



ISSN: 1817-6798 (Print)

Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

available online at: [www.jtuh.org/](http://www.jtuh.org/)
**JTUH**  
 مجلة جامعة تكريت للعلوم الانسانية  
 Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

Nooray Asghar Hameed  
(M.A.Student)

Asst. Prof. Dr. Dunia Tahir Hameed  
College of Education for humanity sciences/  
University of Tikrit

\* Corresponding author: E-mail :  
[Nooray.a.hameed@st.tu.edu.iq](mailto:Nooray.a.hameed@st.tu.edu.iq)

**Keywords:**

Ambiguity ,  
Lexical Ambiguity ,  
Semantic Ambiguity

**ARTICLE INFO****Article history:**

Received 14 Aug. 2022  
Accepted 17 Sept 2022  
Available online 26 May 2023  
E-mail [t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq](mailto:t-jtuh@tu.edu.iq)

©2023 THIS IS AN OPEN ACCESS ARTICLE  
UNDER THE CC BY LICENSE

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities

## Assessing Iraqi University Students' Ability to Interpret Lexical Ambiguity

### ABSTRACT

This research is devoted to study the lexical ambiguity. By definition, ambiguity is a linguistic phenomenon in which a given text has more than one meaning or interpretation. Thus, this study aims for:

1. Assessing Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity at colleges of education/ English department in three universities Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar
2. Finding out the comparison of the students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity at both the recognition and production levels at the three universities: Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar.

The participants were three hundred and seventy-five undergraduate students in the fourth year of study in the Departments of English, Colleges of Education, University of Tikrit, University of Kirkuk, and University of Al-Anbar. The research was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022. The data was gathered by using a diagnostic test to assess students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity. The results of the study revealed that there are statistically significant differences among Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity.

© 2023 JTUH, College of Education for Human Sciences, Tikrit University

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.25130/jtuh.30.5.2.2023.24>

### قابلية طلاب الجامعة العراقيين في تفسير الغموض المعجمي

نورآي أصغر حميد/ كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية/ جامعة تكريت

أ.م. د. دنيا طاهر حميد/ كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية/ جامعة تكريت

#### الخلاصة:

يدرس هذا البحث الغموض المعجمي . حيث إن ، الغموض يعرف بكونها ظاهرة لغوية يكون فيها نص معين له أكثر من معنى أو تفسير واحد. وبالتالي ، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى:

1. اختبار قدرة طلاب الجامعة العراقيين على تفسير الغموض المعجمي في كليات التربية /قسم

اللغة الإنكليزية في ثلاث جامعات تكريت وكركوك والأنبار.

2. المقارنة بين قدرة الطلاب على تفسير الغموض المعجمي ضمن مستويي الادراك والإنتاج في الجامعات الثلاث: تكريت وكركوك والأنبار.

حيث تم اختيار عينات عشوائية بمقدار (303) طالبًا جامعيًا (ذكور واناث) في المرحلة الرابعة من الدراسة في أقسام اللغة الإنكليزية في كليات التربية في جامعات تكريت وكركوك والأنبار. أجريت الدراسة في الفصل الدراسي الأول من العام الدراسي 2021-2022. تم جمع البيانات باستخدام اختبار تشخيصي لتقييم قدرة الطلاب على تفسير الغموض المعجمي. ووضحت النتائج التي توصلت اليها الدراسة عن وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين قدرة طلاب الجامعة العراقيين على تفسير الغموض المعجمي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الغموض، الغموض المعجمي، الغموض الدلالي

## Chapter One Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Language is a system of human communication or method of communicating an idea, emotion, and desires consisting of the use of words in a structure or conventional way. It consists of written and spoken language. Moreover, to be able to interact with each other, they have not only developed their English language skills and mimic native English speakers but also conceive the meaning of the word in oral language or written communication and decode ambiguous sentences in English. Spoken language is a language produced by the use of sounds or symbols while written language is the representation of spoken language by means of the writing system. written language is more difficult to understand than spoken language (Crystal, 2010, p.22).

