (dew), but in the Sorany dialect, the word (shawnm) refers to (dew).

In the Sorany dialect_____*shawnm*

In Kurmanjy dialect_____*xunav*

Lexical Reason

Lexicon is another way that causes ambiguity in language, frequently in the dictionary most parts of speech are used for different purposes and the differences in the meaning of each part cause confusion and complexity to the reader or listener. The majority of words in language can represent more than one part of speech and each one relates to the word itself so we should differentiate between the word itself and its part of speech and also it is meaning (Abdulla, 2007:235)

In the Kurdish language some adjectives that are used to describe someone or something can stand for more than one part of speech.

For example, the adjective   (*Ŝirin*) means (*sweet*)

An adjective like the noun   *Ŝirin Ŝirine. (She is cute).*

Adjective like adverb   *Ŝirin Ŝirin dedwĕ. (She speaks courteously).*

(Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009:237)

In addition, we have some words in the Kurdish language that can stand for some parts of speech like adjectives, nouns, and also verbs.

For example: word (*Rzgar*) (*personal noun*)

(*Rzgar*) like noun   *Rzgar dktorêky nasrawe. (Rzgar is a well-known doctor)*

(*Rzgar*) like verb   *Her gelê têbkoŜêt rzgary debêt. (Whoever tries will be saved)*   (Ibid: 237-238)

Partonymy and Hyponymy

Partonomy and hyponymy are two other ways that cause ambiguity in language. Crystal (1998:239) states that partonymy is a semantic term that is used to investigate the meaning of words. Partonomy is a relation between meronymy and holonymy which is known as (the part and whole relation), it is an important relation in a language it has a big role in creating ambiguity in the language (Saed, 2011:153-156).

 For example:

1-(pê)   (*foot*)

The word (pê) means (foot) is a partonym and it includes these words (leg, knee, heel, toe, foot).   (Nawkhosh andKhoshnaw,2009:240).

2-The word (*taye*) means (*wheel*) is a meronym and (*otombêl*) means (*car*) is a holonym.

Hyponymy is like partonymy it is a relation between specific and general or it is a relation that joins specific with general (Muhammad. A., 2005:12 cited in Muhammad. D.H, 2016:33), in linguistics the specific one is called hyponym and the general one known as hypernym, it is a reason to make ambiguity.

Examples:

1-(*Human*) is a general word and these words like (*Woman*, *boy*, *girl*, *teacher*, *engineer*) are hyponyms of humans. (Muhammad. D. H, 2016:34)

2-The word (*hand*) is hypernym and (wrist, elbow, arm) are hyponyms of (*hand*), for example, this sentence (*My hand has broken*) is an ambiguous sentence because of the word (*hand*) and the reader does not know which part of my hand was broken (Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009:240).

3.4 The Ways of Clarifying Lexical Ambiguity

Ambiguity as a linguistic phenomenon usually can be seen in a tangible way in language and many ways suggested by linguists to clarify this ambiguity, Kurdish linguists suggest some ways to clarify this phenomenon like (stress, context, synonymy, and lexicon).

Stress

Stress is one of the main ways of losing ambiguity, it is an additional energetic phonic that constantly appears on one of the syllables of a word (Amin, 2004: 284). Stress has an important role in clarifying lexical ambiguity (Akma jian1995:228). Nawkhosh & Khoshnaw (2009: 245) believe that if a word is more than one syllable then it takes stress. Every language has it is own phonological principle to indicate the place of main stress on the words also in the Kurdish language generally main stress is on the last syllable of words (Marf, 1976: 69). In the Kurdish language determining the place of stress on the words is very important to clarify ambiguity

(Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009:246).

For example:

In the word (*baran*) which means (*rain*) The main stress is on the second syllable which is (*ran*).

Sometimes changing the place of stress on the words completely changes the meaning of words (Amin, 2004:285), also Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw(2009:245) have the same idea that changing the place of stress on the words entirely changes the meaning of words, and this changes only appear in writing by speaking it will disappear.

For example:

Changing the place of stress on those words changes their meanings.

