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**Polysemy in and of the Science Fiction Film *Arrival* (2016)**

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**Abstract**

Polysemy has always become a significant issue in interdisciplinary studies, mainly because particular words or phrases tend to have multiple meanings and the way to decide on the intended meanings involves cultural understanding that may be problematic for different groups of people. This paper divides the main research questions into two inquiries: (1) What is the meaning of the micro-unit polysemy in the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016)? and (2) What is the interpretation of the macro-level of polysemy in the film? The purpose of this research is to describe the interrelation between the polysemy in the film and the polysemy of the film. It is assumed that revealing the phenomena of polysemy found in the film helps to construct a better comprehension of the objective of the polysemy of the film. This has been done by implementing two stages of procedures in this research: (1) identifying the translation of the most significant polysemous words, phrases, clauses, and sentences found in the film by using meaning patterns and contextual patterns (Schmidt, 2008) and (2) discovering the three potential themes of polysemy of the film that include resistive reading, strategic ambiguity, and hermeneutic depth (Ceccarelli, 1998). The analysis shows that examining the phenomena of cognitive linguistic meanings from the 30 micro-unit polysemy to the rhetorical criticism of the polysemous text opens up multiple interpretive possibilities that may go unnoticed.

**Key words:** *polysemy; translation; science fiction film; cognitive linguistic meanings; rhetorical criticism*

**Introduction**

Polysemy occurs in most parts of our everyday lives without our awareness because we tend to use the same expressions in order to communicate our different intended meanings. Fauconnier and Turner particularly mention that the human's conceptual system is much higher than our linguistic system, accordingly, no matter what language we are speaking, the vocabularies and grammatical concepts are not enough to support our abundant yet complicated ways of thinking

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(Fauconnier & Turner, 2003). Therefore, it is never easy to reveal the meanings of specific texts from one culture and to determine the equivalence to another culture (Lafer & Tarman, 2019; Tarman & Kilinc, 2018) because “a word acquires meaning through its context and can produce varying responses according to culture” (Nida, 1964). Any translation activities need various considerations such as recognizing the context of situations or the cultural aspects of both the source language (SL) and target language (TL) text, and it is included but not limited to the translation of polysemy. Therefore, some concerns must be made, and these possibilities that may occur in the translator’s mind are seen through the phenomena of polysemy as shown in the science-fiction film *Arrival* (2016); while polysemy of the film reveals how *Arrival* as a text may have multiple interpretations, depending on who initiates it. This paper argues that polysemy as seen from different points of view –in and of– a text, in this case a film, shouldn’t be used as if it had a single universal meaning nor a tool for liberation, but more of a way to create a flow pattern that gives power to the text from the inside to outside.

The film narrates the appearance of aliens in 12 different countries in the world. One of the locations visited was Montana, United States. In this setting, a linguist and a translator, Dr. Louise Banks along with a physicist, Ian Donnelly are hired by Colonel Weber, from the U.S. Army Intelligence, to question the aliens’ intention of coming to earth. During the mission, Louise, Ian, the U.S. Army Intelligence, and other experts from different nations must work together by studying the heptapods’ language and teaching them ‘human’ language in order to achieve effective communication. However, many difficulties occur during the operation because they are coming from different academic disciplines and political regimes, which means having different points of view and do not speak the same ‘language’ to each other. Moreover, the minimal time and high pressure from the public media, society, and their commanders develop the tension throughout the film, and because other nations start to see these aliens as a threat, they must race against time to avoid a global war that might explode any time.

*Arrival*’s characteristics of extraordinary science-fiction film with its “estrangement and cognition” attracts attention to challenge it with the “empirical environment” of the present-day society (Freedman, 2000; Suvin, 1979). The coming of the aliens in the middle of the neighborhood was an example when the estrangement occurred in the film. As in most sci-fi films that aliens usually represent the otherness of our real world, the aliens in *Arrival* may also bring different interpretations to the audience about their sociocultural phenomena. Not only showing empathy to

the alienation, but this film also makes us understand the situation and try to figure out the way to solve the problem as soon as we know how to communicate effectively with them. Moreover, the sociocultural environment of the film production is associated with the specific communicative function, which in this point of view is as seen from the perspective of polysemy, and somehow the multi-meanings are reflected through the rhetorical criticism of the film. In short, the sci-fi film *Arrival* is about a linguist who is assigned to translate the language of the aliens, and therefore by using this film, the study of polysemy and translation will profoundly be fully presented.