According to Fromkin (2013) semantics are the study of the meaning of morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences (p.173). Thus, the words, phrases, and sentences can be interpreted in several senses, and it can raise a problem of ambiguity. Also people who read written texts may have different interpretations of one another and these different interpretations among readers are created by ambiguity (Crystal, 2010, p.22).

Ambiguity arises when a single word or string of sentences is associated with the language system in more than one meaning. That means, a sentence can be interpreted in different ways and it may cause confusion (Chierchia and Connell, 1990, p.32).

Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, and Harnish (2001) define lexical ambiguity as a situation when a word can have more than one meaning. For example, in "he picked up a date" the word "date" can be a fruit or a significant day(para.4).

Added to that linguistic ambiguity falls into some categories the two most important of which are lexical ambiguity and structural ambiguity (Hudson, 1999, p.313). So, this study deals only with lexical ambiguity.

## 1.2 Aims of the Study

1. Assessing Iraqi university students' ability in interpreting lexical ambiguity at three colleges of education/ English department in three universities Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar.
2. Finding out the comparison of the students' ability in interpreting lexical ambiguity at both the recognition and production levels at the three universities: Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar.

## 1.3 Hypotheses

To verify the aims of this study, the following hypotheses were proposed:

1. There are statistically significant differences among Iraqi university students' ability in interpreting lexical ambiguity at three colleges of education in Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar universities
2. . There are statistically significant differences among Iraqi university students' ability in interpreting lexical ambiguity at both the recognition and production levels at the three universities: Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar.

## 1.4 Limits of the study

The present study is limited to:

1. English foreign language fourth-year university students at three colleges of education/ English department in three universities Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar during the first course of the academic year 2021-2022.
2. Assessing Iraqi university students' ability in semantic interpretation of lexical ambiguity.
3. The focus is on the ambiguity case that occurs in the texts like words, phrases, and sentences.

## 1.5 Value of the Study

1. It expects to give the useful information about ambiguity.
2. It expects to increase students' abilities to understand ambiguous words, phrases, and sentences.

## 1.6. Definitions of Basic Terms

### **1.6.1. Assessing**

Saqa (2017) defines assessment as “the process used to identify, gather and interpret information against the required competencies in a qualification or part-qualification in order to make a judgment about a learner’s achievement (p.13).

### **1.6.2. Interpret**

Interpretation is the act of explaining, reframing, or otherwise showing ones’ understanding of something. Interpretation requires you to first understand the piece of music, text, language, or idea, and then give your explanation of it (Ozolins and Vasilakakos, 2001, p. 104).

### **1.6.3. Lexical Ambiguity**

Lexical ambiguity is caused by the presence of one word which may be interpreted in two or more different ways within a single construction (Akmajian et al., 2001, p.242).

## **Chapter Two**

### **Theoretical Background and Previous studies**

#### **2.0 An Introductory Note**

The current chapter is divided into two sections: the first section sheds light on the theoretical background while the second one reviews related previous studies.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Background**

##### **2.1.1 Semantic Interpretation**

Canfield (1997) indicates that semantics is the study of the meaning of words and sentences. Meaning has generally been thought of as a relationship between words and the world". He states that words are used to talk about things, but semantics is used to talk about the relationship between the words and things (p.8).

Yule (2020) agrees with Canfield that semantics is the study of meaning which is concerned with words, phrases, and sentences. It focuses on what the word means rather than on what the speaker wants to mean in a certain occasion. Yule adds that doing semantics is spelling out what we all know when we behave as though we are sharing knowledge of the meaning of the word, phrases, and sentences in a language (p.112).

## 2.1.2 Ambiguity

### 2.1.2.1 Definitions of Ambiguity

McArthur (1992) states that the term ambiguity has its roots from the Latin expression "ambiguitas" which functions in two ways by shifting from ambi/ and agre/actum which means to derive and act. It refers to the actual and potential uncertainty of meaning. Concerning ambiguity, a word, phrase, and sentence can be comprehended by many ways, but they are determined through their use within the context (p. 33).

The term ambiguity refers to an expression that has more than one meaning (Gillion,1990, p. 394). Ambiguity does not only concern meaning but rather the interpretations that can be made by the reader/listener. (Stageberg 1958, p. 479).

