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Assessment Study of Arabic-English Translated Religious Texts

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Abstract

This paper investigates assessing Arabic-English translated religious texts. Throughout history, religious texts translation has been an important part in spreading the divine word. It has been also used to mirror the importance of morals and faith, and to teach newly-converted people the rules and premises of the new religion. The study aims to answer the following questions 1) What are the strategies adopted by translator when they deal with religious texts? 2) What are the solutions available to overcome the problems encountered by religious texts translators? The author presents many culture-specific expressions and other linguistic-related problems that encounter translators during rendering from Arabic into English. †The data collected in this paper is taken from different Quranic interpretations which have been analysed and assessed in terms of the strategies and

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procedures that should be followed in dealing with translating the religious texts. The author suggests some solutions that can be followed in dealing with translating religious texts.

Keywords: culture, equivalence, Quran, religious texts, translation

دراسة تقييمية لنصوص دينية مترجمة من اللغة العربية للإنجليزية

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المستخلص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية تقييم النصوص الدينية المترجمة من اللغة العربية إلى الإنجليزية. فعلى مر التاريخ، شكّلت ترجمة النصوص الدينية جزءاً هاماً في نشر كلام الله. كما استُخدمت لتسليط الضوء على أهمية الأخلاق والإيمان، وكذلك لتعليم المهتمين الجدد قواعد الدين الجديد ومبادئه. تهدف الدراسة للإجابة عن السؤالين الآتيين: (1) ماهي الاستراتيجيات التي اتبعتها المترجمون في عملهم مع ترجمة النصوص الدينية؟ (2) ماهي الحلول المتوافرة للتغلب على المشاكل التي يواجهها مترجمو النصوص الدينية؟ يعرض الباحث العديد من المصطلحات الثقافية، بالإضافة إلى المشكلات اللغوية الأخرى التي تواجه المترجمين أثناء الترجمة من العربية إلى الإنجليزية. وقد جُمعت البيانات في هذه الورقة من تفاسير قرآنية مختلفة، جرى تحليلها وتقييمها من حيث الاستراتيجيات والإجراءات المتبعة في عملية الترجمة. ويقترح الباحث بعض الحلول التي يمكن اتباعها في ترجمة النصوص الدينية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القرآن، النصوص الدينية، الترجمة، التكافؤ، الثقافة

1- Introduction

The relevant literature of translation has tremendously affirmed the view of using translation to fill in the 'gap' between culture and language, basically done via its process of rendering ST into TT. Not only that, but this literature has mentioned a number of

critical debates, like whether translation is a creative art or an imitation, is ST-TT coincidence related to structure or meaning? Or is it a place between them due to its role as mediation. In this regard, the process of translation, as mentioned by Bassnett (2002), must hold both structure and meaning. She points out that the translation:

involves the rendering of a source language text into the target language so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and the structures of the source language will be preserved as closely as possible but not closely that the target language structures will be seriously distorted. (p.2)

Undoubtedly, translation is a very complicated process because translators are not often the people “who invades, extracts and brings home” (Steiner, 1975, p. 298). Instead, they have to bring a similar effect to the extent that TT can be acceptable in its new sociocultural environment. In a similar perspective, Hatim and Mason (1990) believe that the translator as a reader can perform the vital role “of constructing a model of intended meaning of source text and of forming judgments about the probable impacts of source text on intended receivers” (p.92). One of the major problems facing translators is equivalence, so the selected communication model is the same principle between the text of origin of a language and the text of origin of another text (Beaugrande, 1994, p. 56). In other words, if translators are behind successfully-created and relevant translation, they have to look for mechanisms and procedures that help them producing the same effect on readers to those achieved by the original text. That is, translators work in the heart or ‘nucleus’ of TL culture, not only to accommodate the linguistic principles of TL community, but also the sociocultural principles of language use (Olshtain & Blum Kulka, 1996, p. 16). Translating religious texts is of this type, especially any (un)conscious mistake can lead to dramatic consequences, unless a successful equivalence is held.