A theme of a film is generally built from a set of the audience's understanding that may involve the audiovisual stimulation, characterizations, plot, and the linguistic choices of the scenarios. Several micro linguistic units conveyed from a film must contain essential messages that initiate a thorough examination of translation analysis. The translation analysis that involves the elaboration of the thematic functions of each linguistic unit shapes the substantial theme of polysemy of the film. This research proposes that both phenomena of polysemy found as the minor linguistic element in the film and as the major theme of the film shows a mutual correspondence from either way. First, having the idea of the role of polysemy in the film may bring consideration in translating the polysemous words, phrases, and sentences; and second, analyzing the multi-meanings helps the understanding of an entire purpose of polysemy issue as the central theme of the film. The main research questions of this paper are divided into two inquiries: (1) What is the meaning of the micro-unit polysemy in the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016)? Also, (2) What is the interpretation of the macro-level of polysemy in the film? The purpose of this research is to describe the interrelation between the polysemy in the film and the polysemy of the film.

### **Polysemy in Translation**

Polysemy is believed to be a significant issue in translation, in principle, because the linguistic expression does not only represent meanings but more prompts for meanings (Fauconnier & Turner, 2003). Polysemy as the most unrecognizable phenomenon occurs in every aspect of human life helps to create a whole perception in life because the understanding polysemy is considered as an activity of constructing the conceptual integration networks. Moreover, "the study of polysemy can help translator, by giving them certain guidelines, as to how to think about words, and how to make use of the context to resolve the ambiguity of polysemous words" (Schmidt, 2008). Thus, not only in the domain of translation studies, polysemy happens to be a

part of our linguistic system that is hiding behind our ignorance of the conceptual system. In order to examine polysemy from the cognitive linguistics perspective, Schmidt introduced two significant ways of meaning patterns and contextual patterns as a result of combining Taylor's cognitive models of polysemy and Fauconnier and Turner's conceptual blending (Fauconnier & Turner, Taylor). Before understanding the context of a word, we first have to establish the readings of the word, employing the meaning patterns as the network of senses that are represented by dictionary entries. After the meaning patterns, the second important factor is the contextual patterns in which the word is embedded, for example, by examining the context of discourse. Selecting the right sense of meanings must recognize and adjust specific correlations between both patterns respectfully.

The phrase "offer weapon" is one example of polysemy found in the film. It occurs in the climax of the film because it answers the most critical question regarding the purpose of the aliens coming to earth. The misinterpretation of this polysemy may lead to a global war between the aliens who landed the 12 different places on earth and the human beings led by General Shang. The interpreter of these two different cultures, Dr. Louise Banks, analyzes the possible meanings of the phrase. She is aware that even though the aliens have learned the human language, they are still not sure if the aliens genuinely understand the difference between a weapon and a tool. Human language is as messy as their culture, one word may express more than one idea, which sometimes is not parallel to the meaning but contrasted to the original meaning. From her explanation, it is inferred that she is referring to polysemy because seeking the meanings through the context is essential and that when translating polysemy, the translator must focus on the meaning patterns of the language and the cultural issue of its surroundings. Thus, it corresponds directly to Schmidt's theory in selecting the right sense of polysemy in translation: meaning patterns and contextual patterns.