### 2.1.2.2 Kinds of Ambiguity

The phenomenon of ambiguity can be classified into many types. So that many authors in the English language have classified it in different ways. Some authors like Pinkal (2013) claim that lexical ambiguity includes only instances of homonymy and polysemy (p.75). While, Bucaria (2004) for instance, maintains that there is lexical ambiguity, syntactic ambiguity, and phonological ambiguities (p. 281). When it comes to Kaufer (1983) is the one that identifies more types of ambiguities: syntactic, lexical, the ambiguity of illocution, ambiguity of perlocution, and ambiguity of use/mention (p. 210).

According to this research, lexical ambiguity will be tackled.

## 2.1.3 Lexical Ambiguity

### 2.1.3.1 Definitions of Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity or commonly known as semantic ambiguity. According to Lyons (2006) lexical ambiguity is lexical beyond its ambiguity depending on the lexical difference of the two lexemes (p.56). Hurford and Heasley (2007) define any ambiguity resulting from the word ambiguity as the ambiguity of lexis (p.135).

Lexical ambiguity is caused by the presence of one word which may be interpreted in two or more different ways within a single construction (Akmajian et al., 2004, p.242).

### 2.1.3.2 Types of Lexical Ambiguity

In this kind of ambiguity, the research is restricted to only lexical relations and their contributions to ambiguity in daily communication whether in spoken or written. Lexical relations refer to such semantic concepts as antonym, homograph, homophone, homonym, hyponym, meronymy, polysemy,

synonym, and etcetera. However, only three of such lexical relations are relevant to the present discussion, namely homonym, homophone and homograph.

## 1.Homonymy

Liddell, et al (1882) mention that the term 'homonym' is emerged from the Greek word ὁμώνυμος, means to have the same name, which comprises of the conjunction ὁμός meaning 'common' and ὄνομα meaning 'name'(p.480).

Yule (2020) describes homonymy in semantics is linguistically defined as lexical ambiguity " when one form ( written or spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings (p.120).

**Table 1**

*Examples of Homonyms*

Word	Meaning 1	Meaning 2	Transcription
<b>ball</b>	A round object used in games	an evening party	[bɔ:l]
<b>bear</b>	to tolerate people	to act of giving birth	[beə]
<b>bat</b>	a flying animal	a piece of wood	[bæt]
<b>battery</b>	a box that produces electricity	a set of big guns	[bætəri]
<b>can</b>	a modal auxiliary verb	a small container	[kæn]
<b>date</b>	a period of time	a kind of plant	[deɪt]
<b>means</b>	used indicate meaning	same as riches	[mi:nz]
<b>pool</b>	a collection of liquid	a betting game	[pu:l]
<b>gay</b>	happy and lively	a homosexual person	[geɪ]
<b>lock</b>	a game position in rugby	strands of hair	[lɒk]

## 2. Homophony

The term homophony refers to two or more different words in spelling with the same pronunciation. The great attraction of homophones is their potential for punning, especially as they do not seem to be stored in our memories as a pair, and therefore we can be quite surprised that some words apparently sound the same(Aranoff and Miller, 2002, p.6).

If two or more words have the same pronunciation, they are said to be homophones (Yule, 2020, p.120). Accordingly, homophony is the semantic relation in which two or more forms are similar in pronunciation only.

**Table 2**

*Examples of Homophones*

<b>Word 1</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Word 2</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Transcription</b>
<i>aisle</i>	a passage way	isle	an island	[ail]
<i>aural</i>	about hearing	oral	about speech	[ɔ:rəl]
<i>beer</i>	a kind drink	bier	a stretcher	[biə]
<i>boy</i>	a male youth	buoy	a safety device	[bɔi]
<i>cereal</i>	a kind of crop	serial	part of a story	[siəriəl]
<i>chord</i>	musical note	cord	a kind of rope	[kɔ:d]
<i>colonel</i>	a rank in military	kernel	part of a nut	[kɜ:nl]
<i>desert</i>	an arid land mass	dessert	light fruit meal	[dezət]
<i>flour</i>	corn powder	flower	part of a plant	[flauə]
<i>gamble</i>	to bet in games	gambol	to jump around	[gæmbəl]

### 3.Homograph

Homographs, are words that have a single spelling but very different uses or meanings. Although these words are not control in the structure of language; yet, they form part of our consciousness about language, and can be used in jokes and visual punning(Jeffries, p. 161).