2- Equivalence in Translation

Equivalence in translation is a significant factor, and the perplexing issue in the translation process is finding the equivalent expression that is acceptable for the target audience (Altarabin, 2018). This is importantly done by finding out the appropriate words so as to lead his audience to accept and believe the TT content. Hence, equivalence means

“the correspondence of effects: those of the original on the SL audience versus those of the translation on the target language audience” (Beaugrande, 1994, p. 56). The literature has reported many types of equivalence, but the most important ones are the following four: ideational, functional, formal, and dynamic.

Regarding the various natural languages, two contradictory views have been created as far as equivalence is concerned. These are formalists and functionalists. Chomsky, as the pioneer representative of the former, believes that natural languages are systems of finite rules for generating an infinite number of abstract sentences and they relegate lexical items to movable syntactic pieces or counters to be selected and manipulated by the principle of open choice: any word can serve if it fits the syntactic constraints. (Beaugrande, 1994, p. 55)

This simply means that linguistic forms, of course of ST and TT, have to be organized and then formulated appropriately. On the other hand, the latter, i.e., the functionalists, represented by the writings of Halliday, believes that natural languages as influential means of communication; this lies consequently in “attaining basic communicative acts and moves” (p.56). Also, this finds its way in translation, since the same aim is behind. The issue of equivalence, to select a formalist or a functionalist orientation, finds its relevance in translating texts with no equivalence in TT. A vital example for years of critical debate is "الشريعة", since an exact equivalent is not available in English. If TT translator insisted on translating this word, many strategies might be used, like using a long sentence to give its meaning. Finally, the Arabic word has its lexicalization in the English dictionary, of course its unique Arabic sense needs to be checked. To add other tips for translating such examples, the notions of acceptability and adequacy should be taken into consideration before and also after translating a specific text.

3- Translatability vs. untranslatability

The relevant literature has also moved to examine a third issue in translating religious text, namely (un)translatability. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997, p.179) examine ‘translatability’, stating that it is a term, of course to be compared with its direct opposition,

namely ‘untranslatability’, used to examine and then “to discuss the extent to which it is possible to translate either individual words and phrases or entire texts from one language to another”. In other words, they do confirm the idea that even if the translator successfully transferred the semantic meanings of a given text, there will be inevitably a loss in the pragmatic meanings. In other words, there is no identical matching between two texts in terms of linguistic realization, context of situation, and context of culture. Indeed, (un)translatability might appear on the lexical, phrasal, or textual level or all levels at once. (1997, p.179)

It is important here to state that translatability depends on fidelity. The principal feature of fidelity assumes that, according to certain criteria, the SL and the TL in a given text can be truly equal. But the actual realization states that the process of ST into TT translation "can never be equal". That is, there will be no actual or identical equivalents, “yet there will be information transfer and translatability with a remarkable degree of fidelity” which facilitates understanding, as claimed by Barnstone (1993, pp.42-5). On the contrary, the main reason of untranslatability is the "differences within and between languages" (Barnstone, 1993, p.42), which can be illustrated by the following words:

A situation in which the linguistic elements of TT1 [ST] cannot be replaced or encoded adequately in structural, linear, functional or semantic terms as a consequence of a lack of denotation and connotation in the language of TT2 [TT]. (Zepetnek, 1995, p.442)

Zepetnek describes the notion of untranslatability as a ‘gap’ between SL and TL systems regarding the notions of denotation and connotation, leading consequently to problems of mismatching. In this respect, Bassnett (2002) states that majority of these problems can be culturally loaded.

A sentence such as "هي لايمكنها الزواج به لأنه أحد محارمها" is not only culturally-loaded, but also religiously; incorrect or inaccurate translation may lead to critical problems of mismatching. Therefore, translating it into ‘She can’t get married to him as he is one of her guardians/ protectors, or because of a taboo, incest’, would be unacceptable in the English culture. The important problem of such mismatching is in the use of concepts like "محرم" since it is not part of the TL cultural and religious system. Therefore, extra

explanations are needed culturally and religiously. The issue will be more critical if "حرمة" explanations are needed culturally and religiously. The issue will be more critical if "حرمة مؤقتة" and "دائمة" are taken into consideration.