Nevertheless, this paper would also analyze the interrelation of the translation of polysemy to polysemy as the main focus of the film. Some studies on polysemy in films have been conducted in many years by different scholars. One of the most noteworthy researches is the investigation of polysemy in a science fiction text conducted by Delany in 1979 quoted by Rieder in 2010. In his writing, Delany pointed to a polysemous sentence "He turned on his left side" that has two interpretations: (1) of whether the man changed his position to the left side of his body, or (2) if the man actually is an AI that activated the left body by turning on a switch. According to Delany,

“it depends upon the reader’s familiarity with the use of science fiction conventions, both meanings use different senses that actively shape their understanding of the world depicted in the text concerning the empirical environment and the generally constructed world” (Delany, 1979; Rieder, 2010). The result of his study concludes that the different versions of understanding a single polysemous sentence may appear due to the different backgrounds of knowledge and different sociocultural environment that shape the audience. Thus, any new meanings closest to the science fiction text values are worth considering.

### **Polysemy of a Text**

Not only examining the polysemy in translation that is investigated from a cognitive linguistics perspective, but this paper would also analyze a text that is essential to study polysemy as a unity. The film may open up possibilities for multiple interpretations, and the potential assumptions that lead to different categories depend on the purpose of representing the polysemy of a film (Ceccarelli, 1998). The first category is a “resistive reading” that focuses the multiple meanings from the dominant control of the author as an addition to the power of the audience. The second type is the “strategic ambiguity” that is likely to be planned by the author to show two different interpretations from two conflicting groups of audience or readers. Finally, the third one is the “hermeneutic depth” that freely offers a new expanded way to the audience to accept the multiplicity of meanings to fully appreciate the text’s more profound significance (Ceccarelli, 1998). Investigating which type of polysemy is in the sci-fi film *Arrival* (2016) may need an in-depth analysis on how the thematic functions of translating several key elements may influence the message that is carried out in the film. In other words, the polysemy of a film may be reflected by how it is treated and manifested in the film.

Many articles discuss the film from different perspectives. Most of the articles agree that the science-fiction film *Arrival* (2016) mainly focuses on language and communication. Derry suggests that language and communication used in the film show the colonialism among human communities, while Carruthers talks about human reproduction ethics and quality of life through the narrative of the chronological time (Carruthers, 2017; Derry, 2016). Nevertheless, none of them discusses the relationship between language, communication, and translation in particular. Lucking states about how the language perceives time, that context comprehends meaning, and

also brings about the communication issues, but does not interrelate these three terms (Lucking, 2017).

Similarly, narrating the plot is parallel with reviewing the message of the film, and as for both Derry and Lucking, the film's theme is mostly related to communication issues. The various interpretations over the sci-fi film *Arrival* (2016) indicate that polysemy becomes part of this film. Therefore, there must be an interrelation between the languages used in the film, represented by the polysemy, and the translation strategies, of the polysemy, done by the main character of the film.

Polysemy occurs in most science fiction films with its alienation because the films want to challenge the audience' multiple perspectives over the film. Not only is polysemy on the language used, many science fiction films present non-human creatures such as aliens, zombies, Artificial Intelligence or robots in their stories in order to get the audience' attention to reflect their present society with the fictional narratives in the film. The aliens, robots or AI, and zombies "are a basic presence integral to the process of examining humanity" (Sardar & Cubitt, 2002). In other words, aliens in this sci-fi film are used to represent differences and otherness in order to examine humanity: of what it is to be human. Ted Chiang, the author of *Story of Your Life*, the story of where the film is adapted from also supports the statement by saying that "science fiction is very well suited to asking philosophical questions: questions about the nature of reality, what it means to be human, how do we know the things that we think we know" (Chiang, 1998). It shows that this science-fiction film *Arrival* (2016) could be the best film to ask questions about the nature of language in social contexts.

