An Error Analysis of Jordanian MA Students' Translations of Ironic Political Articles in Online News Platforms from Arabic into English

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Abstract

The translation of political irony is difficult due to its dependence on implicit meaning, pragmatic inference, and contextual understanding. Many studies investigated the types of errors committed by translators without accounting for the causes behind these errors. While previous research has examined translation errors in language pairs other than Arabic- English translation, this study focuses on analyzing the errors in English translations of ironic political news articles in Arabic. The data for this research was collected by distributing a questionnaire that contains five extracts of ironic political articles on MA translation students at Yarmouk University. The translated texts were analyzed thoroughly, and errors were identified then categorized based on the three-fold classification of Rahmatillah (2013) and Putri (2019). The study identifies three main types of errors: lexical, semantic, and syntactic. The findings reveal that the most common errors were lexical indicating a continued dependence on literal translation and a lack of awareness of contextual and cultural nuances. As a result, such errors frequently led to meaning distortions, misinterpretations of irony, and a reduction in rhetorical effect. Furthermore, the study found that students prioritize surface-level content while ignoring the communicative goal and cultural subtext encoded in sarcastic discourse. Consequently, the study advises that Jordanian high education institutions overhaul their translation programs, with a focus on irony, political rhetoric, and media discourse. It also recommends for the use of contrastive linguistic analysis when teaching translation, and updating the curricula to include real ironic materials, and hands-on training to improve students' accuracy and contextual awareness while interpreting politically and culturally complicated works.

Keywords: Arabic-English Translation, Political News Article, Error Analysis, News Platforms, Relevance Theory

Introduction

Online news sources have become crucial bridges in the distribution of knowledge across cultural boundaries, raising awareness about social, political and educational issues. As the sources of the fourth authority, they influence public opinion and contribute to the political, economic and social development of societies (Kim, 2023). In particular, electronic newspapers give opportunities for individuals to express their opinions on the issues that concern their lives and have become active producers of news, rather than only acting as messengers of it (Alzyoud, 2022). This has transformed the audience from mere recipients of information to producers of news and its circulation, thereby changing the mechanisms of public debate and reinforcing the role of these online platforms as spaces for debates and social engagement. Also, political satire in online news has become a powerful tool for social and political communication, shaping public opinion and raising awareness about social, cultural, and political issues across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Within this context, translation emerges as a critical mediator of global communication. It serves as means of passing from one people and language to another, making news travel from country to country. Translation, as Isroilova (2024) pointed out, is the very fabric of intercultural understanding in today's globalized world in which isolation is virtually impossible. Translation is not about replacing the words with their equivalents in the source language but conveying to the reader the very spirit, the style, the flavor of the original. Hence, the training of competent translators is essential for ensuring accurate and nuanced communication (Etemadi & Ghanizadeh, 2021; Newmark, 2003).

One area where translation is particularly challenging is the rendering of irony in political news articles. Ironic journalism employs humor, satire, and rhetorical devices to critique politics and society in an engaging manner. Compared to the conventional press, electronic journalism often operates with broader freedom of expression, resulting in diverse forms of satirical writing. In Jordan, for example, ironic articles published on official news portals have become a significant form of commentary, reflecting public opinion on social, cultural, and political issues (Algweirien et al., 2024). This type of journalism not only entertains but also highlights injustices, social hardships, and political shortcomings. As Shafeeq (2006) noted, Jordanian ironic writing plays an important role in easing political constraints, strengthening social awareness, and offering citizens a means of coping with anxiety and frustration.

Despite its cultural and political relevance, translation of ironic journalism presents great challenges. Irony is a very context-based rhetorical device that is often based on cultural references, linguistic playfulness, and subtle tones that may not have their equivalents in the target language. Misinterpretation can result in the meaning of the author being hidden or the satirical effect being undermined. Therefore, the accurate translation of political irony is crucial because mistranslation can obscure the author's intended critique, weaken the rhetorical and satirical effect, and mislead target audiences, affecting both comprehension and political awareness. Previous research on translation errors has been conducted on religious, literary, and scientific texts (Cúc, 2018; Popescu, 2013; Putri, 2019; Rahmatilah, 2013; Silalahi et al., 2018; Wongranu, 2017), with relatively little research conducted on press texts in the Arabic to English context. Despite the prevalence of ironic political journalism, limited research has examined its translation from Arabic to English, particularly in the

context of online news platforms, creating a gap in understanding how translators handle implicit meaning, pragmatic inference, and culturally embedded references.

