

**A RELEVANCE-THEORETIC APPROACH TO
THE ANALYSIS OF PHONESTHEMES IN
SELECTED ENGLISH NOVELS AND THEIR
TRANSLATION INTO PERSIAN**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

2019

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by

MOHAMMAD JAMSHID TIRANI

**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to that caveman who made the first sketches on the walls of Chauvet Cave some 37000 years ago to give vent to feelings, to Plato who encouraged debates on arbitrariness of the meaning of names, to all scholars who passed the intellectual light in the course of hundreds of years from generation to generation, to Prof. Eija Ventola whose paper on phonological meaning in novel was the trigger for embarking on this research, and specially to Prof. Sepora whose critical thinking and heart-warming support has always encouraged me to be as novel as possible. I am also grateful to Maranjab Caravanserai and desert specially at that moonlit night, to Mount Nashalj and the night we danced around fire at the peak saturated with the late teenage mystical affection, to my parents' orchard with its millions of stars above and small fire beside hosting our weird talks till dawn, to old Chinvat Bridge in Tiran that patiently listened to our overnight poem-reciting with the sounds of wolves at the background, and to all the people in my life who added a brick to the wall of my being. I am specially thankful to Sun who warmed my heart by her constant and sincere shine. Without all these, *me* wouldn't be as is now; neither would be this research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DA	Discourse Analysis
RT	Relevance Theory
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TT	Target Text

**PENDEKATAN TEORI-RELEVEN DALAM ANALISIS FONESTEMA
DALAM NOVEL PILIHAN BAHASA INGGERIS DAN TERJEMAHANNYA
KE DALAM BAHASA PARSI**

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini mengkaji fonestema di dalam novel Inggeris dan penterjemahannya ke bahasa Parsi mengikut sudut pandangan Teori Relevan. Fonostema adalah segmen submoformik yang memperlihatkan sifat berkaitan, yang mana adalah sama atau berbeza dengan maksud rambang pada perkataan mana ia muncul. Sasaran fonostema di dalam kajian ini adalah /gl/ bermaksud 'light' di dalam perkataan seperti 'glitter'. Disebabkan fonostema sangat jarang dikaji dalam konteks novel dan juga jarang dalam konteks penterjemahannya, fokus utama kajian ini adalah fonostema dalam novel Inggeris dan bagaimana ia diterjemahkan ke bahasa Parsi. Data kajian ini dikumpul daripada tiga novel Charles Dickens terutamanya 'A Christmas Carol', 'Great Expectations', dan 'Oliver Twist'. Untuk analisis data, pendapat utama Teori Relevan, iaitu 'usaha pemprosesan' dan 'kesan kontekstual' diguna pakai untuk menerangkan bagaimana fonostema berfungsi di dalam novel dan bagaimana ia diterjemahkan kepada bahasa Parsi. Untuk memenuhi objektif kajian ini, metodologi kajian kualitatif digunakan khususnya dengan tiga langkah pengumpulan dan analisa mengikut teori asas. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahawa Teori Relevan memberi penerangan mantap berkaitan fonostema untuk kedua-dua Teks Sumber dan Teks Sasaran, dan juga proses penterjemahannya. Hasil keputusan juga memberikan pemahaman baru dalam fenomena fonostema dalam teks sastera, terutamanya novel, dan teknik penterjemahan praktikal yang boleh meningkatkan penghargaan nilai seni teks sastera dan penterjemahannya ke dalam Teks Sasaran.

A RELEVANCE-THEORETIC APPROACH TO THE ANALYSIS OF PHONESTHEMES IN SELECTED ENGLISH NOVELS AND THEIR TRANSLATION INTO PERSIAN