4- Translation of Religious Texts

Throughout history, religious texts translation has been an important part in spreading the divine word. It was also used to mirror the importance of morals and faith, and to teach newly- converted people the rules and premises of the new religion. It should be as precise and effective as possible and a strong instrument for missionary goals, and it must be in line with appropriate doctrine. Translators must comprehend faithfully the ST and, then precisely, and comprehensively render it to TL. Of course, translation theorists have emphasized that this must be done honestly, to close the door in front of deleting or adding anything to the ST. Dickins et al (2002, p. 178) state that

[t]he subject matter of religious texts implies the existence of a spiritual world that is not fictive, but has its own external realities and truths. The author is understood not to be free to create the world that animates the subject matter, but to be merely instrumental in exploring it.

Cultural or religious problems or mismatching may result from rendering Islamic religious items into other languages. Recent studies in translation have affirmed this, stating that novice translators and professional translators may encounter difficulties or challenges, leading their products to be not convenient. One of the major issues in this context is determining the appropriate lexical and cultural equivalents for such objects. One of the most difficult decisions a translator of Islamic religious texts has is deciding whether cultural concerns should be prioritized: SL's cultural elements, TL's cultural aspects, or a mix of the two. Nida (1964) prioritized the cultural characteristics of the target text while focusing on the semantic and pragmatic basis of the significance in his Bible translation. He argued against words having a fixed or unchanging meaning. To Nida, the functional element stated in the meaning of words is very influential, to the extent that consulting the context may be helpful. The cultural translation, Nida and Taber (1969/1982) believe that

in the cultural translation a modification in the message content would be probable to meet TL readers, even these modifications are not of the inherent linguistic aspects of SL. As a result, translators of ST culture need to take their decisions towards selecting to be source-oriented or target-oriented (see El Haj Ahmed & Abu Shammala, 2020, p. 255).

The failure of a TL equivalent to render the same meaning suggested in the SL equivalence also reveals another challenge. For instance, we think immediately of lexical English equivalents "ablution" and "seclusion" when confronted with terms such as "وضوء" *wudu* or "اعتكاف" *itikaf*. In Arabic dictionaries, these two terms are used to address these religious activities or rituals, and these may be in a contrary position to their use or in Arabic. For instance, Merriam Webster Dictionary defines "ablution" as follows: "the act or action of bathing" and "the washing of one's body or part of it". The two definitions above do not express the implicated meaning in the word "وضوء" *Wudu*, used for washing body parts by water using the Islamic method, usually to prepare for the obligatory prayer "الصلاة", *salat*. Here, it is also necessary to state that Muslims do this act of bathing in other situations, like reciting the Holy Qur'an also before reading the Qur'an or when they look for spiritual cleanness. The same argument can be applied for the denotation and connotations of "اعتكاف". These examples illustrate the fact that translating Muslim religious discourse may lead to more cultural and religious problems, since these terms are missing in the TL. The word "عدة" *Iddah*, for example has no English equivalent due to being not existent neither in their faith nor in their routines. It has two references in our life as Muslims: the duration of a wife's divorce or her husband's death, in both she has to wait for 90 or 130 days before being married to another man. The duration may be longer if the divorced is pregnant. Religious scholars say that the aim of this duration is to know if she was pregnant or not, after being living with her husband. Other ethical or cultural tips are existent here. The religious and social understanding of "العدة" has proven that it is one of the richest words in meaning in Arabic. Mahmoud (2015, p.7) mentions another example, which is the word "التيمم" *Tayyammum* to mean literally a 'purpose'. He mentioned the following:

In Islamic Law, it refers to 'Aiming for or seeking soil to wipe one's face and hands with the intention of purification and preparing oneself to pray, and so on. This act of ritual cleansing is proven by the Qur'an, Sunnah (Prophetic Tradition).