Hence, the present study addresses this gap by analyzing the translation of ironic political articles from Jordanian online news platforms. Specifically, it investigates the errors committed by M.A. translation students at Yarmouk University when translating irony and proposes strategies for preserving both meaning and ironic style in English renderings. In doing so, this study contributes to the theoretical understanding of irony in translation and provides practical insights for enhancing translator training in contexts where political irony is a significant form of public discourse. Beyond its pedagogical value, the research also sheds light on the complex interplay between language, culture, and politics in translation, highlighting how the sophisticated rendering of irony can shape public perceptions of sociopolitical issues across linguistic boundaries. Theoretically, instead of viewing translation errors as isolated linguistic failures, this research re-conceptualizes translation errors in translated political ironical articles as signs of cultural and pragmatic misalignment. Practically, it provides actionable insights for translator training, curriculum development, and professional practice, highlighting the utility of enhancing contextual awareness and pragmatic competence to ensure the effective and accurate translation of politically and culturally charged satire. Furthermore, the findings of this study are valuable for translation students, instructors, curriculum designers, professional translators, and media practitioners, highlighting the importance of pragmatic awareness, contextual sensitivity, and culturally informed translation practices.

Ironic Political News Articles

Criticizing politics and society in an approachable manner while maintaining a lighthearted and enjoyable tone is the focus of ironic journalism. However, the shape of irony and its substance may vary due to the electronic press's broader definition of freedom than the conventional press. For this study, the researcher will focus on electronic ironic articles generally found on official Jordanian news websites.

Jordanian Arabic expressions found in sarcastic articles in Jordanian newspapers are important linguistic tools that have not been explored enough by linguists, even though they are crucial to the development of satirical writing in Jordanian newspapers, according to Algweirien, Al-Quran, and Al-Khawaldeh (2024). Writings of this type reflect people's opinions on many social, cultural, and political issues. Freedom of speech, media transparency, and the sociopolitical circumstances of Jordanians may all have contributed to the proliferation of these kinds of publications.

The ironic writing style is regarded as one of the most challenging and sardonic writing styles in the writing field (Shamsi, 2004). Delivering eloquent discourse in a humorous and enjoyable environment necessitates manipulating the standards of things like amplification, lengthening, or dwarfism. However, the style of irony differs from writer to writer and from generation to generation.

Newspaper stories that satirize politics and society are seen as a form of black comedy, a literary art form that captures the political and social suffering of the people. By using a variety of rhetorical techniques to convey genuine ideas and paint a clear picture of certain

social and political conditions, the journalist reduces the severity of outrageous political news to increase the suffering of the citizen and the deterioration of his situation. He does this by presenting the article in a way that makes the reader laugh and smile.

Through these pieces, the journalist raises awareness of the facts while also entertaining the audience with his messages and the cause he wishes to promote. The most crucial tenets of Jordanian ironic journalism, according to Shafeeq (2006), are easing social and political constraints, strengthening a person's social standing, and providing a means of overcoming anxiety and fear.

Because they have a significant impact on people's habits, trends, and concerns, as well as on helping decision-makers make the right choices, correct the wrong ones, and improve unfavorable circumstances, these ironic articles in the Jordanian media have gained widespread distribution and acceptance.

According to Alrahbani (2009), ironic articles provide a clearer and more intimate view of reality. Mohammed Tomailleh, Ahmed Hassan al-Zoubi, Kamil Nuseirat, Saleh Arabiyat, Abdul Hadi al-Majali, Walid Alimat, and other sardonic authors have recently become well-known in Jordan. Each of these authors stands out for their use of irony, their ability to choose and use words, their use of beautiful imagery, and their use of various rhetorical devices.

As a result, the main focus of all Jordanian ironic writers and their works is to depict the everyday struggles, financial hardships, and social and political injustices faced by Jordanian citizens. Furthermore, all of these ironic articles from Jordan not only harshly criticize laws and government policies that are ridiculous and hurt Jordanians.

Research Questions
This study specifically addresses the following research questions:
1. What types of translation errors occur in political satirical articles from online news platforms?
2. Which categories of translation errors occur most frequently in the translation of political satirical articles?

Literature Review
Understanding irony involves a degree of complexity, let alone translating ironic utterances from Arabic to English or vice versa (Grimwood, 2021). The problem is to do with the gap between what actually said and what the speaker means to say as implied in the subtext. The onus, therefore, is on the translator to identify the intended meaning and attempt to render the same into the target language. Within this context, the expanding body of translation studies highlights the persistent difficulties faced by student translators and the intricacies of translation training. For example, Cúc (2018) examined Vietnamese EFL students' translations and found that lexical and syntactic errors were most common, primarily caused by interlingual interference and students' limited vocabulary. Similarly, Kafipour and Jahanshahi (2015), in their study of English translations of Islamic texts by Iranian translators, categorized errors into grammatical, lexical, and discourse-level types. They highlighted the influence of limited linguistic and cultural competence on the frequency and nature of these errors. Yousofi (2014) reinforced this point, attributing Iranian student