ABSTRACT

The present research studies phonesthemes in English novels and their translation into Persian from Relevance Theory point of view. Phonesthemes are submorphemic segments that bear associated attributes which are same or different than the arbitrary meaning of the word they appear in. The target phonestheme in the present study is /gl/ meaning ‘light’ in words such as ‘glitter’. Since phonesthemes have been studied rarely in the context of novels and seldom in the context of translating novels, the main focus of this study is phonesthemes in English novels and how they are translated into Persian. The data of this study are collected from three novels of Charles Dickens namely ‘A Christmas Carol’, ‘Great Expectations’, and ‘Oliver Twist’. In analyzing data, the main notions of Relevance Theory i.e. ‘processing effort’ and ‘contextual effects’ are applied to describe how phonesthemes function in novels and how they are translated into Persian. In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, a qualitative research method is adopted specifically with the three steps of data collection and analysis provided by Grounded Theory. The results of the analysis of the data demonstrated that Relevance Theory provides a sound description of the phonesthemes both in Source Texts and Target Texts as well as the process of translation. The results also provide a novel insight into the phenomenon of phonesthemes in literary texts, especially novels, and practical techniques of translating them that can enhance the appreciation of artistic values in literary texts and their recreation in Target Texts.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Any of the several instances of human communication, performed via any mode, can be approached and described in a variety of ways depending on the theoretical framework adopted. Literature is considered as one of the instances and modes of human communication. Although the process of conveying and receiving meaning in written mode is to some extent different from the oral mode, it entails the basic characteristics of human communication. The meaning conveyed through literary works, like in any other mode, is in *almost* all cases arbitrary; *almost* because a small set of meaning is naturally motivated via forms which naturally suggest the meaning. In this type of meaning, the ‘phones’ have characteristics that symbolically convey meaning. From different types of sound symbolism, phonesthemes, the non-arbitrary relations between sound and meaning (for example ‘*gl*’ meaning light and vision in words glitter, glisten, etc.), have received the least attention of the academia and they still include intact aspects that need more proper investigation and analysis. Phonesthemes have been studied in cases focusing on different literary genres. However, due to their nature and less density of phonesthemes in them, some genres, specifically novels, have been rarely dealt with with phonesthemes as the center of focus. This rareness is even more visible when we narrow down our focus to translation of novels.

There are several motivating reasons behind selection of phonesthemes as the main phenomenon focused on in the present study. The first reason of this selection is the researcher’s personal interest. Since the researcher writes poems in Persian and sometimes in English, he has been always interested in word plays and sound plays in

morphemic level. The second rationale behind this selection is the observed gap in the body of research on sound symbolism with the approach followed in the present research. Little work is done on phonesthemes in novels, especially when it comes to their translation.

Phonesthemes in novels and their translations can be approached based on different theoretical frameworks. One of the theories of human communication that has repeatedly proved to be explanatorily and descriptively strong is Relevance Theory (referred to as RT in the present study) whose main notions and concepts are completely pertinent to the study of phonesthemes as a mode of human communication. A general search considering the available literature showed no research study on phonesthemes in novels and their translations from RT point of view.

In this chapter the problem on the basis of which this research was embarked on is dealt with first. Then, the next section will discuss the purpose of conducting the research which is mainly on the basis of the gap to be filled in the study at hand. Section 1.4 is a discussion on the significance of the study and how it contributes to the body of knowledge and the quality of literary translation. The next sections are devoted to elaboration of the questions the present research intends to answer and the hypotheses presupposed. After the discussions on the limitations of the study and presentation of the operational definitions, this chapter will be closed with a general overview of the format of the present thesis and its different chapters and subsections.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In order for any research study to be valuable and academically acceptable, it needs to address and fill a gap in the body of knowledge and /or provide a deeper understanding of a phenomenon which may in future facilitate provision of solutions to the problems

related to the phenomenon studied. Properly detecting an actual gap is impossible without a thorough review of the research studies conducted on the same or similar areas. The present study will review the existing literature and will report it in details in chapter 2 below.

As briefly mentioned above, majority of the meaning at work in human language is conveyed arbitrarily i.e. without a direct relationship between the sound and the meaning. This statement is the starting point of many studies on sound symbolism (e.g. Ohala (1997), Sapir (1929), and Nuckolls (1999)). Such a starting point continues with an emphasis on the fact that existence of such majority of arbitrary meaning does not entail that the minor set of symbolic meaning should be neglected. This minor set has been dealt with for a long time and it is traced back to Plato's time (Ohala (1997), Hinton et. al. (2006), and Perniss et. al. (2010)). Several typologies of sound symbolic meaning have been proposed in different studies among which the one proposed by Hinton et. al. (2006) is adopted here. This typology will be discussed in details in section 2.4.2(b) below. From the 3 types of sound symbolism, in the focus of present study is on phonesthemes. Little research is conducted on phonesthemes in novels, especially when it comes to their translation.

According to Wilson and Sperber (2004), RT was originally developed as an attempt to work out in detail the inferential model of communication proposed by Grice (1957) which was itself a development and revision of the traditional code model. The foundation of this theory is Grice's (1957) claim that most of human communication, in both verbal and non-verbal modes, works based on expression of intentions by the addresser and recognition of those intentions by the addressee. RT is based on two principles of relevance: the communicative principle and the cognitive one. The communicative principle states that in each act of communication, the

