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Problems of Translating Exception in The Noble Quran into English

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Abstract

The present paper deals with the translation of exception in the Noble Quran syntactically and rhetorically. The purpose of this research is to determine whether the various translation techniques that are employed to convey the varied stylistic and semantic translations of "exception" in the Noble Quran are adequate or not. The goal was accomplished by determining the various definitions of exception in the Arabic and English languages. Then, determining if each translation method—semantic or stylistic—was adequate for expressing each type of meaning. Several Qur'anic verses were selected, and their various translations were compared with the original text. There are several particles that are used to express exception such as "إلا إىلا", "غير غير", "خالا", "أءا", "حاشا", "ليس لىس" and other particles that vary from one grammarian to another. The two particles "إلا إىلا" and "غير غير" are the major ones, so they will be tackled in this paper. The study hypothesizes that exception particles are not restricted to lexical meanings only, but they also express rhetorical meanings. Nida's equivalence model is

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adopted in this study to assess the appropriateness of the translation. It is clear that exception particles serve multiple purposes in Arabic; as a result, translators view them as an obstacle to finding the appropriate translation for their English renditions.

مشكلات ترجمة الاستثناء في القرآن الكريم إلى اللغة الإنجليزية

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المستخلص

يتناول هذا البحث ترجمة الاستثناء في القرآن الكريم نحويًا وبلاغيًا. إنّ الغرض من هذا البحث هو تحديد ما إذا كانت تقنيات الترجمة المختلفة المستخدمة لنقل الترجمات الدلالية والاسلوبية المتنوعة لأسلوب الاستثناء في القرآن الكريم كافية أم لا. تم إنجاز هذا الغرض من خلال تحديد التعريف المختلفة للاستثناء في اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية ومن ثم تحديد فيما إذا كانت كل طريقة ترجمة، اسلوبية أو دلالية، كافية للتعبير عن كل نوع من أنواع المعنى. عدّة آيات قرآنية تم اختيارها ومن ثم تمت مقارنة ترجماتها المتنوعة مع النص الأصلي. هنالك عدّة أدوات تُستخدم للتعبير عن الاستثناء مثل "إلا"، "غير"، "خلا"، "عدا"، "حاشا"، "ليس" وأدوات أخرى تتنوع من نحوي إلى آخر. الأدوات "إلا" و "غير" هما الأدوات الرئيستان، لذلك سأطرق لهما في هذا البحث. تفترض الدراسة أنّ أدوات الاستثناء ليست محصورة بالمعاني المعجمية فقط، بل أيضاً تعبر عن معانٍ بلاغية. تم الاعتماد على نموذج تكافؤ نايدا في هذه الدراسة لتقييم ملاءمة الترجمة. يُستنتج من ذلك أنّ أدوات الاستثناء تقدّم أغراضاً متعدّدة في اللغة العربية، ونتيجةً لذلك يرى المترجمون أنّها تشكل عائقاً لإيجاد الترجمة الملائمة للترجمة باللغة الإنجليزية.

Introduction

Exception in Arabic

Exception is the extraction of a noun that is present after "illa" "إلا" or one of its sisters which is called "المستثنى" from the rule of the noun that comes before the exception particle which is called "المستثنى منه" for example,

The students stood up except Zaid.

قام الطلاب إلا زيدا

(Al-Ghalayini, 1993, Vol.3:127).

Linguists say that exception is the extraction either by saying or act; whereas grammarians say that exception is the method by which exception is achieved by an exception particle (Eid, 1971: 484).

The meaning of exception is taking out something from which something else has been inserted or inserting something in what something else has been taken out (Ibnu Jinni, 1988: 54).

Ibnu Siraj (1996, Vol. 1: 282-284) states that exception is excluding part from whole and thing from things. He also mentions that the noun that comes after "Illa لا" cannot take the same case as the one that comes before it (Included المستثنى منه).

Al-Hamawi (2004, Vol.1: 263) states that exception is of two types: linguistic and rhetorical. The linguistic exception is extracting a few out of many and grammarians ramified it into several branches, whereas the rhetorical one is the exception that is used after extracting a few out of many and it has an additional meaning above exception one and covers it with a delectation charm.