1-*nustin*   (*sleeping*)

2- *azady* (*freedom*)

3-*Sewze*   (*vegetable*)

In the word (*nustin*) if the stress is on the last syllable it becomes a (noun) like (*sleeping is pleasant.*), but if it is on the first syllable it becomes (*They slept*.) which becomes a sentence. In the word (*azady*) if the stress is on the last syllable it means (*freedom*), but if it is on the second syllable it means *(You are free or your name is azad).* Also in the word (*sewze*) if the stress is on the last syllable it means (*vegetable*), but if it is on the first syllable it becomes the color green *(It is green).*   (Amin, 2004:286)

Context

Context has a great role in fixing the meaning of words, lexical ambiguity that mainly exists via homonymy and polysemy can be clarified or fixed by using context (Nawxosh & Khoshnaw, 2009:241), without context the form of linguistics cannot analyze all those meanings that achieve in language (Hussen,2000:312 cited in Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw,2009:241). Context has a big role in clarifying the ambiguity created by homophone words because it relates to neighboring words which is why context can clarify it (Mama,1989:58).

In the example below context fixes the ambiguity of the word (kurk)

 MiryŜky kurk hêlke nakat.   (Broody hen cannot make egg).

 Au seryne le kurk dirust krawe. (That pillow has made of feathers).

 (Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009: 241).

Despite homonymy, context can also clarify the ambiguity of polysemous words, some adjectives in the Kurdish language have an important role in creating ambiguity but via using context they will lose their ambiguity.

For example:

The adjective (*gran*) which means (*expensive*) has some meanings and context can recognize them.

 1-*Am bare grane*. (It's heavy, and cannot be carried easily).

2-*Pyaweky grane*. (He has a good personality).

3-Pirsyareky grane. (It is a difficult question, not easy).

4-grana. (It is expensive, not cheap).

(Bakr, 2003:68)

Synonymy

It consists of those words that have different forms of spelling and pronunciation but the same meaning or related meaning (Mahwi, 2009:190). Synonymy can clarify lexical ambiguity which is mainly constructed due to homonymy & polysemy. (Hudson, 2010: 35). Synonymous words have a great role in explaining or clearing the meaning of words in contrast to polysemous words that create ambiguity.

Examples:

1-Gewre = driŜt   (big)

2- Bçûk = wird   (small)

3- Koçydwaykirdin =   mirdin = topin = gyan derçun (death)

4-TuŜ = dijwar = sexit = naxoŜ (hard)   (Mahwi, 2009:109-111)

- Synonymy has three basic types.

1. Complete synonymy

It consists of those words that can be used instead of others in all contexts and situations without changing the meaning of the sentence (Hama, 2011:81). Having complete synonymy in the language is very rare and it can be seen in a few cases because it does not create easily even if it has it only remain for a specific period after that they will change their meanings (Hama,2011:81).

Examples: examples of complete synonymy

1- Nawçewan = tawêl   (forehead)

2- Qutaby = xwênkar   (student)

3- Lawan = genjan   (young's)   (Muhammad.D.H, 2016:14-15).

2.Incomplete Synonymy

It consists of those words that can exchange their places in some cases, in that situation the synonym words are close together in a way that cannot differentiate between their meanings, but by changing the context, you will discover that they are not complete synonymy, but it is in complete synonymy.

For example, the examples below compare synonyms like (*êŜ, jan, azar*) which means (*ache* and *pain*) in the sentences, and see how change from complete to incomplete synonymy.

1-serm dêŜet.   jneke êŜ dey grê.   (I have a headache)   (The woman has a pain)

2- serm jan deka.   jnaka jan daygre. (I have a headache)   (The woman has a pain)

3-serm azary heye.   jneke azary heye. (My head has a pain)   (The woman has a pain)   (Ali, 2002:70)

3.Sub Synonymy

It includes those words that have the same meaning, but they are only different in one unit and they resemble a specific context.

1-Be aga = wrya (conscious)

2- Hatn = amadebûn (coming)

3- Ŝay = aheng (party)   (Ali, 2011:84)

Lexicon

The dictionary is a main way of losing lexical ambiguity in language, Mama (1989:58) says about the significance of a dictionary in explaining ambiguity in his opinion dictionary can clarify this ambiguity created by homophone words.

For example: the word (*Demuçaw*) (face) is ambiguous because it is a homophone word, but a dictionary can clarify it.