produced utterance stimulates expectations of optimal relevance and based on the cognitive principle, what is tied basically to human cognition is maximization of relevance (Wilson and Sperber, 2004). Two of the main notions fundamental to RT are processing effort and contextual effect. Briefly speaking, contextual effects are referred to as positive cognitive effects in Wilson and Sperber (2004) and they are defined as “a worthwhile difference to the individual’s representation of the world” (Wilson and Sperber, 2004, p. 251). Processing effort, on the other hand, is the amount of the effort demanded in the process of acquiring new information and bringing about other types of contextual effects or in other words, the certain amount of energy expenditure involved in mental processes whose accomplishment demands energy (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). RT has been applied in variety of areas directly and indirectly related to human languages. A detailed review of the works on the areas related to the scope of the present study is presented in section 2.3.4(b) below. Two of the main theoretical frameworks of the study at hand which have been approached based on considerations of RT are translation and sound symbolism which are reviewed respectively in sections 2.3.4(c) and 2.4.3(e) below. However, a search in the latest update (13th December 2018) of Relevance Theory Online Bibliographic Service, the most comprehensive one for RT (available at <http://personal.ua.es/francisco.yus/rt.html>), reveals that there is not even one case of study on any type of sound symbolism in this list. There are few RT-based studies (e.g. Meinard (2015) and Sasamoto (2017a)) on some types of sound symbolism, especially onomatopoeia, but searching generally throughout the literature revealed that there are no studies available on RT-based analysis of phonesthemes in literary works and their translation.

As demonstrated in the brief review of the literature presented above, the studies that adopted RT to describe and explain linguistic phenomena and the variety of the areas this theory is applied in proves that it is a strong theory, both descriptively and explanatorily. However, a comprehensive search on the titles of the studies done based on RT and a review of the Relevance Theory Online Bibliographic Service (introduced above) demonstrates that it has been applied seldom to analysis of phonesthemes, rarely to the study of phonesthemes in the case of novels, and almost never to translation of phonesthemes in English novels to Persian.

Even a simple glance at the Persian translations of English novels and the way phonesthemes are treated makes one hypothesize that translators of such novels are not properly aware of the existence and importance of phonesthemes in literary works, especially novels. This lack of awareness may result in improper translation of phonesthemes and absence of this important component of the original work in the translation. This problem can be approached from different points of view. As discussed above, and will be elaborated below, considering the way RT has been applied in directly and indirectly related areas demonstrates that this theory is one of the strongest theories that can firstly provide us with a deep insight into the problem at hand and secondly equip translators with efficient tools for analyzing and understanding the text and the embedded phonesthemes and provide them with practically efficient techniques for translating them.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Previous section provided a brief review of the literature regarding the main theoretical frameworks and central concepts of the study at hand. As discussed, there is a gap in the literature i.e. a Relevance-theoretic account of the phonesthemes in English

novels and their translation in/to Persian. Accordingly, to fill the gap observed and contribute to the body of knowledge and enhance the quality of literary translation through providing translators with tools for exegesis and techniques for translating phonesthemes, the researcher embarked on the present research. Accordingly, the design of the present study and the respective methodology are in line with the objectives of the study. The design and the methods adopted in the study at hand are presented in details in chapter 3 below. The purpose of selecting novels as the sources of data was providing a sound analysis of them based on RT to present a clearer image of phonesthemes in novels and setting an example of RT-based analysis for translators.

The following sections deal with the significance of conducting this study and the questions it tries to answer.

1.4 Significance of the Study

In order to be valid and valuable, any study needs to be significantly important in one sense or the other in regard to the context it is done and received. This part will be a discussion of the significance of the study at hand concerning both theoretical aspects and practical ones.

Theoretically speaking, regarding the observed and assumed gap in the body of knowledge, the present study will firstly provide a relatively sound awareness of the existence of phonesthemes in literary texts, especially novels. This awareness is of great importance since phonesthemes are one of the most artistic aspects of the literary texts, especially the valued prose, which have been ignored and neglected. An RT-based approach to a novel with phonesthemes in mind will provide a deeper understanding of the text. This understanding provides a novel approach from which literary critics, translation studies experts, and translators will benefit. This can open

new horizons in the world view of the translators as well. In addition to this contribution to the body of theoretical knowledge, the resulting awareness of the researchers and translators will probably result in practical contributions discussed below.

The present research study and the resulting findings and guidelines can be of great practical importance in variety of ways. The first and the main importance of conducting the study at hand is providing translators with techniques of translating phonesthemes. As mentioned above, phonesthemes are one of artistic aspects of literary prose which has been in most cases, at least in translation from English to Persian, neglected. This new insight and guideline can in turn improve the quality of the translation of novels both as a process and product. The other practical importance of the results of the study at hand is the implications it has for translation quality assessment which includes both the self-assessment by the translators and evaluations done by translation and literary critics and the ones by translation agencies and publishers. These issues will be dealt with in more details below under the implications of the study at hand.

1.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Below is a list of the research questions the study at hand intends to answer. The questions Q1 to Q3 below will be the basis for the design of the study, selection of the sources of data, and the methods of collecting and analyzing the data.