translators' persistent errors to inadequate training and insufficient awareness of pragmatic equivalence. In a corpus-based study of Romanian EFL learners, Popescu (2013) likewise identified frequent lexical and cohesion-related errors, largely resulting from structural differences between English and Romanian. Similar findings have been reported in other contexts. For example, in the Indonesian context, Silalahi et al. (2018) identified numerous lexical and discourse-level errors in Indonesian student translations of scientific texts. Researchers attributed these errors to students' overreliance on literal translation strategies and inadequate subject knowledge. Gunawan and Rini (2013), focusing on English humorous texts translated into Indonesian, noted pragmatic and cultural inconsistencies that diminished the intended humorous effect and recommended genre-specific training as a corrective measure. Collectively, these studies highlight the multifaceted nature of translation errors and the need for context-sensitive translator training that integrates cultural and pragmatic awareness alongside linguistic skills.

Even when translators are familiar with linguistic theory, they continue to face persistent challenges. According to Newmark (1988), difficulties may involve lexical ambiguities, multiple forms for a single meaning, or one form representing several meanings. Pym (1992) further suggested that errors can arise at linguistic, pragmatic, or cultural levels. Seguinot (1989), cited in Kafipour and Jahanshahi (2015), attributed many errors to misinterpretation of the source text or the inability to produce accurate target texts. Putri (2019) added that translation errors often occur at the surface level grammatical, morphological, semantic, and lexical while deeper challenges emerge from cultural differences between source and target languages. Both Rahmatillah (2013) and Putri (2019) identified insufficient knowledge of linguistic features and translator anxiety as key causes of errors.

Scholars have proposed various classifications of translation errors. Popescu (2013) and Cúc (2018) divided them into linguistic, comprehension, and translation-related errors. Yousofi (2014) argued that ignorance of both source and target language structures, vocabulary, and punctuation often leads to such errors. Kafipour and Jahanshahi (2015) identified linguistic, cultural, and stylistic problems, further distinguishing errors as language, miscellaneous, and rendition-based. Wongranu (2017) classified errors into syntactic, semantic, and miscellaneous categories, while Silalahi et al. (2018) documented lexical, morphological, and syntactic errors in Indonesian translations of scientific texts.

Arabic–English translation presents particular difficulties due to the structural and systemic differences between the two languages. These issues heighten the likelihood of translation errors, which not only alter the meaning of the original text but also distort the intended message and risk misleading readers. Gunawan and Rini (2013) demonstrated this in their study of humorous texts, where mistranslations obscured the comic intent and revealed errors that underscore the need to account for cultural and pragmatic fidelity in addition to linguistic equivalence.

Method
Research Design
This study employed a qualitative content analysis design to examine translation errors in political satire from Arabic into English. A qualitative approach was selected because

the aim was not simply to count errors but to explore their nature, patterns, and implications within the specific rhetorical context of satire. Irony is a highly culture-bound and context-dependent device, relying on implicit meanings, intertextual references, and subtle linguistic cues that do not always have direct equivalents in the target language. A qualitative design was therefore the most suitable means of investigating how these features are interpreted and rendered by student translators. In this way, the design facilitated an in-depth understanding of the translation process beyond surface-level accuracy. The analytical framework was guided by Rahmatillah (2013) and Putri (2019), who proposed a widely applied classification of translation errors into three categories: lexical, semantic, and syntactic. This model provided a structured lens through which to identify, describe, and interpret the errors made in student translations of satirical texts. The following is a summary of the three primary types of errors:
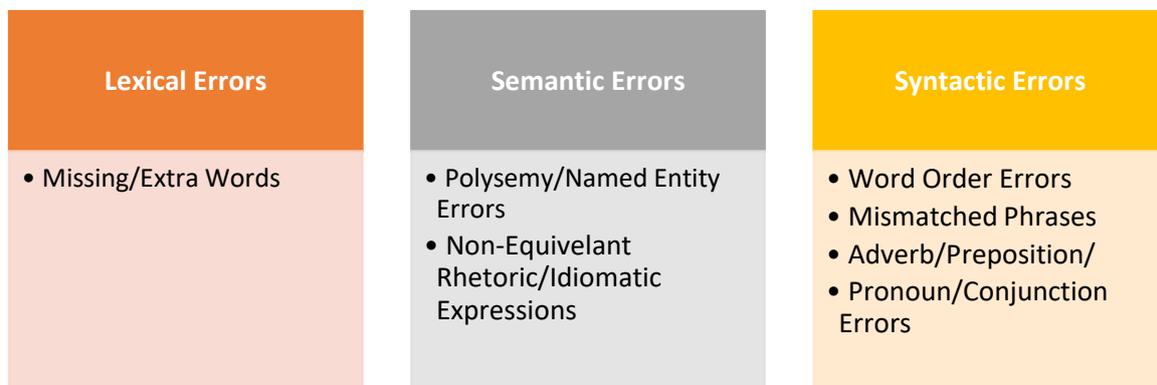
Lexical Errors	Semantic Errors	Syntactic Errors
• Missing/Extra Words	• Polysemy/Named Entity Errors • Non-Equivelant Rhetoric/Idiomatic Expressions	• Word Order Errors • Mismatched Phrases • Adverb/Preposition/ • Pronoun/Conjunction Errors