For this reason, this paper adequately describes the interrelation between the translation of polysemy in the science-fiction film *Arrival* (2016) to reveal the cultural and ideological environment of the film. Accurately, this paper answers the research questions of (1) What is the meaning of the micro-unit polysemy in the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016)? Moreover, (2) What is the interpretation of the macro-level of polysemy in the film? By countering the two research questions, this paper may provide a complete overview of how polysemy in the film contributes to the vital theme of the film and how the message of the film influences the different meanings of polysemy as illustrated in the film.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The research is using a qualitative method because this paper aims for a complete, detailed description of observation, including the explanation on the context of events and how to connect them with the data collected to answer the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Not only the dialogues in the film, but also the cinematic output, including the sound effects, background music, motion pictures, camera angles, and other filmic details belong to the primary research data. Meanwhile, the most significant component of data is the polysemous words, phrases, clauses, and sentences that are selected from the spoken dialogues, monologues, and narrations during the film. The selection process was made based on the urgency of the appearance of the polysemy: whether they are explicitly explained in the film; implied during the film; or left unexplained in the film.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In this study, the researcher is the data gathering instrument because the subject of the analysis is a film. The primary source of the research data is the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016) and supported by the intertextual texts surround the film, such as the materials supplied by the directors, producers, or reporters and film reviewers as supplementary resources or promotion media in newspapers or articles discussing their interpretation about the film.

### **Data Collection**

The researcher applied specific procedures in examining the polysemy found in the film. The most necessary procedure is to identify the polysemous words and phrases by using Schmidt's cognitive-linguistic (Schmidt, 2008). It involves the dictionary used as a means to recognize the meaning patterns. It is crucial to validate whether the words and phrases are polysemy because if the meanings found in the dictionary are not related to each other, the next procedure must be applied to make sure the relevance of the other new meanings to the context of the situation. In order to grasp the contextual patterns, understanding the film is considered to be the best way to objectively interpret the cultural setting because particular words or phrases might be used as the means to different intended meanings. Besides, it also depends on the context of the situation,

wherein the film, there are many ways to interpret it, such as the setting, the camera angles, the lighting, or the background.

**Data Analysis**

After analyzing the polysemy from a linguistic perspective, they are investigated through the three categories of rhetorical criticism to select the possible meanings for the film’s polysemy. Studying the possibilities of “resistive reading” was carried out by investigating DVD bonuses, film commentaries, or reviews to explore whether the audience has different interpretations than the producers or directors over the film. Meanwhile, the “strategic ambiguity” was inspected by studying the film explanations, film critics and articles written in mass media to see any different groups of readers converging in assessing the film as intended by the filmmakers. The “hermeneutic depth,” on the other hand, was also investigated through film critics and audience reception, but must be proven that there are no forced interpretations from neither points of view and “accept the multiplicity of meanings to fully appreciate the film’s deeper significance” (Ceccarelli, 1998).

**Findings**

**What is the meaning of the micro-unit polysemy in the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016)?**

In order to answer the first research question on the interpretation of meanings, the micro-unit of polysemy must be determined and examined thoroughly. These are the findings and the analysis of the research that is divided into different parts, signified by the 30 findings of polysemy in the film as seen from table 1 below.

**Table 1**

*Polysemy in the science fiction film “Arrival” (2016)*

<u>Explicitly explained</u>	<u>Implied</u>	<u>Unexplained</u>
12 vessels	Channel	Alpha
Foundation of civilization	Translation	Crackdown
		<i>Arrival</i>
		Aliens



Non-linear	<u>War</u>	Parrot	Human
<u>Kangaroo</u>	Approach	The big domino	
<u>Offer weapon</u>	Handshake	To gain ground	
	Math problems	Everybody dies	
	Booster	Risk	
	Kick	Strong cocktail	
	Copy	Steer	
	Clear	Over	
	Vitals	<u>Made a quick work of those insurgents</u>	

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These 30 examples of polysemy belong to different categories based on the appearance in the film. Five polysemy are explicitly explained throughout the film, and most of the polysemy is implied, 22 of them, and the rests, only 3 remained unexplained but played a significant role in determining the meaning of polysemy in film. However, from all the 30 polysemy, five critical examples of *war*; *kangaroo*; *make a quick work of the insurgents*; *offer weapon*; and *Arrival* was chosen randomly to explain the phenomena of polysemy, both from the micro unit and the macro unit as the theme of the film. These key examples indicate the phenomena of polysemy in the sci-fi film as it is discussed or intentionally exposed by the author of the film in order to mirror the alienation. Thus, through the evaluation of the polysemy and the strategies of translating the polysemy, this analysis leads to the revealing interrelation between the polysemy in and of the film.