Q1: How does RT describe phonesthemes and their interpretation in English novels and their Persian translations (as products)?

Q2: How does RT describe the translation of phonesthemes used in English novels into Persian (as a process)?

Q3: How can RT help translators analyze and translate phonesthemes from English to Persian by adopting the most practical techniques?

Correspondent to the questions above are the hypotheses H1 to H3 below the testing of which is the intention of the present research.

H1: RT can provide a relatively solid description of phonesthemes and their interpretation in English novels and their Persian translations (as products).

H2: RT can provide a relatively solid description of the translation of phonesthemes used in English novels into Persian (as a process).

H3: RT can help translators analyze and translate phonesthemes from English to Persian and provide them with practical techniques of translating phonesthemes.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Since no study can be exhaustive and all-inclusive, clarifying the limitations of the study and the scope it is bounded to is necessary. The limitations of the present research can be discussed in terms of the phonesthemes, the languages under study, and the genre focused on.

The first limitation of the study at hand is in regard to phonesthemes which is the main focus of the present study. As will be discussed in details in sections 2.4.2(b) and 2.4.3 below, from all types of sound symbolism, the present study investigates only phonesthemes and how they are manifested, perceived, and interpreted in English novels and their translations in/to Persian. As mentioned above, phonesthemes have received the least attention of the academia and they still include intact aspects that need more proper investigation and analysis.

Phonesthemes possess a notable deal of universality and different languages enjoy more or less levels of their richness and density. From all the language pairs, the

present research aims at English, as the source language, and Persian, as the target language. Examples from other languages may be provided in supporting the arguments, but the main focus will be this pair.

The other limitation of the study at hand is related to the source of data collection which is English novels among all genres. Although novel is one of the least likely genres for phonesthemes to appear in, this appearance is not unlikely. In addition, being sensitive to sound symbolism in this genre makes translators indeed more sensitive to genres richer in phonesthemes, such as poetry. In this regard, as well, this study may refer to some examples from other genres, especially poetry, but still the main scope of the study will be novel.

Another limitation of the scope of the present study is related to the process of translation from which the only aspect that will be focused on is the techniques of translation adopted; the cognitive process of ST analysis and translation of it to TT will not be studied. Cognitive aspects of translating phonesthemes will be suggested for further research.

Another limitation of scope regarding translation process is related to the assessment of the quality of translation. The study at hand does not intend to investigate the level of success of the translators in rendering phonesthemes and the quality of the product. As mentioned, the intention is merely investigating if the phonesthemes are translated or not and presenting a description of the process of translating them.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

In this section, the operational definitions of the key terms of the study at hand are presented.

1.7.1 Relevance Theory (RT)

RT is an attempt to work out in detail the inferential model of communication proposed by Grice (1957) which was itself a development and revision of the traditional code model. RT is based on two principles of relevance: the communicative principle and the cognitive one. In the present study, the relevance of a word or phrase is considered specifically by the contributions of the phonestheme to the contextual effects and processing effort.

1.7.2 Contextual Effects

Wilson and Sperber (2004) defined this term as “a worthwhile difference to the individual’s representation of the world” (p. 251). In the study at hand, such representations of the word are specifically the weak implicatures implied by the phonestheme in the context that result in enhancement of the relevance.

1.7.3 Processing Effort

The certain amount of energy expenditure involved in mental processes whose accomplishment demands energy (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). To be specific, in the present research, such processes are the ones carried on to access encyclopedic information.

1.7.4 Sound Symbolism

According to Hinton et. al. (2006) “sound symbolism is the direct linkage between sound and meaning.” (p. 1)

1.7.5 Phonesthemes

Bergen (2004, p. 3) defines phonesthemes as “frequent sound-meaning pairings, which cannot be defined entirely in terms of contrast”. Phonesthemes in the present study are specifically the submorphemic segments that bear associated attributes which can be the same as the containing word or different than it.

1.7.6 Novel

Abrams and Harpham define novel as an extended work of fiction which is written in prose. Although the findings of the research at hand can be generalized and attributed to all types of novel (in some sense to the whole body of literature), novel in this study will be specifically Charles Dickens' novels 'A Christmas Carole', 'Great Expectations', and 'Oliver Twist'.

1.8 Outline of the Thesis

All of the steps of research conduction mentioned above will be reported in details throughout the present thesis. The present chapter provided an overview of the basis of the study including the problem, the purpose and significance of the study, the research questions and hypotheses and the limitations and operational definitions of the key terms. Chapter 2 will be a detailed review of the literature to find out the existing gap in the body of research. In chapter 3, the methodology applied in conducting the study at hand will be presented. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and a discussion on them. In chapter 5, the conclusions of the study will be reported.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will be a review of the fundamental concepts of major theoretical frameworks applied in this study specifically Relevance Theory (RT) and sound symbolic meaning.