 (*Demuçaw):* mouth and eye

 (*Demuçaw*): face   (Nawkhosh and Khoshnaw, 2009:243).

1.1   The Differences between Lexical Ambiguity in English and Kurdish.

The Differences in Types of Lexical Ambiguity in Both Languages.

There are some differences between types of lexical ambiguity between English and Kurdish languages.

1. (Homophony and Homography) with Complete Lexical Ambiguity.

The differences between these types of lexical ambiguities are that homophony & homography in English are constructed due to homonymous and polysemous words. Homophones contain those words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings, homographs are those words that have the same spelling but different meanings.

 For example

The words (*Cell and sell*) have the same pronunciation but different meanings.

The word (bass) is homograph it contains two meanings (a deep voice and a kind of fish)

 Complete lexical ambiguity, which is one of the main kinds of Kurdish lexical ambiguity is different from homophony and homography because it also constructs due to hyponymy despite homonymy and polysemy.

For instance

-Destim shka. (My hand has broken)

This sentence is ambiguous because of the word (*Destim*) which is hypernym; the reader does not know which part of the hand has broken.

2.Differences in Reasons Behind Lexical Ambiguity between English and Kurdish Languages.

There are no differences in reasons behind lexical ambiguity between both languages.

There is a Reason behind Lexical Ambiguity in English which has no Similarities and Differences in Kurdish.

1. Metonymy

Metonymy is a trop in which one entity is used to stand for another associated entity. It is a reason for lexical ambiguity in English.

For example

The word *(crown)* is a metonym, it refers to *(monarch)*.

The word *(wheel)* is a metonym, it refers to *(car)*.

3. Differences in Techniques used in Clarifying Lexical Ambiguity in English and Kurdish languages.

1. Providing a Grammatical Environment with Synonymy

There is a difference point between providing a grammatical environment in English and synonymy in Kurdish, the English one is used only to clarify the ambiguity of homonymous words, but the Kurdish one is different it can clarify not only the ambiguity of homonymous words but polysemous words as well.

Examples:

In English

- *He lies all the time.*

Is an ambiguous sentence because of the verb (*lie*) which is a homonym and has two meanings *(not true and resting), but* providing a grammatical environment can clarify the ambiguity of this sentence by using the past tense of verb (*lie*) like following.

Lie (not true)..........lied

Lie (resting)...........lain

In Kurdish

Synonymy can clarify the ambiguity of the word (roj) which is polysemous and the word (Ŝir) which is a homonym by using their synonymous words. For example

Roj =hetaw=xor   (sun)

$\hat{S}ir= \hat{S}m\hat{S}er$ *(sword)*

1.2   Points of Similarities

Despite the differences, there are some similarities between English and Kurdish languages about lexical ambiguity, both of them have the same idea that if a word or an expression conveys more than one meaning it is ambiguous.

1. Similarities in Types of Lexical Ambiguity in English and Kurdish Languages.

1. There is a similarity between homography and homophony in English and complete lexical ambiguity in Kurdish, both of them are constructed by hyponyms words and appear in homonymy.

Examples:

In English

The words *to* and *too* are homophones

The word *lead* is homograph and contains to meanings

Lead   to give direction

Lead   a piece of metal

Both homophones and homographs are two parts of homonyms words.

In Kurdish

-La mnalaka bgere.

Is an ambiguous sentence because of the word *(legeran)* which is a homonym and it contains two interpretations:

Legeran   giving away

Legeran   looking for

2. Similarities in Reasons Behind Lexical Ambiguity

1. There is a similar point between English and Kurdish languages in ways that cause lexical ambiguity which is existing polysemous words in both languages as a main reason to make lexical ambiguity in language.

Example for English

The word (*spring)* is a polysemous and it contains these meanings

 (a *season of the year, the act of springing, a place where a stream of water comes up).*

 Example for Kurdish

The word (*friŝte*) is polysemous and it has two meanings (*Angel and very good person)*

3. Similarities in Techniques that are used to Clarify Lexical Ambiguity between both Languages.

1. There is a similarity between using context in both languages, in both languages the context can clarify those ambiguities which mainly constructed by polysemous words.