#### WAR: AN ARGUMENT OR A DESIRE FOR MORE COWS?

The first finding is the word "war". It is mentioned by Louise when she talked to Colonel Weber in their first meeting. Colonel Weber showed her a recorder device of the aliens' voice to ask about the script translation, and Louise wanted to interact with the aliens herself because it is impossible to translate from an audio file, but Colonel Weber did not trust her. Next, he was going to ask Professor Danvers in Berkeley for a second opinion. That was when Louise asked Colonel Weber to demand the Sanskrit word and the translation for the word *war* to Professor Danvers as it is seen in figure 1. This telling question becomes a test for Professor Danvers because his answer will

influence Colonel Weber's decision. In the very early morning, Colonel Weber came back to Louise with Professor Danvers' answers. He said that the Sanskrit word for *war* is "*gavisti*," and he says it means "an argument" (figure 2). Colonel Weber asked Louise back, "What do you say it means?" Louise answered, "A desire for more cows" (figure 3). The film does not precisely explain the reason why Colonel Weber considers Louise's translation to be much better than Professor Danvers nor how Louise's considerations in putting the different meanings of the word "*war*". She only gives a sign that she knows how Professor Danvers will answer the question and that her approach is close to Colonel Weber's need.

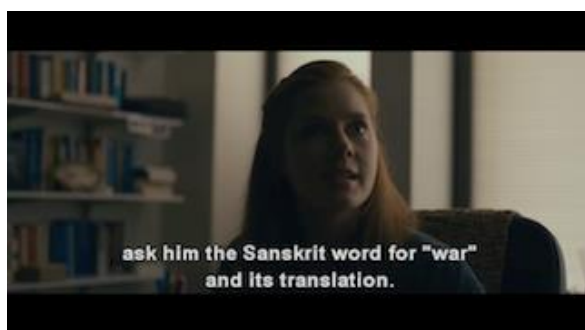


Figure 1. Sanskrit word for "war"



Figure 2. "Gavisti."



Figure 3. "A desire for more cows."

The scene above tells us the meanings elaborated from two different points of view: on the one hand, it may refer to *an argument* as stated by Professor Danvers, and this is the literal meaning of the word "*war*." On the other hand, Louise approaches the translation by using the context of the word origin, and it shows her deep linguistics proficiency and her openness for the learning process to restore communication issues among humans and aliens. The context of the situation in the film is described as chaotic and can be at any second move to war. As a US army leader,

Colonel Weber has the concern to keep the situation in hand and to avoid as many confrontations as possible, thus having other ideas besides *argument*. Her interpretation may not be too direct nor too literal because of the aliens' estranged atmosphere that may influence the way she approaches the translation, yet it shows that she will try to interact with them in order to understand their culture and their way of thinking, and the most important thing is to keep the world in peace.

*KANGAROO: A HOP AROUND ANIMAL WITH A POUCH OR I DON'T UNDERSTAND?*

The next polysemy is "*kangaroo*". The scene took place in the middle of their mission when Colonel Weber doubted Louise's approach to the heptapods' language. She is teaching them how to speak and read in the English language, which, according to Colonel Weber, will take a longer time. Louise then told him the Kangaroo story about Captain James Cook when he set to Australia in 1770 and met the Aboriginal people. He asked about the animals hopping around with pouches and asked the Aborigines "What are they?" and they replied "kangaroo" and so we call these animals kangaroos to this day (figure 4). Recently, when we finally fully understand their language, we find out that *kangaroo* means "I don't understand" (figure 5). From this story, we realize that Louise does not want to take irresponsible acts by misinterpreting the heptapods' language, and this approach is the best and fastest way to reach the message of translation. The polysemy *kangaroo* refers to two different references: the animal as the concrete object and "I don't understand" as the non-existence general reference. The reference of the extended meaning can be elaborated from the context shared of the original setting, in this case, is the year 1770 Aboriginal people in Australia.