He justifies this by saying that

[o]ne of the problems that arise when translating Islamic religious items is the rich implications included in it that makes the equivalent even if it is available in the target language unable to convey the same message. (Mahmoud, 2015, p.7)

The Arabic equivalents for 'paying money' can be "انفاق". It is of direct relevance to the Islamic economic system, especially Muslims read emphasizing this economic act of payment as a way of living with others or a way of being near to Allah. However, the word "انفاق" includes other presuppositions and implications, depending on the purpose or intention of paying money. The Islamic dictionary includes many other related terms, of course with their morphological derivatives, like "نحل", "عطاء", "الجهاد بالمال", "ايتاء", "صدقة". These carry lots of debatable implications within the Muslim discourse, due to the various interpretations of their meanings and uses locally and globally.

It seems that the cultural challenges for Arabic ST- English TT are of direct relevance among other challenges if religious discourse has been taken into consideration. One result of these challenges is misunderstanding of the TT readers. Mahmoud (2015) states that the cultural challenge of "فتح مكة", especially a quick survey of its English translation contains words like 'occupation' and 'conquest', neglecting that this fatah was bloodless and peaceful. On the other hand, the denotative and connotative meanings of its translation indicate force, war, bloodshed, violence as well as a wrong deed.

5- Word Order

As another source for ST-TT mismatching, Aziz (1988) has examined the typology and classification of Arabic word order. The similarities and differences in these two books are of direct relevance to any translator, especially they have stated that Arabic nominal sentences may be challenging to novice translators. The use of implied subjects, declinable

nouns, optional fronting and postponing are vital and also challenging. In this respect, Hoffmann (2004, p. 42) assumes that word order in the Qur'an

betrays an implicit topical hierarchy, in which important Subjects, Allah being the most prominent, seem to have a higher rate of Subject-Verb order than should be expected in a language where the Verb-Subject order generally dominates.

The unique VSO of Arabic has led to many problems or challenges to translators, among them the concord between the verb and other elements of the sentence in terms of gender, number, case, and person. These need much attention from translators since the subject may be implied. The possibility of changing this unmarked structure to marked ones like SVO "الوالي يعلن الحرب", VOS "قتل عيسى موسى". The last sentence can be read as VSO or VOS, consequently leading to a challenging translation. In fact, such change in the position of elements can be accompanied by changes in thematic roles. The following example from Sourat Faṭer (Originator) is illustrative:

"إنما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء" (فاطر 23)

"Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge" (Yusuf Ali's Translation, 2000) (Fatir 35:28)

The Arabic text reveals that the subject "العلماء" takes the final position in the sentence, leading consequently to a marked VOS order. In the English translation, the unmarked English SVO order is seen. Similarly, an aya from Sourat Al-Baqara (2: 255) shows the use of the bound morpheme "الهاء" as the object:

"لَا تَأْخُذْهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ" (البقرة 255)

"No slumber can seize Him nor sleep" (Yusuf Ali's Translation, 2000) (Al-Baqara 2:255)

It is important to state that tense is an obvious problem in the Arabic word order, especially in translating the Qur'anic discourse. This issue is not only seen in this way, but also related to issues of prohibition, warning, and other speech acts. Sadiq (2010, p. 20) states that

[t]ense means the ‘grammatical realisation of location in time’ and how location in time can be expressed in language. In translating the Holy Qur’an, tense and verb form should be guided by the overall context and by stylistic considerations.

According to Abdel-Haleem (2004,p. 221), in the Qur’an, “there is a shift from the past tense to the imperfect tense to achieve an effect, which can pose some problems in translation”. For example,

"إِذْ جَاءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونًا"
الاحزاب 10 :

"Behold! They **came on you** from above you and from below you, and behold, the eyes **became dim** and the hearts **gaped up** to the throats, and ye imagined various (vain) **thoughts** about Allah!" (Yusuf Ali's Translation, 2000) (Al-Aḥzāb 33:10)

It is evident that there are three verbs in the past tense " جاءوكم ", " زاعت " and " وبلغت ", while " وتظنون " is in the present. Abdel-Haleem believes that the use of the past tense does not prevent the reader of such ayas from conjoining the events to the present; this is because the Arabic tenses “cannot be conveyed literally” (p.229). In other words, such shifts to convey the intended meaning is crucial:

The Qur’an employs the power of the verbal sentence, using the past tense for historical accounts in its argumentation and also when discussing the afterlife. This is effective in making such momentous events of the afterlife (mentioned directly or indirectly on almost every page of the Qur’an) seem as if they are already here, a device crucial for Qur’anic discourse and techniques of persuasion. (Abdel-Haleem, 2004, p.300.)