Figure 1 Main types of Errors in Translation

Data Collection

The data for this study were drawn from political satirical articles published on widely read Jordanian online news platforms, which are recognized for their frequent use of irony in covering social and political issues. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the chosen articles contained a sufficient density of ironic expressions and culturally embedded references that would present real challenges for translation. From these articles, ironic sentences were identified and extracted to form the source dataset. The extracted sentences were then assigned to M.A. translation students at Yarmouk University for translation into English. This population was deliberately selected because student translators represent a key stage in professional development where error patterns are particularly visible and pedagogically instructive. Their translations thus provided authentic data for tracing how satire is handled in practice, what errors recur most frequently, and what underlying linguistic or cultural gaps these errors reflect. Collecting data from student work also ensured that the findings would have direct pedagogical relevance for translator training programs.

Satire was chosen as the focus of this investigation because it poses unique and complex challenges for translators compared to other genres. Unlike straightforward informational texts, satire relies heavily on irony, parody, and cultural allusion devices that are deeply tied to the source culture and often lack direct equivalence in the target language. Political satire, in particular, makes frequent use of wordplay, double meanings, and implicit criticism of social or governmental figures, making it especially prone to mistranslation.

Studying this genre therefore provides sharper insights into the limits of student translators' interpretive skills and highlights areas where additional training is needed.

Data Analysis

The analysis was carried out in several stages. First, the translated texts were examined systematically, and all instances of error were identified. Second, these errors were classified according to the tripartite model of Rahmatillah (2013) and Putri (2019):

- **Lexical errors**: cases of inappropriate word choice, omission of essential items, or addition of unnecessary expressions. These errors often reduced or obscured the sarcastic tone of the original and weakened its communicative impact.
- **Semantic errors**: errors of meaning, typically arising from misinterpretations of satire, cultural references, or polysemous expressions. This category also included difficulties in translating idioms and rhetorical devices central to satire, as well as distortions or irrelevant additions that disrupted the intended message.
- **Syntactic errors**: structural problems reflecting weaknesses in grammar and coherence, such as faulty word order, inaccurate phrasal constructions, or misuse/omission of grammatical items (e.g., prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions). These errors disrupted not only accuracy but also the satirical rhythm of the text.

The process of analysis was iterative. Initial coding of errors was carried out manually by the three researchers independently, after which errors were grouped into categories. To strengthen reliability, two translation experts were invited to review the classifications independently. Discrepancies in categorization were discussed collectively among the three researchers and two experts until consensus was achieved. This multi-stage validation process minimized researcher bias and ensured that the analysis was both rigorous and credible.

Results

Answer to Research question One

In this research, research question one seeks to answer "What types of translation errors occur in political satirical articles from online news platforms? In this section, the researchers demonstrate the types of translation errors committed by the respondents in each extract. The results are shown in the following tables:

Extract 1: "السادة أصحاب القرار، تحية طيبة وبعد: قبل أن نعطش أكثر وتتحوّل ألسنتنا إلى ألسنة أجراس، وقبل أن نضطر للوضوء بـ "البيبسي" ، أمامكم عام واحد فقط، إما أن تجرّوا مياه الديسي إلى عمّان، أو أن تجرّوا عمّان إلى مياه الديسي."

Table 1
Translation Errors in Extract 1

Arabic Expression	Transliteration	Intended English	Student Translation	Error Type	Comment
تجرّوا مياه الديسي إلى عمّان	tjrru miah aldiysi 'iilaa emman	bring the Disi waters to Amman	divide the waters	Lexical	Misinterpretation of verb تجرّوا as 'divide.'
للوضوء بالبيبسي	lilwudu' bi albibsi	perform ablution with Pepsi	get baptized by Pepsi	Semantic	Religious nuance and humour misrepresented.
قبل أن نضطر للوضوء	qabl an nadtara lilwudu	before we are forced to perform ablution	before enforced to ablute	Syntactic	Awkward and ungrammatical phrasing.