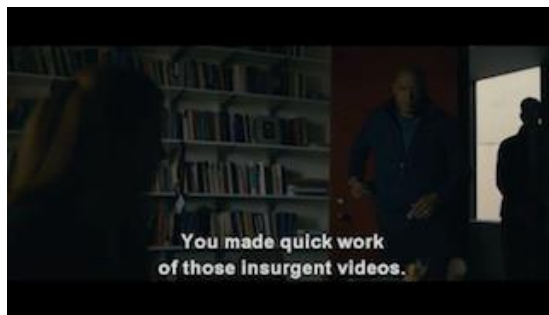
*Figure 4. Kangaroo*



*Figure 5. Kangaroo means I don't understand*

*TO MAKE A QUICK WORK OF THE INSURGENTS: TRANSLATION OR MASSACRING?*

The next phrase is *to make a quick work of the insurgents*. The act is on the first meeting between Louise and Colonel Weber when he came to ask her translating the heptapods' language from a voice recorder. He said that Louise is on top of everyone's list when it comes to translation and that she still has the top-secret clearance from her previous work translating Farsi language for the U.S. Army. He was trying to praise Louise by saying, "You made quick work of those insurgent videos" as seen in figure 6. However, Louise replied by saying "You made quick work of those insurgents" (figure 7), which lead to different reference: the first *quick work* refers to the quick translation work of the video done by Louise, while the other *quick work* done by Colonel Weber must deal with the execution sentence of the U.S. Army toward the Farsi or Persian people. This time, the polysemy involves the verb phrase where the meanings are extended from the original meaning but with different references.



*Figure 6. ...those insurgent videos*



*Figure 7. ...those insurgents*

*OFFER WEAPON: USE GUNS OR GIVE KNOWLEDGE?*

The next phrase of polysemy is "*offer weapon*". The phrase is the most important message from the film because it happens during the climax, the answer from the heptapods when Louise was asking the question "what is your purpose of coming to earth?" (figure 8).



Figure 8. What is your purpose?



Figure 9. Confuse



Figure 10. Offer weapon

The phrase *offer weapon* is discussed further in the film, and this is when Louise revealed language as a cultural issue. She says, “We don't know if they understand the difference between a weapon and a tool. Our language, like our culture, is messy, and sometimes, one can be both. And it is quite possible that they are asking us to offer them something, not the other way around.” From her explanation, we get the sense that as a translator, Louise is trying to apply the translation strategy when she is dealing with the polysemous phrase of “offer weapon”. She cannot ignore the possibility of any cultural issues that may influence the meaning of the language. The word *weapon* may refer to a tool or harmless instrument that might be needed by the heptapods.

Meanwhile, the word “offer” may refer to the opposite of it, meaning they are asking us to offer them something rather than they indeed present us something. However, a series of Louise’s approaches to the translation is done by entering the shell once again to the confirmation and giving empathy to Abbot. They finally get the idea that the heptapods are trying to tell them that they need to assemble with the other 11 sites in order to comprehend their knowledge. Approaching Louise’s strategies in translating this polysemy suggests that a translator must be

open-minded to any possibilities that may influence the interpretation because it cannot be seen only from one but of many perspectives.

#### ARRIVAL: COMING OR BORN?

The crucial last example is the title, *Arrival*. It is already stated at the beginning of the paper that the title attracts the attention the most due to its ambiguity and it is so called polysemy because it is assumed to have more than one meaning with an extended relationship among the notions. As a title, the polysemy must carry the essential elements that cover the whole message of the film and how the translation strategies illustrated in the film lead the audience to perceive the theme. The first assumption refers to the most obvious one: the aliens' or the heptapods' coming to earth. The proofs can be from Louise and Colonel Weber when they say "they arrive". Louise mentions it in the very beginning of the film right after the scenes of her glimpses of the future, where many mass media reports on the aliens. She says "I believe in beginnings and endings. There are days that define your story beyond your life. Like the day they arrived." Reading the script without watching the film may give a different interpretation, but when we observe the film, we understand the word "they" in the clause "the day they arrived" is closely related to the heptapods. Figures 11 and 12 tell us that many people are interested in the coming of the heptapods but Louise. The scenes show that it may not be the Arrival of the aliens that become the center of the attention in the film.