6- Semantic Challenges

Denying the existence of semantic problems when translating from an SL into another TL is not acceptable since the word order is different. For translating the Holy Qur’an, for example, semantic challenges clearly seen such as metaphor, metonymy, and

polysemy. Reference to denotative and connotative meaning will be briefly stated in the following sections.

6-1 Methaphor

According to Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary (2010), metaphor is "a word or phrase used to describe something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful" (p. 965). According to Al-Misned (2001), metaphor is commonly used in the Holy Qur'an, among other rhetorical devices, and "translators should not ignore its use when attempting to translate the Qur'anic text" (p. 145). Consider this example:

"وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ" الحج: 5 :

"Thou seest the earth barren and lifeless, but when we pour down rain on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells and it puts forth every kind of beautiful growth in pairs." (Yusuf Ali's translation, 2000) (Surah al-Hajj: 5).

Al-Misned (2001) states that in the translation of this Qur'anic extract, the trembling of the earth after a long quiescence is compared to an animal that calms down after moving. Here, the Almighty God borrows some features from an animal to describe what happens to the earth after it rains. In this case, the literal translation cannot convey the exact meaning of the verse to the audience. To show how the earth (stirred and swells) these features for animals, we need to use communicative translation or paraphrasing to convey the intended meaning, the features, and the context of the verse (p.146).

He also examined another Qur'anic example:

"اقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ أَوْ اطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ قَوْمًا صَالِحِينَ" (يوسف 9)

"Kill you Joseph, or cast him forth into some land, that your father's face may be free for you, and thereafter you may be a righteous people." (Arberry's Translation) (Surah Yusuf 12:9)

His argument about the translation of metaphor in this text can be seen in the following quotation:

Arberry's literal translation of the metaphorical expression (يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ) is completely out of context. Therefore, the recipient may not comprehend the literal translation (your father's face may be free for you). The metaphorical expression in the above verse means that the attention and care of the Prophet Jacob will be passed on to his sons after killing Joseph, who received more care from his father. (p.147)

He has concluded his discussion of the metaphoric use in the translation of the Holy Qur'an by mentioning that should adopt one or more strategies (like explanation or paraphrasing, see the next section); of course, this is for a more comprehensive TL audience.

6-2 Metonymy

According to Newmark (1988, p. 125), metonymy exists "where the name of an object is transferred to take the place of something else with which it is associated". It is a conditioned existence of both a solid relationship between the figurative and literal meanings and the existence of an implicit reference to the latter type of meaning, even it is not intended. Al-Misned (2001) believes that this semantic relation in the Holy Qur'an is not "a useless substitution because it usually serves a purpose" (p.147). The following are among the examples he talked about.

"وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِزْرَارًا" (الأنعام:6)

"For whom we poured out rain from the skies in abundance." (Yusuf Ali's translation, 2000) (Surah al-An'ām 6:6)

He states that the word "السَّمَاء" is used to refer to the intended meaning of "المطر" 'rain'. Arberry translated this verse as follows:

"...and how we loosed heaven upon them in torrents..."

Al-Misned (2001) goes further to comment here by stating that "Arberry adopted literal translation to convey the verse, but he failed to express the metonymic phrase (وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ) which does not mean (loosed heaven). Instead, it means 'we sent or poured heavy rain upon them'(p.147). In this respect, Al-Salem (2008) examined the procedures of rendering metonymy in the Qur'anic discourse. She has concluded that the appropriate

procedure is the use of the literal translation, but understanding the intended meaning may need extra strategies.

6-3 Polysemy

Polysemy is commonly-used in the Qur'anic discourse due to its richness. It is defined by Kalakattawi (2005, p.4) as a "phenomenon in which a word has several different meanings that are closely related to each other". Abobaker et al (2012) state that "the translator will encounter obvious difficulty when he/she tries to convey the intended meaning of the polysemous words because he/she will be confused by the various meanings and senses of these words" (p.590). They illustrate their discussion by citing the polysemic nature of the word *ūmmah* " أُمَّة " - people) since it "has nine polysemic meanings".