Example for English

The word (*bachelor*) is ambiguous because it is Polysemious and it holds two meanings (*unmarried man* and *first degree for those who graduated from university*), but context can fix its meanings.

-The old bachelor finally died.

-My father holds a bachelor's degree.

Example for Kurdish

The adjective *(gran)* means *(expensive)* is ambiguous and it holds some meanings, but context can fix its meanings.

-Am bare grane. (It is heavy)

-Pyawêki grane. (He has a good personality)

-Prsyarêky grane. (It is a difficult question)

-Grane. (It is expensive).

 One Other Type of Lexical Ambiguity in English

There is only one other type of lexical ambiguity in English that does not have any similarities and differences in Kurdish.

1. Pun

Pun is a type of English lexical ambiguity; it is created intentionally by playing on words to make them give several possible meanings or to make a joke.

For example

-The tallest building in town is the library which has thousands of stories.

The pun is on the differences between stories in books and stories in buildings.

5. Conclusions

Ambiguity is a property of linguistic expressions, a word, phrase, or sentence is ambiguous if it has more than one meaning and it is important in many areas of language study, understanding people's speech, and getting meaning properly is well recognized.

This research paper concerns itself with studying the semantic characteristics of ambiguity in both English and Kurdish languages. It could be concluded that:

Ambiguity as a linguistic phenomenon can be seen tangibly in the Kurdish and English languages.

Although each language has its unique system and its characteristics, they have some similarities between the English and Kurdish languages about ambiguity. The number of similar and different points is equal in both English and Kurdish Languages in types of lexical ambiguity.

There is a big difference in reasons that make lexical ambiguity between both languages, each language has it is own specific technique to resolve lexical ambiguity and they use different ways to clarify ambiguity.

References

-Abulla. R, (2007), Zmanawany, First Edition, Chwarchra Press.

-Ali. T, (1998), hendê rêga le peywendi nêwan wishe u rista la zmani kurdida,Hawler, Slahadin University. (P.H.D)

-Ali.T, (2002), Dyardai Haw Watay le Zmani Kurdida, volume (16), Hawler, zanko press.

-Ali.T, (2011), watasazi, first edition, Hewler, Rojhelat press

-Allaf. P, (2009), Watau Wergêran, First Edition, Hawler, Rozhhalat Press.

-Amin.W, (2004), Asoyeky Tri Zmanewany, First Edition, Hawler.

-Bakr. S, (2003), Zman Nasi U Handê Babeti Try Zman Nasy Kurdy, Hawler

-Bobrow. D, and Fraser, B, 1969, An Augmented State Transition Network Analysis Procedure, Proceedings of The First IJCAI, Washington, DC.

-Bobrow.R, and Webber, B, 1980. Knowledge Representation for Syntactic/Semantic Processing. Proceedings of The 1980 AAA1 Conference, Stanford.

-Cann.R, 1993, Formal Semantics, an Introduction, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

-Charniak. E, 1983, Passing Markers, A Theory Of Contextual Influence In Language Comprehension, Cognitive Science, vol. 7.

-Chierchia, G, and McConnell-Ginet, S. 1990, Meaning and Grammar: an introduction to Semantics, Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

-Culicover. P.W. and R. Jackendoff, 2005, Simpler Syntax, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

- Crystal, D. (1998). A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. 5th ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

-Das, R. (2023). Multifaceted Dimensions of Ambiguity in English. International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 5(2).

-Dzay. A, (2009), Watesazi, First Edition, Hawler, Khany Press.

-Fattah. M, (1990), Zmanewani, Bagdad.

-Gerald. K, 2000, Teach Pronunciation. Essex, Person Education Limited.

-Hama. H, (2011), Lêly Le Zmany Kurdide, Koya, University of Koya. (M.A)

-Hamd. Sh, (2010), Têrwaninky Nwê bo Haw Watay, University Of Sulaimany College Of Language.

-Heim. I, and Kratzer, A, 1998, Semantics in Generative Grammar. Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

-Huang.Y,2004, Foundation Semantics, MA Module Materials. Reading, SLALS, The University of Reading.

-Hudson, Richard. 2010. An Introduction to Word Grammar. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

-Hurford. R.S. and B. Heasley 1983, Semantics, A Course Book. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

-Jacobson, Pauline, 1999, "Towards a Variable-Free Semantics," Linguistics and Philosophy. Springer.