Previous Studies

Recently, some studies have appeared that focused on the translation of exceptions in the Noble Quran. Two research papers are found about this study. After reading them, it is found that the two studies are different from the current study and they do not tackle the main topics in detail. Ziyad and Muhammed (2012) study the translation of exceptions in the Noble Quran into English. Their study concentrates on the rhetorical meaning of exception regardless of the syntactic uses of exception. The other one is Zubaida's study (2016) which tries to study the translation of exceptions in the Noble Quran from syntactic and rhetorical studies.

The Relation between Grammar and Rhetoric

Grammar and rhetoric are two separate sciences. Each one of them has its borders, rules, and matters that distinguish it from the other type. Grammar, on the one hand, deals with the single sentence which is characterized by the completeness of meaning, the correctness of linguistic and morphological structure as well as the accuracy of its structure. Rhetoric, on the other hand, was adopted by rhetoricians at the beginning of its emergence to reveal the miracle of The Noble Quran. Some rhetoricians attributed rhetoric to the meaning and some of them attributed it to the expression or both together. Others attributed it to the anecdotes of regulations through the styles of The Noble Quran (Al-shajrawi, 1991: 43).

The task of grammar has been finished because it achieved the correctness of sentences. The rhetorical art, after that, must control the sentence fluently and strongly about the hearer and addressee because rhetoric requires two things: the grammatical right and then the fairness and suitability of the addressee's sense and mind (Al-Shayeb, 1966:26).

Types of Exception

Exception in Arabic has two main types: complete exception and emptied one. Complete exception is divided into two types: complete linked exception in which the

excluded *المستثنى* is from the same sort of the included *منه المستثنى*, and detached complete exception in which excluded and included are not from the same sort.

As for the second type of exception (i.e. emptied exception), included is eliminated, and exception particle is regarded as a cancelled exception particle. The sentence of emptied exception is often negative.

Linked and Detached Complete Exception

Grammarians, jurists, and interpreters divided exceptions about sort into two types: linked exception *استثناء متصل* and detached one *استثناء منقطع*. If the noun that comes after "Illa *إلا*" (i.e. excluded *المستثنى*) is from the same sort, the exception is linked as in

People stood up except Zaid. *قام القوم الا زيداً.*

But if excluded is from a different sort, then an exception is detached such as

Passengers attended except for their luggage. *حضر المسافرون إلا امتعتهم.*

As long as a linked exception has fixed rules and limits and a detached exception is a branch for searching the meaning in the context, grammarians, jurists, and interpreters concentrate on detached exception and its cases (Al-Shajrawi, 1991: 179).

Emptied Exception

It is the exception in which included *منه المستثنى* is deleted from its sentence in a non-certified utterance, so two things are accompanied in this approach: negation *النفي* and the deletion of included *منه المستثنى*. Thus, it is the exception that is based on non-certified and incomplete speech. In this approach, the noun that comes after "illa *إلا*" is inflected according to the elements that are present before "illa *إلا*". This type is called "emptied exception *استثناء مفرغ*" because what comes before "illa *إلا*" was emptied only for inflectional work of the noun that comes after "illa *إلا*" and not for anything else (Al-shajrawi, 1991: 202).

Sibawaih(1988, vol.2:310) says: you should know that the noun which comes after "illa *إلا*" has two cases: firstly, the case in which the noun is in its position before attaching "illa *إلا*". In such a case, the noun is inserted in something and then the negation of anything else about it as in

No one came to me except Zaid. *ما جاءني إلا زيداً.*

I saw no one except Zaid. *ما رأيت إلا زيداً.*

Exception Particles

Exception in Arabic has several particles. Sibawaih (1988, vol.2:310-350) points out that the particles of exception are eight which are: "Illa *إلا*", "Gayr *غير*", "Layekoon *لا يكون*", "Laysa *ليس*", "Ada *عدا*", "Khala *خلا*", "Hasha *حاشا*" and "Siwa *سوى*".

Al-Mubarrid (1979, vol.4:389-392) mentioned the same particles, but he added another particle "Sawa'a سواء". He says that "Illa إلا" is the original particle of exception, "Gayr غير", "Siwa سوى" and "Sawa'a سواء" are nouns, "khala خلا", "Hasha حاشا" and "Illa إلا" are particles and "khala خلا", "Hasha حاشا", "Ada عدا", "Layekoon لا يكون" and "Laysa ليس" are verbs. The two particles: "Illa إلا" and "Gayr غير" are mentioned in the Noble Quran in the meaning of exception, whereas the other particles are not mentioned in the meaning of exception in the Noble Quran (Jabran, 2008: 46).