- "It can mean a period of time":

"وَقَالَ الَّذِي نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَادَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِثَأْوِيلِهِ فَأَرْسِلُون"

"But the man who had been released, one of the two (who had been in prison) and who now bethought him after **(so long) a space of time**, said: 'I will tell you the truth of its interpretation: send ye me (therefore)'." (Yusuf Ali's Translation, 2000) (Surah Yusuf 12:45)

- "the leader of the people who teaches or guides the believers to the right path in their religion and life":

"إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ" (النحل:120)

"Abraham was **indeed a model**, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in Faith, and he joined not gods with Allah." (Yusuf Ali's Translation, 2000) (Sura Al-Nahl 16:120)

- It "refers to a religion that some people follow":

"بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَى أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ مُهْتَدُونَ" (الزخرف 22)

"Nay, but they say, 'We found our fathers upon a community, and we are guided upon their traces'. (Arberry's translation, 1982) (Az-Zūkhūrūf, 43:22)

Abobaker et al (2012, p. 590) has commented on Arberry's literal translation, criticizing it by being not communicative. They go further to add the following:

"It does not express the polysemic meaning of word (ūmmah), which means (religion or beliefs), not (a community) as he conveyed. In this respect, the translator must be aware and understand the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'an to translate better the intended meaning of the verses to the target audience".

7- Suggested Solutions

The literature of translation studies has emphasized the fact that translators never implement the same strategies if translating culturally-loaded texts is required. Theorists like Ginter (2002) confirm this problem saying that translators have to solve this before imitating any translation activity. The range of mismatching, as stated above, can be further dominating if religious register and jargon is the concrete content. The following is a survey of these strategies can be implemented to reproduce or manipulate Islamic context, of course writing down these merits and demerits of using them.

A quick survey of the literature of translation studies can help in stating the used strategies, or procedures if the terms used by many, Ivir (1987) among them, are taken into consideration. For instance, Ivir (1987) has mentioned the following procedures:

- definition,
- lexical creation,
- literal translation,
- substitution,
- addition,
- omission, and
- borrowing.

Hervey & Higgins (1992) have suggested using the following:

- cultural transplantation,
- communicative translation,
- calque,
- cultural borrowing, and

- exoticism.

Newmark (1988) proposed adopting the following:

- transference,
- descriptive equivalent,
- modulation,
- naturalization,
- functional equivalent,
- cultural equivalent,
- through translation,
- shift or transposition,
- recognized translation,
- paraphrase,
- translation label,
- compensation,
- synonymy,
- componential analysis, and
- reduction and expansion

The following suggested strategies by Mahmoud as solutions for the expected cultural and religious mismatching in ST-TT translation will not be away from these presented classifications. A matter of reshaping them may be useful. These strategies are the following:

- Transcription/transference/ transliteration
- Transcription with little illustration
- Transcription with paraphrasing
- General Sense
- Literal Translation of Meaning
- Classifier
- Footnotes

7-1 Transcription/Transference/Transliteration

The term ‘transference’ is used here to refer to the actual phonetic representation of speech sounds, of course in ST-TT rendering the SL alphabet will be pronounced exactly. The term ‘transliteration’ is used due to the process of transcribing SL characters or sounds into TL. The third term ‘Transliteration’ is used to refer to the process of approximate converting of SL into TL, especially in sounds. Mahmoud (2015) believes that this third process is followed more than other due to its easiness, especially in rendering personal names and places. Therefore, this transliteration strategy is found in other classifications, to the extent that translators find it, of course based on their practical experience, the most convenient, and the most frequent in rendering texts loaded with cultural and religious reference. The example cited by Mahmoud (2015) and in other books of translation is the rendering of the word "الله". A transliterated word ‘**Allah**’ is now lexicalized in the English dictionary, even some translations of the Holy Qur’an have used terms like ‘God’, ‘Lord’, etc. It is important not to forget in such contexts the actual understanding of ‘Allah’ in at least Islam and Christianity.