Extract 2: " في آخر "الناس" سورة قرأت فهلّا .. رسمي اجتماع كل قبل "الفاتحة" تقرأ ألفناك .عبّاس محمود السيد موقف رسم"

Table 2
Translation Errors in Extract 2

Arabic Expression	Transliteration	Intended English	Student Translation	Error Type	Comment
ألفناك تقرأ الفاتحة قبل كل اجتماع رسمي	alifnāka taqraʾ al-Fātiḥa qabl kull ijtimāʿ rasmī	We were accustomed to seeing you read Al-Fatihah before every official meeting	you familiarize us with reading Surah Al-Fatihah	Lexical	Incorrect verb choice; "familiarize" is pragmatically inappropriate and results in an unnatural and misleading expression.
فهلّا قرأت سورة الناس	fa-hallā qaraʾta Sūrat al-Nās	why don't you read Surah Al-Nas	What about checking your residents?	Semantic	Figurative and ironic meaning is completely misinterpreted; the religious reference is mistaken for a literal reference to "people/residents."
في آخر موقف رسمي	fī ākhir mawqif rasmī	in your final official stance/position	Did you last official position?	Syntactic	Ungrammatical sentence structure and missing verb lead to loss of clarity and communicative intent.

Extract 3: ".النفط وعواصف السياسة "مربعانيات" لمواجهة ،الوحيد الملاذ هي فأفريقيا"

Table 3
Translation Errors in Extract 3

Arabic Expression	Transliteration	Intended English	Student Translation	Error Type	Comment
فأفريقيا هي الملاذ الوحيد	fa-Afrīqiyā hiya al-malādh al-waḥīd	Africa is the only refuge	Afriqa is the only destination	Lexical	Misspelled "Africa" and improper synonym choice; "destination" diminishes "refuge"'s protective sense.
مربعانيات السياسة	murabbaʿāniyyāt al-siyāsa	severe political crises	the squares of politics	Semantic	Literal translation fails to convey the metaphorical meaning of murabbaʿāniyyāt as extreme hardship or crisis.
عواصف النفط	ʿawāṣif al-nafṭ	oil crises / oil shocks	fuel wind	Lexical	Inaccurate lexical choice results in a meaningless expression in English.
لمواجهة مربعانيات السياسة وعواصف النفط	li-muwājahat murabbaʿāniyyāt al-siyāsa wa-ʿawāṣif al-nafṭ	to confront severe political and economic crises	Africa is the only resort to confront policy crisis and oil tempest	Syntactic	Awkward sentence structure and inappropriate collocations reduce clarity and idiomaticity.

Extract 4: أحياناً أشعر أن بعض المحللين السياسيين "مطحنة شرايط".. يجترون ما يقال، يطحنون الألوان السياسية السائدة مع "قمصان" النفاق والمزاودة.. "ليحشوا" وسادة الكلام بمادة لا لون لها""والأفكار الرائجة والتوجهات

Table 4
Translation Errors in Extract 4

Arabic Expression	Transliteration	Intended English	Student Translation	Error Type	Comment
مطحنة شرايط	muthīnat sharāyiṭ	Meaningless repetition/mechanical regurgitation	propaganda mill	Semantic	Reinterpreting the metaphor as political manipulation adds connotations (e.g., disseminating false narratives) not in the source text.
يجترون ما يقال	yajtarūna mā yuqāl	they regurgitate what is said	spreading false narratives	Semantic	Figurative meaning of repetition is replaced with an ideologically loaded interpretation,

					distorting the original ironic intent.
ليحشوا وسادة الكلام بمادة لا لون لها	li-yaḥshū wisādat al-kalām bi-māddah lā lawn lahā	to fill speech with meaningless content	—	Semantic	Failure to convey the metaphor of emptiness and redundancy results in loss of irony and evaluative stance.
مطحنة شرايط	muthīnat sharāyiṭ	metaphorical "tape grinder" / repetition machine	foblic grinder	Lexical	Coined or non-existent expression in English; lacks semantic relevance to the original metaphor.
مطحنة شرايط	muthīnat sharāyiṭ	mechanical metaphor of repetition	top mill	Lexical	Inappropriate lexical choice weakens metaphorical clarity and interpretability in the target language.
بعض المحللين السياسيين مطحنة شرايط	baʿḍ al-muḥallilīn al-siyāsiyyīn muthīnat sharāyiṭ	some political analysts are like a tape grinder	some of political analysts is similar to the foblic grinder	Syntactic	Incorrect prepositional structure and subject–verb disagreement disrupt grammatical accuracy and fluency.

"السكّري السياسي يقتلنا وينخر فينا وكل قياساتنا المعتمدة غير صحيحة. اتحدّى أن يخرج واحد ويرينا :Extract 5 الفحص التراكمي للسكري السياسي الذي فيه."