"Illa إلا"

It is the main exception particle in the Arabic language. The other particles are attached to it because they have the meaning of "Illa إلا". Some nouns have the meaning of exception particle "Illa إلا" which are: "Gayr غير" and "Siwa سوى" and there are verbs which are: "Layekoon لا يكون", "Laysa ليس", "Ada عدا" and "Khala خلا". There are also genitive particles, but not nouns, that have the meaning of "Illa إلا" which are: "Khala خلا" and "Hasha حاشا" (Sibawaih, 1988, Vol. 2: 309).

"Gayr غير"

Sibawaih (1988, Vol.2: 343) says: It is the most inherent particle to "Illa إلا". It has the meaning of "Illa إلا". It has the same rule as the noun that comes after "Illa إلا". For each position, one can exclude by "Illa إلا", and is permitted to exclude by "Gayr غير". "Gayr غير" could be a descriptive نعتاً and it follows what comes before it (Al-Zujaji, 1984: 232).

Al-Qarrafi (1982: 115) says that the reason for the similarity between "Illa إلا" and "Gayr غير" is the noun that comes after them is contrary to what comes before each one of the two in affirmation and negation.

Exception in English

The most common prepositions that are used to express exception in English are: except for, with the exception of, apart from, aside from, except, excepting, excluding, but and save. Consider the following examples:

We had a pleasant time, except for the weather.

With the exception of Jane, none of us had any money.

(Quirk.R., Greenbaum.S., Leech.G., & Svartvik.J., 1985:707)

Except/ Except for

These two prepositions are generally used before the noun phrases as in:

I have cleaned the house except for the bathroom.

He ate everything on his plate except the beans.

They both are also used after generalizing words such as: all, any every, no, everything, anybody, nowhere, nobody and whole. Consider the following examples:

I have cleaned all the rooms except(for) the bathroom. (Swan. M, 2005: 173-174).

But

"But", in some cases, is used to mean "except" after all, none, every, any, no, everything, everybody, nothing, nobody, anywhere etc...

He eats nothing but hamburgers.

I have finished all the jobs but one.

The verb form after "but" is dependent on what comes before it. Infinitives as well as ---ing forms are usually used without "to" as in: She is not interested in anything but skiing (Swan. M, 2005: 94).

"But" as a preposition has to be differentiated from "but" as a conjunction. The similarity and contrast between the two functions are bright out in:

Everyone had a good time but John. (preposition: "with the exception of", "except for")

The students had a good time but not John / but John did not. (conjunction)

(Quirk.R., Greenbaum.S., Leech.G., &Svartvik.J.,1985:707-709).

Apart from

The two expressions: except, and apart from are sometimes confused.

Except is usually used to mean (subtract). It is like saying (without) or (minus) as in the following example:

I like all musical instruments except the violin.

(Apart from) is used in both senses.(i.e. it means either add or subtract) as in the two following examples:

Apart from the violin, he plays the piano and the flute. (Beside the violin.....)

I like all musical instruments apart from the violin. (..... except the violin)

The two expressions can have the same meaning if they are preceded by no, nobody, nothing, etc...

He has nothing except/ apart from his salary. (He only has his salary.)

Nida's Equivalence: Formal and Dynamic Equivalence

Eugene Nida's theory of translation evolved from his own practical work from the 1940s onwards when he translated and organized the translation of the Bible, and trained a number of inexperienced translators who worked in the field. Two significant books from

the 1960s, : Toward a Science of Translating (Nida 1964a) and the co-authored The Theory and Practice of Translation (Nida and Taber 1969).

The old terms such as 'literal', 'free' and 'faithful' translation are discarded by Nida in favour of 'two basic orientations' or 'types of equivalence' (Nida 1964a: 159): (1) formal equivalence; and (2) dynamic equivalence.

Formal equivalence concentrates attention toward the message's actual substance and form. It is important that the message in the target language closely corresponds to the various components in the source language (Nida 1964a: 159). Formal equivalence—later referred to as "formal correspondence" (Nida and Taber, 1969: 22)—is closely focused on the ST structure, which has a significant impact on accuracy and correctness. The most common type of translations of this type are "gloss translations," which closely resemble the structure of ST and frequently include academic footnotes.