Kreidler (2002) states that homographs are two or more words that have the same spelling, different pronunciations, and different meanings (p.52). Thus, homography is a lexical relation in which two or more words are alike in their writing forms only, such as, bow (n.) /bəu/ and bow /bau/ (v.) (ibid).

**Table 3**

*Examples of Homograph*

<b>Words</b>	<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>
<i>lead</i>	verb	to give direction	[li:d]
<i>lead</i>	noun	a piece of metal	[lɛd]
<i>minute</i>	noun	a unit of time	[minit]
<i>minute</i>	adjective	small in size	[mainju:t]
<i>wind</i>	noun	air in motion	[wind]
<i>wind*</i>	verb	to roll something up	[waɪnd]
<i>wound</i>	noun	an injury or pain	[wu:nd]
<i>wound</i>	verb	the past form of wind*	[waund]
<i>bow</i>	noun	a device used for hunting	[bəu]

## 2.2 Previous Studies

### 2.2.1 Simanjuntak (2009)

The aim of the study was to analysis all types of ambiguity they are: Phonetic, structural, referential, and lexical ambiguity. The sample of this study was four English texts. The instrument of this study is descriptive research that are translated by commercial translators around USU campus. The finding of this research, lexical ambiguity is often happened. Its means that lexical ambiguity arises when context is insufficient to determine the sense of single word that has more than one meaning.

### 2.2.2 Jha (2017)

This study aims to explore the probable ambiguities that become incomprehensible for an EFL learner in terms of decoding the intended meaning. The sample of the study used content analysis as part of data collection. The instrument of this study is analytic induction which used as the method of data analysis. The results of the study reveals ten types of ambiguities that an ELT practitioner must discuss with the learners to understand ambiguous expressions.

### 2.2.3 Discussion of the Previous Studies

#### A. Aims

The aims of Simanjuntak (2009) 's study which focuses on an analysis all types of ambiguity they are: Phonetic, structural, referential, and lexical ambiguity. While the aim of Jha (2017) study explore the probable ambiguities that become incomprehensible for an EFL learner in terms of decoding the intended meaning.

#### B. Sample

The sample of the first study Simanjuntak (2009) is obtained by the written story text from the student's experience. While the sample of Jha (2017) is content analysis as part of data collection.

#### C. Instruments

The instrument of the first study Simanjuntak (2009) is descriptive research that are translated by commercial translators around USU campus. The instrument of Jha (2017) is analytic induction which used as the method of data analysis.

#### D. Results

The results of first study Simanjuntak (2009) reveal that lexical ambiguity is often happened. Its means that lexical ambiguity arises when

context is insufficient to determine the sense of single word that has more than one meaning. While the results of Jha (2017) reveal ten types of ambiguities that an ELT practitioner must discuss with the learners to understand ambiguous expressions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

A descriptive quantitative method has been used in order to conduct the collected data. Ary (2010) mentioned that the descriptive way is a method that connects with data in the form of the word. Thus, the researcher used the descriptive method to describe the data (p.474).

According to Cohen (2014), quantitative research is defined as social research that employs empirical methods and empirical statements. He states that an empirical statement is defined as a descriptive statement about what “is” the case in the “real world” rather than what “ought” to be the case. Typically, empirical statements are expressed in numerical terms. Another factor in quantitative research is that empirical evaluations are applied. Empirical evaluations are defined as a form that seeks to determine the degree to which a specific program or policy empirically fulfills or does not fulfill a particular standard or norm (p.156).

#### 3.2 Population of the Study

Population refers to any set of items, individuals, etc. which share some common and observable characteristics and from which a sample can be taken (Richards & Schmidh, 2013, p.206). Creswell (2012) describes a population as—a group of individuals who have the same characteristic. For example, all teachers would make up the population of teachers, and all high school administrators in a school district would comprise the population of administrators. As these examples illustrate, populations can be small or large. Within this target population, researchers then select a sample for study (p.142).