Generally, any theory, theoretical framework, or even a simple concept emerges and develops in the first step as a kind of response to a prior theory or theories of the same or related fields of study and in the next step, as an attempt to handle the drawbacks of its ancestors and in another further step, probably as a means of providing more comprehensive and less faulty frameworks to be applied in related areas. According to Flesch (1951), any concept can be traced back in the history since it had a beginning before it appears in someone's brain as a patterned nerve cell.

In regard to RT, as the main theoretical framework of this study, the present study shall review the issues related to it by tracing its development through the steps mentioned above. In doing so, section 2.2 is devoted to the ancestors of RT, namely code model and inferential model. For the case of each model, the basic notions, the problems and shortcomings, and the proposed solutions shall be reviewed from different researchers' and scholars' point of view.

In section 2.3, a range of general to very specific issues related to RT shall be dealt with. Firstly, the basic theoretical notions will be elaborated and then the theoretical approaches and reactions of the scholars to this theory shall be reviewed. Since each theory has its own problems, in section 2.3.3, the perceived problematic issues of RT and the proposed solutions shall be taken into consideration. Sections

2.3.4 is allocated to the applications of RT in different areas especially in translation of the languages and genres which shall be focused on in this study.

In section 2.4, firstly, some fundamental notions of phonology, especially the prevailing notion of arbitrary nature of sounds of language will be discussed. Then, the aim will be shifted toward the less arbitrary face of sounds of language i.e. iconicity of them. Following the introduction of sound symbolism, a typology of it will be presented and from the main types of sound symbolism, phonesthemes will be introduced and elaborated in section 2.4.3 below. The next section will narrow down my review to phonesthemes in English, in literature (both poetry and prose), in translation, and in Persian (as the TT studied in this thesis). The final part will present a review of RT-based studies on phonology and phonological meaning.

2.2 Ancestors of RT and Their Shortcomings

As mentioned above, each new theory is developed on the foundation of a series of theories and concepts from which it inherits some basic notions and to which it adds through proposing solution to the problems identified by developer(s) of the new theory and other researchers. RT, as stated by the developers of it, Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986; 2004), is in one sense development of Paul Grice's main claim i.e. human communication is essentially expression and recognition of intentions. Grice's main claim, which is based on an inferential model proposed by him, is itself kind of response to theoretical and explanatory shortcomings of the classical approach to communication known as code model. This section shall investigate firstly, the basic notions of the code model briefly, secondly, the problems and issues related to the code model and the solutions proposed for them, thirdly, how inferential model of communication deals with such problems, and finally, the problems of the inferential

model in specific and related ideas of Grice in general, as well as the responses to and solutions proposed for them.

2.2.1 Code Model

From Aristotle's time to modern semioticians', the attempts to looking for and developing an all-inclusive theory of communication were all based on the code model. As the title suggests, this model deals with the process of encoding and decoding messages.

2.2.1(a) Basic Notions of Code Model

In a widely quoted diagram, Shannon (1948) illustrated the whole process of general communication through which a message is produced in an information source, transmitted as a signal into the environment, affected by the noise sources, received as a signal by the receiver, and finally duplicated as a message in the destination.

This code-based framework has been generalized and adapted in many non-language areas. Harrison (1989) studied the way non-verbal codes complement linguistic codes. Some researchers such as Leach (1976) even extended the scope of codes to the whole culture and claimed that understanding human culture-related patterns can be achieved through following the code-based organization of their elements.

According to Blackburn(2007), this code based approach, which appeared in linguistics around mid-1950s, was first labeled as "code model" by Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Wilson and Sperber (2004). This model is a system of allocating messages to signals which enables the two parties communicate with each other. A *message* is the representation which is internal to the communicating devices of the

both parties and *Signal* is the modification made outside the devices in the environment which is produced by one party and is recognized and received by the other. According to this view, meanings are not transferred; they exist in minds and it is the signals which are transferred.

As stated in Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Wilson and Sperber (2004), the success of an act of communication, in the sense described above, depends on the health of the two devices and identity of the codes at both ends. Sperber and Wilson (1986) concentrated on the specific issue of human communication and in a diagram, illustrated in figure 2.1, showed the way encoding and decoding processes work in the specific case of human verbal communication.