Dynamic equivalence, later 'functional', equivalence is based on what Nida calls 'the principle of equivalent effect', where "the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message" (Nida 1964: 159). This means that the message aims at complete naturalness of expression and must be adjusted to the linguistic requirements and cultural expectations of the recipient. This method of translation involves translating the source language "thought for thought" as opposed to "word for word," as in formal equivalence. 'Naturalness' is a main requirement for Nida. Indeed, he defines the aim of dynamic equivalence as seeking "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (Nida 1964: 166, Nida and Taber 1969: 12).

SL Text (1)

(يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَرْوُتَ وَمَا يَعْلَمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ)
(البقرة: 102)

Interpretation

In this noble verse, "حتى" means "إلا أن". This means that "حتى" is an exceptive particle (Al-Zemekhshery,1986, Vol.1: 129). "حتى" could be an exception particle in Arabic but rarely (Ibnu Hisham, 1984, Vol.1: 125). Allah explains the situation of the two angels by saying that they both do not teach anyone unless they warn him deeply. Thus the rhetorical meaning of exception implied in this noble verse is a warning that appears in their saying. (إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ).

TL Texts

1- Rashad: They taught the people sorcery, and that which was sent down through the two angels of Babel, Haroot and Maroot. **These two did not divulge such knowledge without pointing out:** "This is a test. You shall not abuse such knowledge."

2- Sarwar: They taught magic to the people whatever was revealed to the two angels, Harut and Marut, in Babylon. **The two angels did not teach anything to anyone without saying,** "Our case is a temptation for the people, so do not hide the truth."

3- Shakir: They taught men sorcery and that was sent down to the two angels at Babel, Harut and Marut, **yet these two taught no man until they had said**, "Surely we are only a trial, therefore do not be a disbeliever."

4- Sherali: They taught people falsehood and deception, and they claim that they follow what was revealed to the two angels in Babylon, Harut and Marut. **But these two taught no one anything until they had said**, "We are but a trial from ALLAH, do not, therefore, reject what we say."

Analysis and Discussion:

Table(1): SL Text (1) Analysis

No.	Translator	TL Texts	Equivalence	
			Formal	Dynamic
1	Rashad	These two did not divulge such knowledge without pointing out		+
2	Sarwar	The two angels did not teach anything to anyone without saying		+
3	Shakir	yet these two taught no man until they had said	+	
4	Sherali	But these two taught no one anything until they had said	+	

The two Translators 1 and 2 use "without". "**without**" seems to be a good corresponding equivalent since one of its meanings is "إِلَّا", so it implies the meaning of the exception. Thus, it is considered the correct translation that fits the exact meaning of "حَتَّى" in this noble verse. The two Translators 6 and 7 use "until". "**Until**" seems not to be a good corresponding equivalent for "حَتَّى" in this noble verse because it does not have the intended meaning that "حَتَّى" means in this context.

SL Text (2)

(لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ) (الانبياء: 22)

Interpretation

Grammarians say that (إِلَّا) means "غير" because if the heavens and the earth were managed by gods except Allah, they would be ruined. (إِلَّا), in this noble verse, cannot be an exceptive particle because if it was regarded as an exceptive particle, then the meaning would be if there were gods but Allah does not exist among them, the heavens and the earth would be ruined and this entails if Allah is present with gods, no harm will be done to the heavens and the earth, but this is a falsehood because if there are gods with or without Allah, the ruin will be found forever (Al-Razi,1981, Vol.19: 150).

TL Texts

1- Rashad: If there were in them (the heavens and the earth) other gods beside God, there would have been chaos.

2- Sarwar: Had there been other deities in the heavens and the earth besides God, both the heavens and the earth would have been destroyed.

3- Shakir: If there had been in them any gods except Allah, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder.

4- Sherali: If there had been in the heavens and in the earth other gods beside ALLAH, then surely both would have gone to ruin.

Analysis and Discussion:

Table (2): SL Text (2) Analysis

No.	Translator	TL Texts	Equivalence	
			Formal	Dynamic
1	Rashad	If there were in them (the heavens and the earth) other gods beside God	+	
2	Sarwar	Had there been other deities in the heavens and the earth besides God	+	
3	Shakir	If there had been in them any gods except Allah	+	
4	Sherali	If there had been in the heavens and in the earth other gods beside ALLAH	+	

(Beside) is used by the two translators 1 and 4. This translator presents an unsatisfactory translation since (beside) is used to mean (next to). We notice that translator 2 uses (besides) as an equivalent for (إِلَّا), and this is regarded as a good corresponding equivalent as long as (besides) can be used to mean (as well as). In such a case, the ruin is attributed to the multiplicity of gods. (Except), that is used by the two translators 3 is the least accurate translation because it turned the intended meaning because of rendering (لَا) into (except) and this is impossible because (إِلَّا) in this noble verse is an adjective for (الهِمَّة) which means (غير) and not an exceptive particle.