The population in the present study is (375) undergraduate students from departments of English, Colleges of Education, University of Tikrit, University of Kirkuk, and University of Al-Anbar during the academic year (2021-2022). Table (4) shows the population distribution.

**Table 4**

*Population of the Study*

Population	Number
University of Tikrit	135
University of Kirkuk	118
University of Al-Anbar	122
Total	375

### 3.3 Sample

The word sample refers to any small group or proportion of individuals which is selected for the present population (Best and Kahn, 2006, p.13). The sample is a subset of the target population that the researchers are intending to evaluate in order to generalize the target population. Ideally, a survey is selected to represent the population as a whole (Creswell, 2012, p.145).

The sample of the present study was randomly selected in order to be truly representative of the population characteristics without any bias and in order to obtain valid and reliable results. The total number of the sample is (303) chosen randomly. The total number of males students are (167) whereas females students are (136). The intentional choice is represented through choosing a college and random choice is achieved through selecting a representative number of students from Colleges of Education/ Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar universities.

**Table 5**

*Sample of the Study*

University	Males	Females	Total
Tikrit	54	44	103
Kirkuk	55	50	100
Al-Anbar	58	42	100
Total	167	136	303

### 3.4 Test Construction

One of the formal and systematic ways of gathering information about learners' behavior usually through the paper-and-pencil procedure is the test. According to Dictionary. O. (2000) test is an examination of somebody's

knowledge or ability, consisting of questions for them to answer or activities for them to perform (p.345). Harrison (1983) states that a test is seen as a natural extension of classroom work, providing teachers and students with useful information that can serve each as a basis for improvement (p.34).

In order to achieve the aims of this study, a diagnostic test has been constructed. In the construction of the test a specification of the behavioral objectives is derived, as table (6) illustrates:

**Table 6**

*The Specifications of the Contents and Behaviours of the Test*

	No. of Question	No. of Items	Contents		behavioral objectives	Scores
<b>Recognition</b>	4	1,2,4	Homophone	Lexical Ambiguity	Evaluating	20
		3	Homograph			
<b>Production</b>	5	1,3,5	Homonymy	Lexical Ambiguity	Creating	20
		2,4	Homograph			
<b>Total</b>						40

The test is designed to assess Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity on both recognition and production levels and it consists of two questions. Questions one access students' recognition level. It involved multiple-choice type that tests the students' ability to select the most appropriate choice that goes best with the context. While question two access students' production level in which the students are going to demand description of the items. Each item with a clear example.

### 3.5 Validity of the Test

Validity is defined as " the extent to which the differences or decisions we make on the basis of test scores are meaningful appropriate and useful"(Mousavi,1991, p. 441). McNamara (2000) defines validity as " the relationship between evidence from test performance and the inferences about candidate's capacity to perform in the criteria that are drawn from that evidence "(p.138).

There are four kinds of validity: content validity, construct validity, criterion validity, and face validity. The aspect of validity related to this research is the face and content validity.

#### 3.5.1 Face Validity

Face validity refers to the way the test looks right to test administrations, educators, and testees (Heaton,1988, p.153).

To ensure the test validity, it has been submitted to a jury of instructors and specialists in the English linguistics teaching (ELT) methodology and Linguistics. The jurors have reviewed the instrument and stated that it is appropriate and valid, their modification has been taken into consideration.

### **3.5.2 Content Validity**

Content Validity is concerned with the case in which the test will measure what it is supposed to measure. It checks whether the test measures the characteristics or ability aimed to be measured or not (Hughes, 2003, p.26).

Weir (1993) has the same view as Hughes (1989) considering content validity as the process of declaring to what extent the test tasks being tested(p.25).

### **3. 6 Reliability of the Test**

Reliability is one of the important features of the measuring instrument which refers to "The extent to which a measuring device is consistent in measuring whatever it measures"(Bachman and Palmer,1996, p.19).

The obtained result after the application of Cronbach's alpha formula is 0,82 which is considered to be a suitable index from a statistical point of view.

### **3.7 Scoring Scheme of the Test**

Scoring means applying a numerical scale to measure responses. Scoring provides a valuable feedback concerning students' achievement and teachers' attitudes (Genesee and Upshur, 1996, p.208).