Figure 11. Like the day they arrived

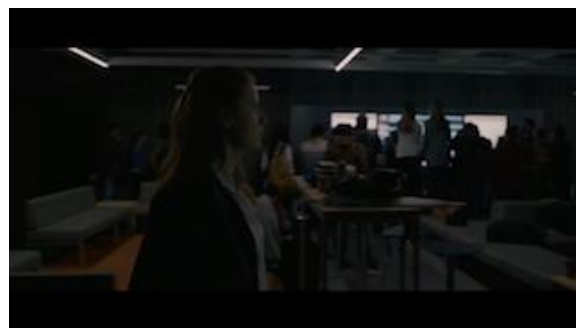


Figure 12. Indifferent



Figure 13. *Where is everyone?*



Figure 14. *The news in class*

Moreover, the utterance “they arrive” is said by Colonel Weber on the first day Louise and Ian come to the shell to interact with the heptapods for the first time. When they all are ready inside the shell, and nothing happens for a while, Louise asks Colonel Weber “What happens now?” and he replies “They arrive” and that is just before the aliens show up on the barrier. Thus, we believe that the polysemy “they arrive” as spoken by Louise and Colonel Weber in these two different contexts refers to the Arrival of the aliens.

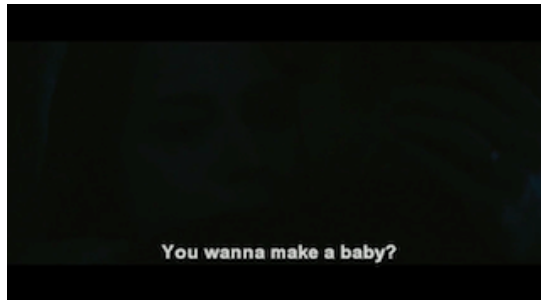


Figure 15. *Alpha's now in the nave.*



Figure 16. *They arrive.*

On the other hand, the title *Arrival* does not technically appear in the first part before the film is about to start nor at the beginning of the film but only at the end of the film. The film ends with Louise and Ian dancing in the house, and Ian is asking her “Do you want to make a baby?” This question ends the film, and the title is the first and last time ever appeared on the screen. Thus we may also infer that the title *Arrival* refers to the Arrival of the daughter, Hannah, or their new family, together with Ian and the upcoming daughter, Hannah. The polysemy of the verb *arrival* has two different references because it appears in different contexts: at the beginning of the film to indicate the Arrival of the aliens and at the end of the film conclude the resolution of the film that leads to a happy ending or a new hope.



*Figure 17. You wanna make a baby?*



*Figure 18. Arrival, the title*

### **Why is polysemy treated and manifested in *Arrival*?**

After analyzing all 30 polysemy with five key examples and identifying the thematic functions described and shown in the film, the different categories of polysemy in the sci-fi film are tested by three considerations suggested by Ceccarelli (1998). They include the “resistive reading” or dominance of the author; the “strategic ambiguity” that imparting the opposed interpretations; and the “hermeneutic depth” or the audience’s freedom to accept the multi interpretations. Finally, a complete representation of polysemy in the sci-fi film may be accomplished.

The first category that is related to the “resistive reading” shows whether or not the author has a hidden agenda with the film production. In order to investigate this, the sociocultural environment of the film must be revealed. Denis Villeneuve produces the movie itself and released in the cinema in 2016, a few days after the US election. However, this is an adaptation film taken from a novella *Story of Your Life* by Ted Chiang in 1998. Thus, the idea must have already been there long before the political moment. However, a few articles discussed the themes of the film from different areas, and one major theme that is explained in most of the research is the communication issues represented by the aliens, the characters, the nations, and the conflicts between them (Collocations cross-linguistically : corpora,dictionaries and language teaching, 2016; Lucking, 2017). It indicates that there is a possibility of having the contextual factors that shape the film adaptation. The producer must have seen significant ideas that appeared in 1998 so that he decided to modify the short story relevant to a 2016 film. However, “resistive reading” does not occur in this film.



