

# Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating Some Unique Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Items into English: Reexploring Some Translation Approaches

Mohammed H. Albahiri<sup>1</sup> & Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, King Khalid University, Abha, Asir, Saudi Arabia

<sup>2</sup> English Unit, Applied College, Dhahran Aljanoub, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj, English Unit, Applied College, Dhahran Aljanoub, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia.

E-mail: alalhaj@kku.edu.sa

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## Abstract

This research paper aimed to identify the linguistic obstacles met in translating some unique Qur'anic cultural lexical items into English through the lens of translation approaches. The study used a qualitative descriptive method and Nord's (1991) text analysis model in translation. The findings showed that the most used approach to translating the implication of Qur'anic cultural lexical items was that of word-for-word and verbatim translation, and this resulted in a deep meaning loss and manipulating the perfect translation. The study also found that Al-Hilali and Khan's and Abdel-Haleem's translation approach, contrastingly, seems to be predominantly translated text-oriented, and thus conforms to the strategy of free translation, putting pivotal descriptive details in brackets, footnotes, or as a paraphrase. The study concluded that Pickthall was inclined to resort to a literal translation strategy, which often gives rise to obscurity and problems because it does not consider the idiomatic meaning and implicit meaning of the Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Items.

**Keywords:** Items, linguistic obstacles, cultural lexical, translation approaches, Qur'anic translations

## 1. Introduction

The Holy Qur'an needs to be rendered and interpreted into many languages, including English, if non-Arabic-speaking persons are to grasp the Divine words enshrined in the sacred text that lies at the core of Islamic beliefs. Rendering of the Islamic scripture in English is thereby a fundamental task, but it is also particularly challenging because of the rare linguistic styles and lexical, syntactic, and artistic features of Qur'anic Arabic.

Translation of the Holy Qur'an into foreign languages in general and English in particular is a highly interesting subject to scholars, religious, non-religious, and secular alike. Other than being an academic theme, it also depicts how much further Islam has spread out and disseminated around the globe, that nations in different languages are yearning and ambitious to be aware of it, and to what extent they go to procure it (Moghissi, 2006; Marzouki, 2017). All this relies greatly on the quality of translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an that are accessible and obtainable in their mother tongues, which ought to be faithful, perfect, adequate, and proper.

Translation of the Holy Qur'an into other languages in general, and English in particular, is a daunting and difficult task due to the powerful Qur'anic rhetoric, characteristic rhythm, literary grace, poetic beauty, depth of wisdom, and vividness of language. This shows so far, another challenge that translators ought to cope with from linguistic and cultural perspectives to enable the target language receptor to grasp the real message and original meaning of the Holy Qur'an (Sinai & Ringgren, 2020; Arkoun, 2001).

Historical and recent scholars have disagreed about the judgment of translating the Holy Qur'an into foreign languages. Some of them have authorized it, others utterly forbidden, and still more have allowed some and proscribed others. Each side has its arguments and justifications (Alhaj, 2015; Afrouz & Mollanazar, 2016). From one angle, those who call for authorizing the rendering this sacred scripture think that the Islamic call is global to all of humankind. Notwithstanding their multiple languages and generations, this is why explication of the Holy Qur'an is necessary to non-Arab nations, and if the non-Arab is hindered from enjoying and tasting the Qur'anic textual structure by linguistic obstacles or barriers, this does not thwart him / her from managing its translated meanings into his / her language, and the Arab Muslim himself needs the interpretation of many Qur'anic verses (Yakubovych, 2024; Wild, 2015). Hence, it is more suitable for a non-Arab to require an explication of the Holy Qur'an in his / her language through translation, just as the Messenger, peace be upon him, sent letters to the kings of the world including decisive verses, knowing that these verses must be rendered so that the addressee can understand them (Malik, 1997; Al-hawamdeh, 2017).

One facet that must be considered when rendering the Holy Qur'an in English is cultural lexical words. Since cultural lexical words vary in all cultures, when rendering a text a translator should pay heed to what word will be adequate and understandable for the target culture (Alhaj & Alwada'i, 2024; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2024). Rendering the meaning of the Holy Qur'an needs advanced knowledge of the civilizing lexical words of the origin language (Arabic) and translated language (English), as well as an understanding of the contexts

such as cultural context, co-text or linguistic context, situational context, and related contextual frameworks (House, 2006; Zammit, 2020).

The Holy Qur'an is a standalone genre: it is written in classical Arabic, which is wholly disparate from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). In Qur'anic Arabic, cultural lexical words hold and maintain many nuances of meaning hinging on their context. As an illustration, some cultural lexical words have more than a unique sense, and some tropes and similes comprise meanings whose cultural implications and hidden connotations are often difficult to grasp in translation (Akundabweni, 2014; Schmidt, 2012; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023).

Since many cultural lexical words employed in the Holy Qur'an contain nuances of meaning and cultural styles, a verbatim or word-for-word translation runs the risk of contorting their meaning (Afsar, 2004; Khamehgar, 2002). This study argues that if the translator endeavors to make a free translation, comprising the use of idiomatic expressions and connotative expressions changing the syntactic and lexical units of the Arabic text, they might be able to give a more accurate approximation of their meaning to non-Arabic-speaking persons and target language receptors.

A suitable translation makes the targeted language receptor or reader think over the cultural macrosystem of the source language. Cultural dissemination is one of the gains that communicates notions and diffuses innovation, culture, and social behaviors from different ethnic backgrounds (Venuti, 2017; Atti, 2005). With a proper translation, the receptor or reader of the translated language culture will reap a lot of valuable benefits, such as humanitarianism and complements using translation (Wendland, 1987; Abdelkarim, & Alhaj, 2024). The other examples are etiquette, civility, and polite manners of various countries that echo their culture.