The test is scored out of 40 points and consists of two questions. Each question was worth 20 marks. The first question is related to the recognition level. Five scores are allotted for the correct answer in the first question while the wrong one takes zero. The second question is related to the production level. four scores are allotted for the correct answer while the wrong one takes zero.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Presentation of the Results**

##### **4.1.1 Results of the First Hypotheses**

To achieve the first aim of this research which is to find out and comparing among Iraqi University Students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity at three colleges of education in Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar universities by investigating the first hypothesis that states "there are statistically significant differences among Iraqi University Students' ability to

interpret lexical ambiguity at three colleges of education in Tikrit, Kirkuk and Al-Anbar universities”, the researcher has compared the mean scores and standard deviations of students' scores in lexical ambiguity were used to collect the data. The mean score of Tikrit University is (18.7379) with a standard deviation (6.31519) while the mean score of Kirkuk University is (17.6600) with a standard deviation (5.42947) finally the mean score of Anbar University is (16.7500) with standard deviation (4.74475). A comparison is made among the three means. Table (7) identifies the results of students' scores in the lexical ambiguity.

**Table 7**

*Inter-Universities Results in Lexical Ambiguity*

University	No. of Students	Mean Scores	Std. Deviation
<b>Tikrit</b>	103	18.7379	6.31519
<b>Kirkuk</b>	100	17.6600	5.42947
<b>Al-Anbar</b>	100	16.7500	4.74475

The one-way analysis of variance ANOVA is used to determine whether there are any significant differences in the lexical ambiguity of Iraqi university students at the three colleges of education in Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar universities. The analysis shows that the computed F-value is (3.274) which is higher than the tabulated F-value (3.02) at the (0.039) level of significance and DF= (2). This indicates that there are significant differences between university students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity. According to this result, the first hypothesis is accepted. See Table (8).

**Table 8**

*One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)*

University	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
<b>Between Groups</b>	201.152	2	100.576	3.274	0.039
<b>Within Groups</b>	9215.112	300	30.717		
<b>Total</b>	9416.264	302			

In order to find out the comparison between universities, the researcher uses SH-Value as seen in the table (9, 10, 11):

**Table 9**

*The Comparison Between Kirkuk and Al-Anbar*

Group	No. of Students	Mean	SH-Value		Level of Significance
			Computed	Tabulated	
<b>Kirkuk</b>	100	17.6600	<b>0.67</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>Al-Anbar</b>	100	16.7500			

Table (9) shows that there are no significant differences between Kirkuk and Al-Anbar students in their interpreting lexical ambiguity because the computed SH-value is (0.67) which is less than the tabulated SH-value (3.00) at the (0.05) level of significance and in favor of Kirkuk.

The analysis of the results (table 10) identifies that the computed SH-value is (3.27) which is higher than the tabulated SH-value which is (3.00) at the (0.5) level of significance. This indicates that there are significant differences between Tikrit and Al-Anbar students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity.

**Table 10**

*The Comparison Between Tikrit and Al-Anbar*

Group	No. of Students	Mean	SH-Value		Level of Significance
			Computed	Tabulated	
<b>Tikrit</b>	103	18.7379	<b>3.27</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>Al-Anbar</b>	100	16.7500			

In the table (11), the computed SH-value is (0.96) which is less than the tabulated SH-value which is (3.00) at the (0.5) level of significance. So, there are no significant differences between Tikrit and Kirkuk students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity.

**Table 11***The Comparison Between Tikrit and Kirkuk*

Group	No. of Students	Mean	SH-Value		Level of Significance
			Computed	Tabulated	
<b>Tikrit</b>	103	18.7379	<b>0.96</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>Kirkuk</b>	100	17.6600			

#### 4.1.2 Results Related to the Second Hypothesis

In order to achieve the second aim of the current research which is to find out and compare Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity on both the recognition and production levels at the three universities Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Al-Anbar, by investigating the hypothesis which hypothesized that "there are statistically significant differences among Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical Ambiguity on both recognition and production levels".