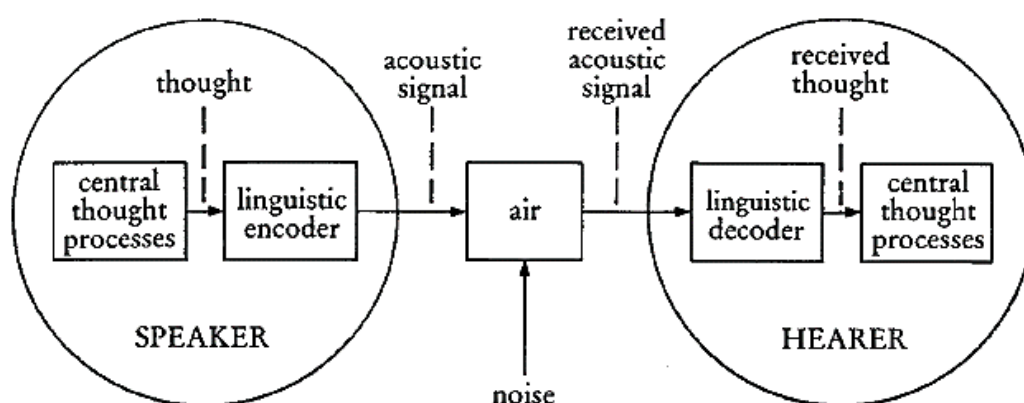


Figure 2.1 Code-based verbal communication

As illustrated in figure 2.1, in the case of human verbal communication, the information *source* and destination are central thought processes; language faculty of mind plays the role of *encoder* and *decoder*; thoughts are transmitted as *messages*; and the *environment* is the air through which the acoustic *signals* are transferred. In such a system, languages are codes and codes associate sounds to thoughts.

The idea that linguistic communication is achieved through association of thoughts and codes is so much referred to and so much applied in the literature of

language and human communication areas that apparently it has been taken for granted as a fact or an axiom. However, according to Sperber and Wilson (1986), Gutt (1992), and many other followers of Grice (including Neale (1992)), code model is merely a hypothesis which has its own strengths and weaknesses. The strength of this model is its explanatory capacity. In fact, it seems to be a straightforward explanation for the success of utterances in conveying thoughts. This, as the main merit of the code model, is quite well-known. However, there are a number of demerits with this model which are relatively less known. In the following section, some of these shortcomings which are more relevant to the scope of this study shall be dealt with.

2.2.1(b) Problems and Shortcomings

As mentioned above, the crucial explanatory role played by the code model is, in fact, not a fact. It is a hypothesis that naturally has its own demerits and shortcomings. The main defect of this model, as elaborated in Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Wilson and Sperber (2004), is that it is *descriptively* weak. This is concluded from the plausible assumption that “comprehension involves more than the decoding of linguistic signals.” (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, p. 6). Although in semiotics (as Peirce calls it), or semiology (as Saussure and his followers name it), it is considered as an axiom that existence of underlying codes is the only way we can explain the process of all modes of communication including the linguistic one (as in Vygotsky (1962), Saussure (1974), and Leach (1976)), this model has faced an “intellectual bankruptcy” (Sperber and Wilson, 1986) and its theoretical framework failed to be productive and sound (Kreß, 2011).

In spite of Saussure’s (1974) expectation that the laws developed in semiology will be widely applied in linguistics, this model was taken enthusiastically only in the

few decades when *structuralism* was the dominant approach in language studies; no significant law was discovered based on this framework (Sperber and Wilson (1986); Blackburn (2007)).

After the structuralism era, the next turning point in linguistics was Chomsky's publication of *Syntactic Structures*. This new movement, referred to as *generative grammar*, was by no means dependent or based on semiotics (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). However, there are a number of problems with this approach as well. This new grammar, which pairs phonetic representations of sentences with the semantic ones, only describes and demonstrates purely linguistic aspects of the utterances and does not account for the non-linguistic context of an utterance. Fawcett (1998), in his study of the role of presuppositions in translation, argues that it is not possible to deal with presuppositions in absolutely linguistic terms and considering a non-linguistic world knowledge, generally referred to as context, seems necessary in this regard. He quotes Levinson (1983) to claim that analyzing presuppositions purely linguistically "will seem narrow and disappointing to many people" (Fawcett, 1998, p. 115). The problem of context, which is referred to in Kreß (2011) as the main problem of the code model, is that this model does not account for the role of context in working out the intended meaning of the utterances. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), a specific sentence can be shared by a number of utterances each of which conveys different linguistic as well as non-linguistic properties (those related to context, both linguistic and physical) which were left unexplained in the code model and later in code-based generative grammar. Grammar can only predict the possibilities; how the hearer narrows down his choices to the intended one should be investigated in an appropriate theory of utterance interpretation.