Table 5

Translation Errors in Extract 5

Arabic Expression	Transliteration	Intended English	Student Translation	Error Type	Comment
السكّري السياسي يقتلنا وينخر فينا	alskkry alsiyasiu yaqtuluna wayankhar fina	Political diabetes is killing us and eating away at us	Political sugar is killing us	Lexical	The metaphor السكّري السياسي is misinterpreted as "sugar" instead of "political diabetes," which better explains the chronic political issue. Literal reading undermines metaphor.
الفحص التراكمي للسكري السياسي	alfahs altarakumia lilsukarii alsiyasii	cumulative test of political diabetes	accumulated test of political diabetes	Lexical	The literal translation "accumulated test" misrepresents the metaphorical and medically proper "cumulative test," obscuring it.
السكّري السياسي يقتلنا وينخر فينا	alskkry alsiyasiu yaqtuluna wayankhar fina	Political diabetes is killing us and eating away at us	The disease is eating away at the political situation and affecting the people	Semantic	Altered the metaphor's emphasis from systemic illness to general political instability, reducing the intended evaluative impact of the metaphor.
القياسات المعتمدة والخاطئة	alqiasat almuetamadat walkhatia	all our standardized measurements are incorrect	all our adapted measurements and incorrect	Syntactic	Grammatical issue due to missing verb; incorrect word order and absence of conjunctions lead to unclear meaning and disrupt textual coherence.
القياسات المعتمدة والخاطئة	alqiasat almuetamadat walkhatia	all our standardized measurements are incorrect	all our adapted measurements and incorrect	Syntactic	Repetition emphasizes the structural problem: Arabic original requires connecting verb for completeness; omission affects comprehension and rhetorical effect.

Answer to Research Question Two

Research question two seeks to answer "Which categories of translation errors occur most frequently in the translation of political satire?". The following table shows the frequency of each translation error identified above:

Table 6

The Percentages of Error Types

Type of Error	Percentage of Total Translations (%)
Lexical errors	46.7%
Semantic errors	30%
Syntactic errors	23.3%

The analysis of students' translations reveals a recurrent pattern of errors that can be systematically classified into lexical, semantic, and syntactic categories. Among these, lexical errors are the most dominant, constituting approximately 46.7% of the total identified errors. These errors primarily involve inaccurate lexical selection, inappropriate synonym use, literal renderings of metaphorical expressions, and the production of non-idiomatic or invented terms. In many instances, students relied heavily on surface-level equivalence, which resulted in translations that failed to preserve the intended ironic force or evaluative stance of the source texts.

Semantic errors account for roughly 30% of the total errors and are particularly evident in examples rich in figurative language and culturally embedded irony. These errors stem from misinterpretations of implicit meanings, metaphorical extensions, and satirical intent. Rather than reconstructing the intended pragmatic message, students often produced translations that neutralized irony or introduced unintended meanings, thereby altering the communicative purpose of the original text.

Syntactic errors represent the remaining 23.3% and mainly involve grammatical inaccuracies, awkward sentence constructions, and deviations from standard target-language norms. Although less frequent, these errors significantly affect textual coherence and fluency, reducing the overall quality and readability of the translated texts.

Discussion

Types of Translation Errors in Political Satirical Articles

Three types of translation errors were identified in this research. First, lexical errors which stand for incorrect word choice were identified in many translations of the respondents. For example, when translating the extract " الفاتحة" تقرأ ألفناك .عبّاس محمود السيد respondents committed many lexical رسم موقف آخر في" الناس" سورة قرأت فهلّا رسمي اجتماع كل قبل" involving incorrect word selections that altered the intended meaning or tone. For instance, the phrase "you familiarize us with reading Surah Al Fatihah" (Arabic: " سورة قراءة على تعوّدنا أنت الفاتحة"/"ant tewwdna ealaa qira'at surat alfatiha") demonstrates an incorrect use of the verb "familiarize," which resulted in an awkward and unnatural expression. Another example of lexical errors occurred when translating the extract " مربعانيات" لمواجهة ,الوحيد الملاذ هي فأفريقيا النفط. وعواصف السياسة" , Other examples of where the translation contains lexical errors due to incorrect or awkward word choices are "destination," an inappropriate synonym for "refuge," and "fuel wind" lacks any meaningful sense. Moreover, the error in translating the

expression " مطجنة شرايط " " in the extract ".. مطحنة شرايط" أحياناً أشعر أن بعض المحللين السياسيين
السائدة مع "قمصان" النفاق والمزاودة.. "يجترون ما يقال، يطحنون الألوان السياسية والأفكار الرائجة والتوجهات
This error resulted from newly coined or misused phrases . "ليحشوا" وسادة الكلام بمادة لا لون لها"
that were not suited for the context, in addition to semantic problems. One obvious example
is the term "fabric grinder," which seems to be a typographical or created variant of "public
grinder" a metaphor that does not exist in English and has nothing to do with the original
Arabic idea of شرايط مطحنة/muthinat sharayit ("conditions mill"). Additionally, another
student chose the word "top mill" rather than a more appropriate metaphor like "grinding
machine" or "reel-to-reel machine," making the metaphor less clear. These decisions weaken
the figurative source language's vividness and interpretive clarity. Whereas the incorrect
language choice, which frequently resulted from literal readings that broke the intended
metaphorical tone was the main cause of lexical errors when translating some expressions in
the extract " السكّري السياسي يقتلنا وينخر فينا وكل قياساتنا المعتمدة غير صحيحة. اتحدّى أن يخرج واحد ويرينا
السكّري." Some students, for example, interpreted "الفحص التراكمي للسكري السياسي الذي فيه."
السياسي"/"alskkry alsiyasiu" as "political sugar." However, the more contextually suitable
translation would be "political diabetes," which better conveys the idea of a chronic,
degenerative political ailment. Furthermore, the phrase "التراكمي الفحص"/"alfahs altarakumiu"
was mistranslated as "accumulated test" instead of the poetically and medically appropriate
"cumulative test."