##### 4.1.2.1 Comparison of the Students' Ability to Interpret Lexical Ambiguity on the Recognition Level

The analysis of the results identifies the results of the university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity in the three universities at the recognition level. This comparison is made as a whole, among the three universities. Table (12) shows the number of students, mean score, and standard deviation among Iraqi university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity on recognition level.

**Table 12***Inter-University Results in Recognition Level*

University	No. of Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tikrit	103	15.1165	4.46402
Kirkuk	100	14.3200	4.12893
Al-Anbar	100	13.5300	3.73748

It also determines whether there are any statistically significant differences to interpret lexical ambiguity among three universities on the recognition level using a one-way ANOVA.

**Table 13**  
*One-Way Analysis of Variance in Recognition (ANOVA)*

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Mean Scores</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	127.725	2	63.862	3.754	0.025
Within Groups	5103.272	300	17.011		
Total	5230.997	302			

Based on the results, it is clear that the computed F-value (3.754) is higher than the tabulated F-value (3.00) at the (0.025) level of significance and DF= 2. This indicates that there are significant differences among the university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity on the recognition level. In order to find out the comparison between universities, the researcher uses SH-Value as seen below in the tables (14, 15, 16):

As seen in table (4.18), there are no significant differences between Kirkuk and Tikrit students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity because the computed SH-value is (0.95) which is less than the tabulated SH-value (3.00) at the (0.5) level of significance.

**Table 14**  
*The Comparison Between Tikrit and Kirkuk*

<b>Group</b>	<b>No. of Students</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SH-Value</b>		<b>Level of Significance</b>
			<b>Computed</b>	<b>Tabulated</b>	
Tikrit	103	15.1165	<b>0.95</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Kirkuk	100	14.3200			

A table (15), the computed SH-value is (3.77) which is higher than the tabulated SH-value which is (3.00) at the (0.05) level of significance. This indicates that there are significant differences between Tikrit and Al-Anbar students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity.

**Table 15**  
*The Comparison Between Tikrit and Al-Anbar*

Group	No. of Students	Mean	SH-Value		Level of Significance
			Computed	Tabulated	
Tikrit	103	15.1165	3.77	3.00	0.05
Al-Anbar	100	13.5300			

Table (16) shows that the computed SH-value is (0.92) which is less than the tabulated SH-value which is (3.00) at the (0.05) level of significance. This indicates that there are no significant differences between Kirkuk and Al-Anbar students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity.

**Table 16**  
*The Comparison Between Kirkuk and Al-Anbar*

Group	No. of Students	Mean	SH-Value		Level of Significance
			Computed	Tabulated	
Kirkuk	100	14.3200	0.92	3.00	0.05
Al-Anbar	100	13.5300			

#### 4.1.2.2 Comparison of the Students' Ability to Interpret Lexical Ambiguity on the Production Level.

Another comparison is made among the three universities on the production level, which is related to the second hypothesis that there are significant differences among Iraqi university students at the three universities. Table (17) shows the number of students, mean scores, and standard deviation among Iraqi university students.

**Table 17**  
*Inter-Universities Results on Production*

University	No. of Students	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tikrit	103	3.0097	4.18094
Kirkuk	100	2.7800	3.82332
Al-Anbar	100	2.5400	3.45657

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA is used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in lexical ambiguity among the three universities on the production level.

**Table 18**  
*One-Way Analysis of Variance in Production (ANOVA)*

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>Mean Scores</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Between Groups</b>	11.195	2	5.597	0.381	0.684
<b>Within Groups</b>	4412.990	300	14.710		
<b>Total</b>	4424.185	302			

The results show that the computed F-value (0.381) is lower than the tabulated F-value (3.02) at (0.684) level of significance and DF= 2. This indicates that there are no significant differences among university students on production levels.

According to the results of both recognition and production levels, the fourth hypothesis is accepted at the level of recognition and rejected at the production level.

#### **4.2 Discussion of the Results**

This study attempts to test the Iraqi university students' Ability to interpret lexical ambiguity at three colleges of education Tikrit, Kirkuk, and AL-Anbar universities.

The result of the first hypothesis shows that there are significant differences between university students in their interpretation of lexical ambiguity. According to this result, the first hypothesis is accepted. The result of the second hypothesis shows that there are significant differences among the university students' ability to interpret lexical ambiguity on the recognition level. The results also show that there are no significant differences among university students on production levels. According to the results of both recognition and production levels, the second hypothesis is accepted at the level of recognition and rejected at the production level.

