Word Formation Study in Developing Naming Guidelines in the Translation of English Medical Terms Into Persian

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INTRODUCTION

The medical translation is a critical tool for communication between patients and health care professionals. A correct translation finds itself significant when a medical translator, as a skilled mediator, acts accurately and precisely by transferring the messages between a medical professional and a patient. This study is of utmost importance as it aims to find guidelines specific to translation procedures of English medical terms into Persian through word formation processes for linguists and translators. Such guidelines can be employed by translators to find the required equivalents. Persian linguists from the Persian Language and Literature Academy (PLLA) and Medical Science Academy in Iran may also find it beneficial. It may be effective and applicable to information technology and machine translation systems linguistic databases. This study presents the findings obtained by a comparative analysis of the Persian translation equivalents found in "راهنمای کدگذاری بین المللی بیماریها" (Guide to ICD-9-CM in Persian) using the universal naming guidelines and local naming principles in Persian, with regard to their pairs in English selected from medical terms in "ICD-9-CM." The study went through the research questions to investigate the naming characteristics of the English-Persian medical terms with respect to Sager's criteria (1990, p. 88) who provides 12 criteria for the perfect idealized requirement in a serious controlled condition for naming, the PLLA principles, the effectiveness of the adopted TPs in naming, the contribution of the morphosemantic

factors to the naming process and to propose the specific naming parameters for the translation of English-Persian medical terms. The objectives of the study were also in line with the research questions. The analysis focused on Sager's naming criteria, the PLLA naming principles, and the applied translation procedures on the selected English medical terms into Persian equivalents during the translation process.

BACKGROUND

According to Ashuri (1995, p.29), one of the problems for Persian today is the fact that it is a combination of ancient writings and translation works. Scientific language of new works mostly deals with translation together with a lot of English and French words and syntactical structures. He suggests that the word formation is a solution for enriching a language with new concepts.

Beheshti (1999, pp.25-31) explains that one of the most significant contemporary linguistic issues is scientific-technical word formation, which is based on the language grammar and linguistic principles. She discovered that only 50 percent of the total terms studied had the equivalences in Persian; thus, indicating that the translators have not yet shown interest in employing Persian equivalents in their works. Further investigation is crucial to uncover the underlying reason. According to her, equivalent findings or naming of imported medical terms should be based on the features specific to medical terms. This means that medical terms, either in the source language

or the target language, should be studied to find their systematic characteristics and some patterns in order to help the translators or linguists in the word formatting process or naming imported terms in the future. She suggests a study on the patterns based on the term characteristics of morphology, etymology, word formation and translation procedures.

Naseri et al. (2011, pp.41- 47) believe that the present problems of Persian in the areas of science and technology are due to the application of foreign language structures, lack of consistencies in scientific terms, and no consensus among authors and translators. Sadeqi (1993) believes that the solution to these problems is stabilizing the scientific and technical terminology at the basic levels and mass media. He states that the scientific terminologies are not consistent and in some cases, there are various Persian equivalents for a single foreign word in different dictionaries, or there are various foreign equivalents for a single Persian word. As a result, it is claimed that the scientific expressions are inconsistent (Kafi, 1992). According to Beheshti (1999, p.31), a language that borrows a large number of words suffers from negative consequences in the general language and can denigrate the capacity for people to speak their native language (i.e. such as German language in interaction with the English language). The Persian language in interaction with other languages will lose its capabilities and will be converted to a totally different language if it is not protected against the foreign words imported from many languages. Therefore, activating the Persian language capabilities for naming the scientific and non-scientific foreign words is considered as a necessity which should be based on definite principles or patterns.

MAIN FOCUS

It is of the interest of this study to investigate what types of universal naming criteria and principles are followed by the selected data. While naming process should follow the international naming guidelines, the state or local naming principles may not be skipped, as creation of an equivalent in the target language should be lexically and semantically based on the cultural, terminological, linguistic and language factors of the target language.

The naming criteria suggested by Sager (1990, p.88) provides guidance on the creation of terms to be referred to when the translator deals with the difficulties in coining translated terms because of different structures and term formation techniques found in various languages. It remains difficult to generalize on a broad level. Sager provides 12 criteria for the perfect idealized requirement in a serious controlled condition for naming. "Criterion" is abbreviated as "C" in this study and it is followed by a numerical digit showing the number of criterion suggested by Sager. For example, "C1" represents the first criterion Sager has proposed for term formation. These criteria are outlined as below:

C1. The term must relate directly to the concept. It must express the concept clearly. A logical construction is advisable.

C2. The term must be lexically systematic. It must follow an existing lexical pattern and if the words are of foreign origin, a uniform transcription must be preserved.

C3. The term must conform to the general rules of word formation of the language which will also dictate the word order in compounds and phrases.

C4. Term should be capable of providing derivatives.

C5. Terms should not be pleonastic (i.e. no redundant repetition, e.g. combining a foreign word with a native word having the same meaning).

C6. Without sacrificing precision, terms should be concise and not contain unnecessary information.

C7. There should be no synonyms whether absolute, relative or apparent.

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