7-2 Transcription with little illustration

Mahmoud (2015,p.11) believes that this strategy is the best “that the translator can use to overcome the problem of translating Islamic religious items. It seems to be among the best strategies ever used as it preserves the original item in the SL as it in addition to a short explanation that make the target reader able to get the meaning implied in such an item.

Besides, he affirms that it can both keep and help the translators to transcribe SL terms and then understood among TL readers. He mentions five words that can be of direct relevance here:

- **hajj** (to mean “pilgrimage to Makkah”)
- **Ijlaal** (to mean “glorification associated with love”)
- **Al-Birr** (to mean “virtuous deeds”)
- **An-Nusub** (to mean “Stone- altars”)
- **Nutfah** (to mean “mixed drops of male and female sexual discharge”)

7-3 Transcription with paraphrasing

Based on the Arabic grammatical structures, many instances of Islamic words “are compressed in meaning such that a long TL paraphrase is sometimes required to give even a rough denotative equivalent of the SL term” (Mahmoud, 2015:p.12). In this situation, translators find themselves unable to convey the text content by adopting the previously-examined strategies. To solve any expected mismatching, little explanation or paraphrasing will be added to the transcription. For instance, Mahmoud and his team were asked to be responsible for rendering Al-Madinah Mosque Friday Speeches or ‘Khutbah’. His experience was related to rendering a specific speech about ‘Fear of Allah’:

The orator used more than one word to refer to this topic such as Khawf, Khashyah, Wajal, and Haybah. We decided to use this strategy as the best option so that the target reader could understand the difference between these various Islamic religious items. (p.11)

To quote their translation;

Khashyah (a quality that is particular of the people knowledgeable of Allah and more specific than khawf); Wajal (the shivering and breaking of the heart when remembering the One it fears, His authority, punishment or seeing Him) Haybah (fear from Allah associated with glorification and reverence. Its peak is achieved when love and knowledge are strongly combined. (p.11)

7-4 General Sense

This strategy will be used in instances of ignoring the “cultural charge of a source text item, may be because there is no cultural equivalent in the TL; that is, a tendency towards implementing the general sense, of course with reference to its cultural implication. Mahmoud (p.12) states that the translator can resort to this strategy when he fails to find an equivalent. He gives a more general alternative that implies some of the cultural features of the item. This strategy avoids direct translation as it could be ambiguous, misleading and strange.

For instance, the word "براق" “Buraq” is not part of the English vocabulary. All know that its meaning is semantically associated with the ascension of Prophet Muhammad to the highest heavens. Mahmoud states that the available translations of this word have been accumulated on the term ‘animal’. In this case, the word, “animal” which is a general term refers to the whole class of animals. However, the researcher thinks it would be better

if we add more sense to the translation. He thinks, it could be translated into “speedy horse-like creature” which matches the description given by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, when he was asked about It.

7-5 Literal Translation of Meaning

Although the literature of semantics has affirmed the difficulty, if not impossible, to have absolute synonymy (Saeed, 2015), the existence of partial synonymy is possible and exists, and finding their appropriate equivalent will be of problematic in the religious discourse. In addition to other types of synonymy, this issue needs extra efforts and cognitive concentration from the translator. The possible justification for this argument is that the religious discourse differs not only in its denotative reference, but mainly in its connotative one (Abdelaal, 2018, p.78). Therefore, it is clear that Muslim translators of the Holy Qur'an or Prophetic traditions insist on presenting their own ideology via selecting vocabulary, structures, or even adding feedback. As a result, accepting one of the available translations of the Holy Qur'an is not reached or done; majority still believe that these translations are missing lots of tips, actually not available in English, French or other languages. This affirms the possible gaps between translation as a theory and as a practice. Therefore, a one-to-one conceptual and structural correspondence is the theme of this strategy. Mahmoud states that:

This strategy considers the word as a unit of translation under the assumption that there is a structural correspondence between a pair of languages. This strategy is easily applied, for it is the literal translation of the individual words of a term or an expression. For each word in the Source Language there is a corresponding word in the Target Language - a kind of interlingual synonymy. (p.12)