Second, misunderstandings of figurative or culturally ingrained terms were blamed for
semantic errors. A notable example is the rendering of "قبل أن نضطر للوضوء بـ البيبسي"/"qabl 'an
nadtara lilwudu' bi albibsi" as "get baptized by Pepsi," which alters both the humorous intent
and the religious nuance of the original text in the extract :

"السادة أصحاب القرار، تحية طيبة وبعد: قبل أن نعطش أكثر وتتحوّل ألسنتنا إلى ألس أجراس، وقبل أن نضطر"
للوضوء بـ "البيبسي" ، أمامكم عام واحد فقط، إما أن تجرّوا مياه الديسي إلى عمّان، أو أن تجرّوا عمّان إلى مياه الديسي."
 Semantic errors also occurred when the translator was unable to convey the original text's
underlying meaning. An illustrative example is the sentence "What about checking your
residents?" (Arabic: "ما رأيك أن تتحقق من سكانك؟"/"ma rayuk 'an tatahaqaq min sukaanik")a
misinterpretation of the figurative message embedded in the Arabic as in the extract:
السيد محمود عبّاس. ألفناك تقرأ "الفاتحة" قبل كل اجتماع رسمي.. فهلّا قرأت سورة "الناس" في آخر موقف "
رسم"
Also, semantic errors often result from a failure to interpret metaphors correctly, as
demonstrated in the translation. For example, in "Africa is the only refuge to face the squares
of politics and storms of oil," "squares of politics" is a literal and inaccurate translation of
"مربعانيات لسياسة"/"murabaeaniaat lisiasa." As in extract 3.

When translating extract 4, many students were unable to appropriately portray the
figurative meaning that was present in the original text. "Some politicians are just like a
propaganda mill, spreading false narratives to blend political ideologies with deceit," for
example, was how one student interpreted the words. This reflects a misinterpretation of the
Arabic phrase وسادة الكلام بمادة لا لون لها ليحشوا يقال ما يجترون/yuqal liahshuu wisadat alkalam
bimadat la lawn laha ("They say to stuff the pillow of speech with a colorless substance"),
which figuratively refers to meaningless repetition. Instead of expressing this idea, the
student misrepresented the original metaphor by inadvertently adding the meaning of
political manipulation (نشر الروايات الكاذبة/nashar alriwayat alkadhiba, or "spreading false

narratives"). Another student also wrote, "They package them like branded T-shirts" ("ترجمتهم"/"tarjamatuhum mithl qumsan tahmil ealamat tijariatan"), which introduces commercial imagery that is not present in the original message and thereby distorts its tone and intent. In addition, Semantic errors also showed misunderstandings of the underlying meaning. This error specifically occurred when students changed the metaphor's emphasis or lessened its meaning in extract5. The metaphor is changed from an internalized, systemic sickness to a general remark about political instability in one translation, which interpreted the line as "The disease is eating away at the political situation and affecting the people." The original metaphor that compares political dysfunction to a chronic illness would be undermined if this were translated into Arabic as "السياسي السكري"/"المتدهور"/"alwade alsiyasiu almutadahwir" ("The deteriorating political situation").

Third, grammatically erroneous constructions were the source of syntactic problems (23.3%). For example, in extract 1, the phrase "before enforced to ablute" represents an inaccurate translation of "قبل أن نضطر للوضوء"/"qabl an nadtara lilwudu," lacking coherence and grammatical accuracy. Furthermore, when translating extract 2, grammatically incorrect or illogical phrase patterns were identified to have syntactic errors. For example, the translation "Did you last official position?" (Arabic: "هل قمت بموقفك الرسمي الأخير؟"/"hal qumt bimawqifik alrasmii al'akhiri?") is grammatically incorrect and lacks clarity. Also, syntactic errors were also evident in several translations of extract 4, often manifesting as flawed grammatical structures that disrupted fluency and coherence. For example, one student wrote, "Sometimes, I feel that some of political analysts is similar to the fabric grinder." This sentence contains two syntactic inaccuracies: first, the use of "some of political analysts" instead of the correct "some political analysts," and second, the subject-verb disagreement in "analysts is" instead of "analysts are." In Arabic, this reflects a failure to represent the simplicity and clarity of the original phrase: أحياناً أشعر أن بعض المحللين السياسيين مطحنة شرايط/ ahyanaan 'asheur 'ana baed almuhalilin alsiyasiiyn muthanatan sharayit ("Sometimes I feel that some political analysts are just a testament to the quality of the material"). Syntactic errors were also found and usually involved structural problems or grammatical inconsistencies. For example, when translating extract 5, the line "and all our adapted measurements and incorrect," which is grammatically faulty due to the absence of a major verb, serves as an example. Similarly, a number of translations have uncomfortable or unclear expressions due to incorrect word order or missing conjunctions. Similar to this, in Arabic, "والخاطئة المعتمدة القياسات" or "alqiasat almuetamadat walkhatia" (meaning "approved and incorrect measurements") would be incomplete if it were phrased without a connecting verb