SL Text (3)

(:وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِئُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ) (الروم55)

Interpretation

The Hour, in this noble verse, is doomsday. It is called the Hour because it occurs at the last hour of the world hours or because it occurs suddenly. The criminals, on that Day, say that they stayed in the world or the graves or the period between the world expiration and resurrection time for just an hour or a short period (Al-Kashaf, 2009: 833).

TL Texts

1-Rashad: On the day when the Hour comes to pass, the guilty will swear that **they lasted (in this world) only one hour**. That is how wrong they were.

2-Sarwar: On the day when the Hour of Doom comes, the criminals will swear that **they have remained (in their graves) for no more than an hour**. They had been inventing lies in this way.

3-Shakir: And at the time when the hour shall come, the guilty shall swear (that) **they did not tarry but an hour**; thus are they ever turned away.

4-Sherali: And on the day when the appointed Hour shall arrive, the guilty will swear **that they tarried not save a brief period** - thus are they turned away from the right path.

Analysis and Discussion:

Table (3): SL Text (3) Analysis

No.	Translator	TL Texts	Equivalence	
			Formal	Dynamic
1	Rashad	they lasted (in this world) only one hour		+
2	Sarwar	they have remained for no more than an hour		+
3	Shakir	they did not tarry but an hour	+	
4	Sherali	they tarried not save a brief period	+	

The two translators 1 and 2 followed the style of deleting the letter of negation and exception particle to express the emptied exception. This is an acceptable way to translate the emptied exception from SL text into TL text. Translator 1 used the conjunction (only) and translator 2 used the phrase (for no more than) to express the restriction which implied in the verse mentioned above. Translator 3 used the style of negation and exception, and he used an auxiliary verb in front of the negation letter which makes the expression stronger than that which is without an auxiliary verb (i.e. he did manage well by following such a way). We notice that translator 4 used the style of negation and

exception without using an auxiliary verb before the negation letter, but this does not prevent giving the right meaning to the text.

SL Text (4):

(وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ إِلَّا مَنْ أَسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَاتَّبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُبِينٌ) (الحجر: 17- 18)

Interpretation

Allah informs us that the heavens are kept from the cursed devils by Him in order not to listen to anything from the news of the heavens about the revelation or anything else. The revelation is not stolen by the devils because Allah says: " انهم عن السمع لمعزولون " (Ashuara'a: 212). If they listen to anything from the news of the heavens, they convey them to the priests posthaste and they are followed by the falling stars which kill or madden them (Alqurtubi, 2006, Vol.12: 188).

TL Texts

1-Rashad: And we guarded it against every rejected devil. **If any of them sneaks around to listen**, a mighty projectile will chase him back.

2-Sarwar: We have protected them from every condemned devil, **except for those who stealthily try to listen to the heavens**, but who are chased away by a bright flame.

3-Shakir: And We guard it against every accursed Shaitan, **But he who steals a hearing**, so there follows him a visible flame.

4-Sherali: And WE have guarded it against the intrusion of every rejected Satan. **But if anyone hears stealthily something of revelation and distorts it**, there pursues him a bright flame.

Analysis and Discussion:

Table (4): SL Text (4) Analysis

No.	Translator	TL Texts	Equivalence	
			Formal	Dynamic
1	Rashad	If any of them sneaks around to listen		+
2	Sarwar	except for those who stealthily try to listen to the heavens	+	
3	Shakir	But he who steals a hearing	+	
4	Sherali	But if anyone hears stealthily something of revelation and distorts it		+

Translator 1 used the style of condition to convey the meaning, but this is something different from exception expression. Thus, he did not achieve the correct meaning. Although translator 2 used the correct exceptive particle (except for), there is a mistake because the excluded *المستثنى* in this text is singular while the translator used the demonstrative pronoun (those) which is used for plural. The verb (استرق) indicates the singular excluded not the plural one. Translators 3 used the exceptive particle (But). He managed well because he chose this equivalent which was suitable for the intended meaning. Translators 4 used (but) as a letter of restriction *حرف استدراك* that can be used with the detached exception *الاستثناء المنقطع* not with the linked one *الاستثناء المتصل*, so he did not express the intended meaning.

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