The other category of polysemy in the film is “strategic ambiguity” that divides the audience into two opposite sides: the pros and cons. By analyzing the five critical examples of polysemy, it is seen that the meanings or senses of polysemy may refer to almost any referents. However, the two different appreciations do not indicate any conflicts for the audience who interpret the film. Nevertheless, the set of polysemy that includes *war*, *kangaroo*, *make a quick work of the insurgents*, *offer weapon*, and Arrival mainly, are not intentionally being used to cause any divergence audience. In the case of *war* and *kangaroo*, for example, Louise explicitly explained the multi interpretations of the word from different perspectives. The different interpretations open the audience’s mind that people having different opinions is acceptable and that we have to respect their arguments because this numerous diversity that complete us into one. This opinion supports the idea of revealing *offer weapon* that may not be accomplished without gathering all the information from 12 vessels.

The last category of polysemy in the film is “hermeneutic depth”. It happens when the film does not force the only interpretation to the audience but lets the audience decide and embrace the different empathetic by themselves. The context of *a war* that is initiated at the beginning of the film does not explain to us the reason why Colonel Weber chose Louise instead of Professor Danvers, but we can infer it from her intelligence and open-minded attitude to different points of view. In the case of *"make a quick work of the insurgents"* for instance, it is more sort of new information for us rather than to make us choose between the others. It is because the reason why Colonel Weber conducted the massacre was based on Louise’ prompt action on the Farsi translation, thus it is not entirely Colonel Weber’s responsibility but because it is more like a duty that must be executed quickly. The most intriguing phrase is *offered weapon* because it becomes the climax of the conflict, but the audience is led to take sides on Louise’s interpretation than that of the contrary because General Shang may bring the nation into a world war, something preventable in the name of humanity. Moreover, Louise’s actions in demonstrating the evidence seem to be more reasonable that it could save people’s lives than destroying human nature, which is more of a contrast to the audience’s expectation. However, the heroic actions of Louise when she interpreted *offer weapon* do not merely make the audience agree with her choice all the time because one of *"arrival"*s meanings is related to her daughter’s birth and the aliens’ Arrival.

### Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

To answer the first research question about the phenomena of the polysemy found in the film, the elaboration of the multiple possible meanings could be found by interpreting the narrative of the film as seen through the dialogues, the gestures, and the scenes. The findings show that there are 30 polysemy found in the film with five critical examples of *war*, *kangaroo*, *to make a quick work of the insurgents*, *offer weapon*, and *Arrival* presented in the analysis. The least number of meanings are two for each datum, while the most number of possible meanings can reach up to more than five different interpretations. From all the 30 polysemy, five polysemy are explicitly explained throughout the film, including *kangaroo* and *offer weapon*, while the most numbers of 22 polysemy are implied in the film, such as *war* and *to make quick work of the insurgents*, and the rest, 3 of them, is never mentioned in the film, such as the title *Arrival*.

Meanwhile, to answer the second research question related to the reasons for manifesting polysemy in the film depends on the emergence of the polysemy. This paper has shown that the different senses or meanings in polysemy influence the translator's decision in translating the polysemy. However, there are significant ways of making the inferences of the set of the presented polysemy developed in the film's message. From the three types that this sci-fi film may be categorized, the hermeneutic depth is the most general nature for this polysemy. Similar to its category of film, science fiction presenting alien as the main forces, *Arrival* (2016) is trying to open any interpretation for the audience to consider the alienation's references. However, by recognizing the phenomena of polysemy in a particular film, the confusion of misreading or misunderstanding the polysemic text or film might be reduced. It is also realized that polysemy is not always related to power relations from the author to the audience, or specific political discourse. In this case, polysemy in the science fiction film *Arrival* (2016) has its way to reach the audience, which is by recognizing the multiple possibilities that at the end the audience can finally truly appreciate the message of the film.

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