The Most Frequent Translation error

From a Relevance Theory perspective, political satire depends heavily on the reader's ability to infer intended meanings through contextual assumptions rather than relying solely on explicit linguistic encoding (Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995). The results above showed that lexical errors were the most frequent type. The predominance of lexical errors in this study can be interpreted as stemming from students' limited ability to select target-language expressions that provide sufficient interpretive cues for recovering ironic intent. In satirical political discourse, lexical choices frequently act as irony triggers; when these triggers are mistranslated or neutralized, optimal relevance is compromised because the target reader expends more cognitive effort without achieving comparable cognitive effects (Kamyanets, 2019). This finding aligns with previous research on irony translation, which demonstrates

that inappropriate lexical selection often results in pragmatic flattening and a loss of evaluative stance (Hirsch, 2012).

Semantic errors further reflect difficulties in pragmatic inference, especially in handling implicatures embedded in religious or cultural references. The failure to convey such implicatures indicates insufficient activation of shared background knowledge, which Relevance Theory identifies as central to meaning construction (Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995). These results support earlier studies showing that student translators frequently struggle with culturally loaded irony due to limited pragmatic competence and insufficient exposure to satirical genres ("Problems in Translating Irony from Arabic into English," n.d.). Consequently, irony translation emerges less as a purely linguistic task and more as an interpretive one, requiring heightened contextual sensitivity (Kamyanets, 2019).

Although syntactic errors were less frequent, their impact on relevance should not be underestimated. Grammatical awkwardness disrupts textual coherence and increases processing effort, thereby weakening the rhetorical force of satire. This observation corroborates previous findings indicating that formal inaccuracies, even when not central to meaning, can hinder the recovery of implied attitudes in evaluative discourse (Abu-Aliaha, 2022).

Conclusion

This study examined the types of translation errors made by Jordanian university students when translating ironical news articles from Arabic into English. The study identified three types of errors; lexical, semantic, and syntactic. The study revealed that as for lexical errors, incorrect word selections that altered the intended meaning or tone, newly coined or misused phrases that were not suited for the context, and literal readings that broke the intended metaphorical tone are the main causes. In terms of semantic errors, misunderstandings of figurative or culturally ingrained terms, the inability of translator to convey the original text's underlying meaning, the failure to interpret metaphors correctly, inability to appropriately portray the figurative meaning that was present in the original text, and changing the metaphor's emphasis or lessening its meaning are the main traced causes for this type of errors. Finally, syntactic errors are a result of grammatically erroneous constructions, illogical phrase patterns, structural problems or grammatical inconsistencies, and uncomfortable or unclear expressions due to incorrect word order or missing conjunctions. This study finds that the underlying causes for these errors. These include deficiencies in students' language skills, a lack of exposure to humorous literature, and a lack of thorough instruction in pragmatic and discourse-level analysis. Future studies should thus concentrate on genre-based translation education, with a focus on the contribution of contextual and cultural awareness to improving translation accuracy, in order to successfully address these issues.

In addition, this research showed that the most frequent error type is lexical errors. The main causes of these mistakes were syntactic interference from the source language, a lack of lexical competence, and a restricted understanding of complex semantic meanings. Furthermore, pupils had significant difficulties deciphering the complex meaning of satire, especially when it was hinted at rather than expressed directly.

It is imperative that translation departments in Jordanian universities update their curricula to incorporate targeted teaching on satire, political rhetoric, and media discourse in order to address the pedagogical implications. The growth of pupils' lexical diversity, syntactic flexibility, and semantic accuracy should be given special attention by curriculum designers. Furthermore, students' ability to comprehend and render complicated texts can be greatly enhanced by combining critical discourse studies, authentic satirical content, and contrastive linguistic analysis. To further close the gap between academic study and professional practice, it is advised to work with qualified translators and participate in actual media translation projects. When taken as a whole, these steps will better equip upcoming translators to confidently and successfully negotiate the language, cultural, and rhetorical complications of translating satire.

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