## Bibliography

- Akmajian, A., Demers, R. A., Farmer, A. K., & Harnish, R. M. (2001). An Introduction to Language and Communication. In Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data.
- Aronoff Mark and Reese-Miller Janie, 2002. The Handbook of Linguistics. Blackwell publishing: Blackwell Reference Online.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Razavieh, A. (2010). Introduction to Research in Education. Canada: Nelson Education, Ltd.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). Language Testing in Practice: Designing and Developing Useful Language Tests (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press.
- Kahn, K. B., Barczak, G., & Moss, R. (2006). Perspective: Establishing an NPD Best Practices Framework. Journal of Product Innovation Management, 23(2), 106-116.
- Bucaria, C. (2004). Lexical and Syntactic Ambiguity as a Source of Humor: The Case of Newspaper Headlines.
- Canfield, W., Emerson, E. A., & Saha, A. (1997, October). Checking Formal Specifications Under Simulation. In Proceedings International Conference on Computer Design VLSI in Computers and Processors (pp. 455-460). IEEE.
- Chierchia, G. (81). McConnell-Ginet (1990) Meaning and Grammar: An Introduction to Semantics.
- Cohen, P., West, S. G., & Aiken, L. S. (2014). Applied Multiple Regression/Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences. Psychology Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating, 260, 375-382.
- Crystal, D. (2011). A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dawood , Najim Obied .(1984). "Syntactic –Error in Composition made By Students of the Department of English at the College of Education" Unpublished Thesis .University of Baghdad .
- Dictionary, O. (2000). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2013). An Introduction to Language. Cengage Learning.
- Genesee, F., Upshur, J. A., & Richards, J. C. (1996). Classroom-Based Evaluation in Second Language Education. Cambridge University Press.
- Gillon, B. S. (1990). Ambiguity, Generality, and Indeterminacy: Tests and Definitions. Synthese, 85(3), 391-416.
- Harrison, A. (1983). A Language Testing Handbook. Macmillan.
- Heaton, J. B. (1988). Writing English Language Tests. 2nd Ed. New
- Hudson, G. (2000) Essential Introduction Linguistics. London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Hughes, A. (2003). Testing for language Teachers. Cambridge University Press.
- Hurford, J. R., Heasley, B., & Smith, M. B. (2007). Semantics: a Coursebook. Cambridge University press.
- Jeffries Lesley, 2002. Discovering Language. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kaufer, D. (1983). Metaphor and Its Ties to Ambiguity and Vagueness. Rhetoric Society Quarterly, 13(3-4), 209-220.
- Kreidler, C. (2002). Introducing English Semantics. Routledge.
- Liddell, G. H. and Scott, R. (1882) A Greek-English Lexicon 8thed. Perseus Digital Library.
- Lyons, J. 2006. Linguistics Semantics An Introduction. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press

- McArthur, J. B. (1992). The Take-or-Pay Crisis: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Cure for Immorality in the Marketplaace. NML Rev., 22, 353.
- McNamara, T. (2000). Language Testing. Oxford University Press.
- Mousavi, S. A. (1999). A Dictionary of Language Testing. 2nd ed.,Tahran : Rahnama Publications.
- Comares, G., Gentile, A., Ozolins, U., & Vasilakakos, M. (2001). Liaison Interpreting: A Handbook.
- Palmer, F. R. (1984). Semantics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pinkal, M. (2013). Logic and Lexicon: the Semantics of the Indefinite (Vol. 56). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (2013). Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. Routledge.
- Saqa. 2017. NQFpedia: Standard Glossary of Terms. Pretoria: SAQA. Accessed 15 May 2020 <https://hr.saqa.co.za/glossary/pdf/NQFPedia.pdf#>.
- Stageberg, N. C. (1958). Some Structural Ambiguities. The English Journal, 47(8), 479-486.
- Weir, C. J., & Weir, C. J. (1993). Understanding and Developing Language Tests. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Yule, G. (2020). The Study of Language. Cambridge University Press.