He went further to focus on the possible mismatching may result from using this strategy. This demerit lies in the readership of TL since it is based on SL culture (see El Haj Ahmed & Abu Shammala, 2020) And using it as a strategy of translating religious texts is only possible in urgent necessity. Mahmoud and his team suggested that much attention need to be paid “since the use of a certain particular religious item rather than another may cause a serious difference in the attitude towards the other, and may even

mark a hostile stance” (p.13). This does not mean to regard it unsuccessful strategy; in fact, it is a successful one in translating a good number of culture-bound Islamic vocabulary. This is because of the existence of their equivalents in ST and TT. Mahmoud and his team cited names of Allah, names of Islamic event like "الصيام" fasting , remembrance , "الذكر" mercy "الرحمة" and many others.

7-6 Classifier

Mahmoud and his team affirmed that this strategy is one of the most important and best translation strategies for its practicality and applicability. It cannot be used alone but it is always included in the couplet or the triplet strategy. It is used to explain the culture-specific item in simple general way through demonstrating its type, class or category. (Mahmoud,2015, p. 13)

This consolidates the fact that using a classifier may replace longer paraphrases or footnotes. For example, the word "رمضان" is a name given to names of human males or to the ninth month in the Muslim calendar. Therefore, translation it into “the month of Ramadan” and “Mr Ramadan” can remove any cultural misunderstanding. Also, the same strategy can be used in rendering many names of people mentioned in the Holy Qur’an, like "السيارة", "اهل البيت", "عاد", "ثمود", and "اهل الكهف". Therefore, adding words like “people of “ will be necessary.

7-7 Footnotes

This strategy means adding further details “about a strange or a vague culture-specific item” (p.14), taking into consideration that these terms can be seen in different places in the text, but the footnotes only at the bottom of the printed page. These footnotes must be presented in a way that “they must be typically sufficient and approach the precise denotative and connotative meaning implied in the translated item” (p.15). The Islamic discourse is full of these terms described as cultural- specific, context-specific, and addressee-specific. Thus, in translating them, a footnote to the episode or the people addressed is useful. The previously-mentioned strategies may not be useful due to shortage of space, lack of transliteration, cultural or religious boundaries. To the researcher, one of the important examples here is the word "الجهاد". Its denotative and connotative meanings

have led scholars to write books and books about it (Abdel-Haleem,. Therefore, it can be described as context-specific and addressee-specific. Other examples are "اهل الذمة" " اهل الكتاب", " اهل الحديث", "اهل البيت", "باب الريان", "مقات", "الاجتهاد" "العصمة", "التقليد", "المرجعية" and so on. Translating these words needs not only footnotes in the religious discourse, but also in other register like legal and administrative. Mahmoud and his team commented on some of these words, and added the footnotes that might be added at the bottom of the page. One of their examples is "مقات":

Miqat (pl. mawaqeeet) denotes the points which an outsider intending to perform Pilgrimage may cross only in the state of consecration (ihram). These points were fixed according to directions from God. (p.15)

It is important to state here that the ideology and sectarianism of the translator may lead to have different footnotes, and the word "اهل البيت" is a good example. The debate about "العصمة" still raising many issues (Abdelaal, 2018).

Conclusions

The translation of the words of Allah faces many morphological, syntactic and semantic challenges. This state of affairs is linked to the rhetorical nature of the language of the wholly Quran i.e. Classical Arabic. This Quranic language has been shown to demonstrate specific linguistic and cultural features that either have no equivalence in the TL or is displayed differently. Thus, the need for the lexical and syntactic analysis as a foregrounding step before any translation endeavour is a necessary requirement to fulfil the ultimate aim of the Quranic translation: the authentic transfer of the meanings and exegesis of the ST. The analysis adopted in this paper is lexical and syntactic but essentially grammatical-semantic related. Dealing with Quranic texts need adopting eclectic approach that includes various strategies and procedures in a way to serve as a background for the translation of the Quranic Arabic text into English or any other language to help providing an authentic transfer of the meanings and interpretations of the sacred Quranic text.

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