Designing a framework for analyzing linguistic errors in the national-media news: Providing solutions for challenges

Mahmoud Afrouz[1]

1. Introduction

Media is one of the most influential institutions in a society. News has always been one of the most popular sections of the national media. In this regard, a lot of factors are involved in attracting the audience: the content of the news (in terms of honesty in expression to gain the audience's trust); the time of casting the news (announcing the news before other media); the method of expression (maintaining fluency and accuracy while presenting the news); newscasters' appearance, voice, etc.

The present paper aims at designing a framework for analyzing linguistic errors in the national-media news and examining methods of treatment. The focus was on the morning, noon and evening news of Radio Javan and Radio Iran between December 2020 and August 2021.

The findings of this study can (a) help to improve the quality of radio news programs in Iran; (b) help researchers explore deeply the errors identified in the current paper and investigate ways to overcome the challenges; and (c) assist trainers and curriculum designers in developing specific courses to enhance essential skills of newscasters.

The first step in solving problems is to identify its various dimensions. Research questions include: 1) What are the types and frequency of errors observed in the news of Radio Iran and Radio Javan? In other words, where are the weaknesses and strengths of the newscasters and in which area did they make the most mistakes? 2) Has the gender of the newscaster influenced the "number" and "type" of errors? What were the errors of the newscasters on the two radio networks in terms of their gender? 3) What is the distribution of errors in different news sections? What was the biggest challenge for the newscasters of each section? Has the expertise of the newscasters of certain news sections been effective in reducing the number of errors? 4) In which radio network did the most number of errors occur? How was the distribution of errors on each radio network? 5) Has the time of news broadcast been a significant factor in the frequency of errors? In other words, in which news section most of the errors were occurred: morning, noon or afternoon? 6) Has the total time of news been effective in increasing newscasters' fatigue, and

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[1] Assistant Professor of Translation Studies; Department of English Language and Literature; University of Isfahan; m.afrouz@fgn.ui.ac.ir

consequently increasing the number of errors? 7) How did the newscasters react to various kinds of errors? 8) To what extent has the type of newscasters' reaction to the errors been different? How were the policies of the two radios different? 9) Was the gender of the newscaster an effective factor in the type of reaction to various errors?

2. Materials and methods

Content analysis method and descriptive research design was adopted for the present study. As in qualitative research, saturation and repetition-limit is the criterion of adequacy, after selecting news from December 2020 to August 2021, the information reached saturation limit and due to the occurrence of repeated errors, data collection was stopped. To conduct the research, the following steps were taken consecutively: listening to the live news; tracking the error; marking the time; downloading audio file from Iran-Sada website; transcribing the specific part of the audio file; classifying errors; presenting the data via tables and figures; detecting the frequency of newscasters' errors and the type of their reactions; and finally, providing treatment and recommendations.

The initial framework used was based on the model of Corder (1967) and Mugambi et al. (2016) and included 21 types of errors that fell into 5 categories: grammatical, pragmatic, lexical-semantic, calque and phonological.

3. Results and discussion

Findings revealed that all 21 types of errors occurred in at least one of the two radio networks. The improper connection or disconnection of two consecutive words (with a total of 26%) was the most common error made by newscasters. Phonological (67%) and grammatical (2%) errors had the most and the least frequency, respectively. Also, it was found that male newscasters made 20% fewer mistakes than the females did, while the female newscasters made 66% more pragmatic errors than the males did. Another central finding is that male newscasters are 7% more likely than the females to apologize and self-correct their mistakes; female newscasters, on the other hand, were 10% more likely than males to deliberately neglect the errors (with no apologies or self-correction). Thus, the newscasters' gender plays a pivotal role in the occurrence of these types of reaction. Finally, based on findings, only 5% of all errors were made by sports newscasters, all of which were merely of phonological types. In fact, specializing news domains can reduce the number of errors committed by newscasters.

4. Conclusion

The present study's findings confirmed the results pointed out in Hasani (2005). In fact, phonetic, semantic, and grammatical errors were also observed in national media news. Similarly, the findings of Akbari & Kheirabadi's (2015) study were confirmed; in other words, not using punctuation, especially commas, probably by news writers, might have led to such kinds of errors. The word "probably" was used here since it might have been used by the writers, but could have been ignored by the newscaster.

Finally, the findings of Mugambi et al. (2016) were found to be exactly in line with the findings of the present study, as the five types of errors mentioned by those researchers were also observed in the news broadcasted via the two Islamic Republic of Iran's radio channels. While the two types of "non-linguistic" errors and

"calques" were not found in Mugambi et al. (2016), we addressed them in the present study in order to take a step towards boosting their framework and providing prospective researchers with a more comprehensive error-analysis framework.