A central problems of code-based account of communication arises from the assumption of common knowledge (as referred to by Lewis (1969)), or mutual knowledge (as referred to by Schiffer (1972)). A number of the frameworks with this attitude base their assumption even on the etymological meaning of the term communication. Harrison (1989), for instance, starts its discussion by referring to the fact that the English word “communication” is from the Latin root *communis* which means common. This assumption of commonality is problematic in some senses. Briefly speaking, “there is no indication that any particular striving after mutual knowledge goes on” between the parties involved in the process of communication and “even if they try to restrict themselves to what is mutually known, there is no guarantee that they will succeed.” (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, pp. 18-19). In other words, the assumption of shared knowledge is too strong and too determinate to be compatible with the indeterminate nature of human cognitive processes involved in the very act of communication. In fact, it is believed by the semioticians that the code model is a failsafe model on the basis of which successful communication is guaranteed unless that there is a noise in the communication environment or the code mechanism was not implemented properly. However, since the process of communication is highly likely to be risky, existence of such a failsafe algorithm is rejected. The alternative weaker and more plausible proposition is “mutual manifestness” which shall be explained in detail in section 3.1.6 below.

One of the other predictions of Saussure (1974) which motivated literary theorist such as Barthes to approach cultural and artistic issues from semiotics point of view was that rites and customs can be studied as signs i.e. based on the laws of semiology. Such attempts, also, did not succeed in discovering a system of codes

which facilitate the process of communicating more than the linguistic meaning in literary works.

As the unique characteristics of language have been revealed more and more, it has been consequently demonstrated that application of general rules governing the signs does not seem tenable in the case of human language and human communication with their own unique features (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). In the next section, a number of solutions which were proposed regarding the problems faced by the code model shall be presented.

2.2.1(c) Proposed Solutions

In justifying the code model, it is proposed that an extra layer of *pragmatic decoding* should be added to the conventional linguistic level. In this regard, it is held as a fact that pragmatics, like semantics and phonology, is a code-like device whose rules of interpretation can accompany the grammar rules in the process of comprehension. It is true that there are some pragmatic rules, like those of reference determination, but there are numerous aspects of utterance interpretation that cannot be approached so straightforwardly. For instance, even in the apparently simple case of person deixis, such elementary rules are not always applicable and as proposed in some works of modern pragmatists such as Yule (1996), in cases like that, inference is the only legitimate substitution for the code-based rules, or at least the vital complementary explanation.

One of the other problems of code-based approach, referred to above in 2.2.1(b), is the problem of shared knowledge. An explanation, proposed by semioticians themselves, in dealing with the problem of lack of identity of representations between the two parties, the code-based communication designed and

intended to guarantee, is that since generative grammar, as the best model of human language, associates the phonetic representations to semantic ones of the sentences, we can conclude that code model can be applied to verbal communication as an explanation of semantic-phonetic pairings. This argument is invalid based on the fact that although language is a system of codes which associates phonetic and semantic representations in the sentence level, there is a significant gap between the semantic representations of *sentences* and the actual thoughts conveyed through *utterances* (Sperber and Wilson, 1986; Wilson and Sperber 2004; Gutt, 1992; Blackburn, 2007).

The followers of the code model and semiotics strongly claim that, other than the code model, there is no alternative explanation of how communication is achieved. This claim is also unfounded because communication can be properly investigated and described as inferential recognition of addresser's intentions. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986) the inferential approach to communication can be developed more and can be made explanatory. This development and the relevant explanations of the process of communication based on inferential model shall be discussed in the following sections.

2.2.2 Inferential Model

As mentioned in the prior sections, according to the code-based model, communication is a process of encoding and decoding the messages. The alternative model proposed by Grice, apparently as a reaction to the shortcomings of the code model, is the inferential model. In this different model, which is believed to be not completely incompatible with the code model, communication is considered as the process of production and recognition of the intentions of the speaker and the evidence provided by her. In the following sections, I shall deal with the basic notions of this model, the

way it explains and describes the process of communication, its own problems, and finally the responses of the researchers to it.

2.2.2(a) Basic Notions of Inferential Model

Grice (1957) proposed an innovative analysis of the process of communication and comprehension which was based on the intention of the addresser to communicate something and addressee's recognition of this intention. This analysis is believed by Sperber and Wilson (1986) to be the starting point for formulation of an inferential model.