- Jackson, H., and Amvela, E. , 2000, Words, Meaning and Vocabulary: An Introduction to Modern English Lexicology. A&C Black,

-Katz, J., and Fodor, J. 1963, The structure of a semantic theory, Language, vol. 39.

-Leech, H. (1974). Semantics. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

-Lobner, 2002, Understanding semantics, London.

-Longman Group UK, 1998, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Beijing, The Commercial Press and Addison Wesley Longman China limited.

-Lyons, J. (1977). Semantics (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Lyons.J, (1995), Linguistic semantics, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

-Mahwi. M, (2009),Zansty hema,hema,wataw lêkdanawe,Volum,1,2 ,Sulaimany, Paywand press.

-Mama. F, (1989), Hawdangy La Zmany Kurdida, Hawler, (M.A).

-Marcus. M, 1980, a Theory of Syntactic Recognition for Natural Language, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

-Marf. A, (1976), Leber Roshnay Fonetikde, Bagdad, Kury Zanyary Kurd Press.

-Marf.A, (2004), Ferhengi Zarawai Zman Nasi, Sulaimany.

-Matthews, P. H. 1997, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

-May, Robert, 1985, Logical Form, Its Structure and Derivation, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

- Maienborn, C., Heusinger, K. & Portner, P. (2019). Semantics - Lexical Structures and Adjectives. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110626391

-Milne. R, 1982, predicting garden path sentences, Cognitive Science, vol. 6.

-Muhammad. D. B, (2016), Lely le Gutary Syasy Kurdide, Chamchamal, University Of Sulaimany. (M.A)

-Muhammad. D. H, (2009), Peywendye Watayeakan le Zmany Kurdide, Bagdad. University Of Bagdad College of Ibn Rushd.

-Muhammad. D.H, (2011), Wetesazy, Sulaimany, Zhir Press.

-Nawkhosh.S and Nawkhosh.N,(2009), Zmanewany, First Edition,Volum1,2, Hawler.

-Nawkhosh.S, (2008), Ferhengi Dwaney Oxford, Fourth Edition, Hawler, RoŜinbir Press.

- Nguyen Hoa (2004). Understanding English Semantics. Hanoi: VNU Publishing House.

- Palmer, F. (1981). Semantics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

-Pereira. F, and Warren, D 1980, Definite clause grammars for language analysis - A survey of the formalism and a comparison with augmented transition networks, Artificial Intelligence, vol. 13.

-Qadr. S, (2000), Hawbezhyw Fre Watay le Girekda, Slemany, University Of Suleaimany College of Language. (M.A).

-Radford, A. (1982) Transformational Syntax, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

-Rieger, C, and Small, S, 1979, Word expert parsing, Proceedings of the Sixth IJCAJ, Tokyo.

-Riesbeck. C, 1975, Conceptual analysis In R, Schank, ed., Conceptual Information Processing, North-Holland, Amsterdam, pp. 83-156.

-Saed. J,2011 Semantics, Oxford, Blackwell

-Schank. R, and Abelson, R, 1977, Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding, Lawrence Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ.

- Salzmann , Z (1998) . Language, Culture, and Society. Oxford: West View Press.

-Thome.J, Firatley, P, and Dewar, H. 1968, The syntactic analysis of English by machine, In D, Michie, ed, Machine Intelligence 3, American Elsevier, New York.

-Winograd. T, 1972 Understanding Natural Language, Academic Press, New York.

-Woods. W, 1970, Transition network grammars for natural language analysis, Communications of the ACM, vol. 13.

http://www.coli.uni-saarland.de/projects/milca/courses/comsem/html/node92.html

https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ambiguity

https://prezi.com/mftnoshlgc1s/lexical-and-structural-ambiguity/

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ambiguity#examples

https://www.scribd.com/doc/94384413/Lexical-and-Structural-Ambiguity

https://www.tuninst.net/ENGLISH/Lam-Lexical-ambiguity.htm

http://www.literarydevices.com/?s=homograph

http://www.glottopedia.org/index.php/Ambiguity,_Polysemy_and_Vagueness.