Although many pragmatists still adopt code-based frameworks for the purpose of generally approaching the process of communication, in practice, most of them describe the process of comprehension inferentially. Inferential process includes *a set of* conclusions which are inferred logically from, or in some cases warranted by, *a set of* premises the process starts with. As described in Sperber and Wilson (1986), there are two possible ways information can be conveyed through. One way is providing direct evidence (like the case of coughing to convey that one's caught cold) which cannot be regarded as an instance of communication because each state of affairs can play the role of an evidence for a variety of assumptions, but it does not necessarily communicate them. The other way of conveying information is providing the addressee with evidence of the addresser's intention to convey that piece of information. The former method is possible only for information for which direct evidence can be provided, whereas the latter can be applied for any information. This latter form is an instance of communication which is referred to as *inferential* or *ostensive-inferential* communication (both labels were first utilized in this sense by Sperber and Wilson (1986)). In fact, the main contribution of Grice in this regard was

not suggesting that recognition of intentions is included in the process of communication; It was, instead, demonstrating that recognition of intentions is the sufficient condition for a communication to take place. Take for instance the case of coughing to convey that one has caught cold. In that case, even though no linguistic code is provided, if the intention of the addresser to convey that she is sick is recognized by the addressee, communication is successfully achieved. Regarding the issue of intentions, Grice listed three intentions of the addresser to be recognized by the addressee. These three intentions, as reformulated by Strawson (1964; 1971) are: 1) intention to utter something to produce a response in the audience, 2) intention to have the audience recognize intention (1), and 3) intention to have the audience respond by recognition of intention (1). The issue of intentions shall be discussed in detail in section 2.3.1(c) below.

According to Gutt (1992), inference involves combining what one sees or hears with one's *prior knowledge* and arriving at a conclusion which is impossible to draw from the observation or the prior knowledge alone. In this regard, González Márquez (2000) refers to the fact that a single linguistic expression can convey different speaker meanings and thoughts in different contexts. In this way, he concludes that arriving at the intended meaning requires a process of inference which involves utilization of *extralinguistic information*. This Gutt's *prior knowledge* or González Márquez's *extralinguistic information* is referred to as *context* in Sperber and Wilson (1986) and is defined as "a psychological construct, a subset of hearer's assumptions about the world." (p. 15). They further claim that what actually affects the process of comprehension and interpretation are these assumptions, not the real world state of affairs. Therefore, it can be concluded that any mismatch between the context intended by the addresser and the one used by the addressee may cause misunderstanding

(Sperber and Wilson (1986); Gutt (1992)). Due to a number of reasons, such a mismatching is not probable in verbal communication, but it is in fact what is probable to occur in written works especially in the case of translation where the context related to the text probably changes due to the change of audience, the host culture, and the idiosyncratic cultural backgrounds of the audience. This issue shall be dealt with in section 3.5 below.

Regarding the issue of inference and its innateness to the human cognitive faculty, Gutt (1992) refers to a number of real life instances of inference as witnesses to three facts: first, human beliefs have inferential properties, second, humans frequently utilize inferential processes, and third, inference is used in interpretations of verbal communication as well as other experiences.

In a search for a more efficient framework, it is believed that the code model is subservient to this inferential model (Sperber and Wilson, 1986) and the two frameworks can be amalgamated. The way this combination can provide us with a more powerful model is described in section 2.2.2(c) below. But prior to that, the following section shall deal with the problems of the inferential model and Grice's approach to meaning.

2.2.2(b) Problems and Shortcomings

Although it is now taken for granted, by the majority of scholars (eg. Gutt (1992), Sperber and Wilson (1986), Searl (1969), and Strawson (1964)), that communication involves expression and recognition of intentions, this seemingly straightforward fact had not been a commonsense until Grice presented his paper in 1957. However, this attempt to elaborate the concept in a theoretically acceptable way was not faultless. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), this attempt was in a sense away from

common sense, psychologically implausible, and kind of moving back to the code model. A number of the problems of Grice's framework and ideas related to his inferential model shall be investigated below.

According to Searle (1969), Grice's analysis does not indicate the way speaker's meaning is connected to the linguistic meaning and as it is discussed in this study, all human communication involves encoding and decoding as an objection to Grice's analysis.

The other point where Searle (1969) and Sperber and Wilson (1986) object to the foundations of Grice's analysis is the matter of intentions. What they demonstrate through providing some communication instances is that recognition of all Gricean intentions (mentioned in section 2.2.1 above) is not the necessary condition for a communication to take place. They point out that mere recognition of intention (2) is sufficient for fulfillment of the communication. In fact the audience's response to the speaker's utterance is not a necessary condition. However, this issue seems to be more pertinent to the verbal communication and not applicable to specific cases like literary works the main intention of which is not merely communicating or informing, but instead, stimulating a response in the audience (intention (3) of the Gricean intentions).

Lack of strictness in dealing with the case of overtness in communication is one of the other problems with Grice's account of the communication process. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986) communication should be differentiated from cases of covert transmission of information. This issue was noted and discussed, for the first time, by Strawson (1964) who maintained that true communication should be wholly overt. Since the notion of overtness is to some extent intuitive and vague, it is necessary to make it more clear and precise. This is what I shall try to do in sections 2.2.2(c) and 2.3.1(e) below.