### Objectives of the Study

The current study intends to:

- a) Investigate linguistic obstacles faced by translators of the Holy Qur'an when endeavoring to render some Qur'anic cultural lexical words into English.
- b) Examine the proposition that free interpretation best transfers and communicates the Qur'anic cultural lexical words and their implied meanings because it centers on their context and comes close to their thrust and meaning in the translated language, in comparison with literal translation, which does not attend to and take care of what was written in the origin language and hazards contorting the hidden connotations, bewildering target language receptors and targeted audiences.
- c) Suggest translation strategies and framework for prospective translators of the Holy Qur'an when rendering the Qur'anic cultural lexical words, metonymical expressions, and metaphorical expressions and probe the merits and demerits of free translation in contrast to literal translation from conceptual perspectives and analytical models.

### Study Questions

Concerning the focuses of the study above, consequently, this investigation seeks to address the following study questions:

1. What are the linguistic obstacles that face the translators Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Muhammad A. S. Abdel-Haleem (2004), and Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930) when undertaking to translate the Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Items into English?
2. What is the translation approach adopted by the three translators in rendering the Holy Qur'an into English in general and Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Items in particular?
3. What are the translation strategies and framework suggested for prospective translators of the Holy Qur'an when rendering the Qur'anic cultural lexical words into English?

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1 Etymology of "Lexical Culture"

"Lexical culture" has a Greek and Roman origin, lexical being originated from the Greek words *lexis* and *lexicon* which mean "word" and "wordbook", respectively, and culture deeply rooted (literally) in Latin culture, deriving from the verb *colere* "to till" or "cultivate". Both "lexical" and "culture" are therefore very archaic words with impeccable Indo-European connections.

### 2.2 The Concept of Cultural Lexical Items (CLIs)

Cultural Lexical Items (CLIs) show a great variety and comprise fields such as religion in general and Islam in particular as well as reference to cultures and actions unique to a particular cultural situation (Sharifian, 2017; Izutsu, 2002). Regardless of the translator's level of knowledge of the language, CLIs give rise to problems in the conveyance into a target language, problems which are not identified by the words themselves (Wang, 2013; Petrehuş, 2016) but by the actualities they imply, that is by the conceptions, the items, or the contexts which are not part of the target readership's daily life or daily occurrence.

Concerning the paucity of the lexical items in a culture, the gauging of the lexemes, the method(s) CLIs are rendered, and the role translator in the rendering provoke three problems: translation strategies, procedures, and ideology of rendering and the (in)visibility in renditions of ideology of CLIs implemented (Petrehuş, 2016; Stephanides, 2006).

### 2.3 Translation Approaches Adopted by the Three Translators in Rendering the Holy Qur'an into English

This section casts light on the translation approach utilized by the three translators in rendering the Holy Qur'an into English. The three

well-known translators selected for the study are notable Muslim scholars. However, Pickthall was English and a convert to Islam, and his exertions in rendering the Holy Qur'an into English are great and broadly recognized and accepted (Ali, 2020; Abdelkarim, & Alhaj, 2023; Kidwai, 2007). Pickthall seems to adopt a literal translation strategy, and this approach may sometimes hazard deforming the hidden connotations and deeper implications in the Holy Qur'an and confusing the target language receptor and prospective reader.

Abdel-Haleem is an Egyptian Islamic studies professor whose translation of the Holy Qur'an in English is said to be the most accessible rendering, offering him a great reputation as a renowned translator (Hassanein, 2017; Abdelkarim, & Alhaj, 2023). This tremendously revered Islamic scholar and researcher produced a supreme translation of the Holy Qur'an written in modern language and makes the Qur'anic text easy to understand while maintaining its elocution and rhetoric (Hawting, 2005; Hassanein, 2017). Abdel-Haleem seems to have adopted a free translation strategy, and this approach created an understandable, outcome-focused, and conscious Qur'anic translation that was a prominent improvement on its predecessors. Al-Hilali and Khan are also outstanding Islamic scholars whose translation approach in rendering the Holy Qur'an comprises significant notes extracted from principal sources, clarifying several repeated Qur'anic words and conceptions and interposing expository parenthetical expressions (Kidwai, 2007; Kaleel, 2005). Also, Al-Hilali and Khan's consistent accuracy and clarity of their rendering elucidate the obscurity of the Qur'anic Arabic text and bring the Arabic and English closer. To conclude, Al-Hilali and Khan's approach seems to rely largely on the free translation method; nevertheless, occasionally, they comprise recurrence and an extraneousness of explication which may contribute to confounding target language receptors (Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2024; Hawamedh, 2015).

#### 2.4 Previous Studies

Muhammad (2017) carried out a comparative study of the rendering of metonymic terms in Arberry's (1964) and Al-Hilali and Khan's (1997) renderings of the Holy Qur'an. The study found that the Holy Qur'an utilized the metaphorical power of figurative language to transfer explicit messages and tackle specific topics by employing expressions that give both common obvious connotations and metaphorical meaning. Najjar (2012) explored the difficulties of rendering the metaphorical terms of the Holy Qur'an. The findings revealed that the three selected English versions of this divine book have failed to transfer the meaning of Qur'anic metaphorical words. The findings also show that the meaning is often misinterpreted, confused, or misapprehended by target language receptors. Abdul-Raof (2005) also examined the challenges of rendering CLIs in the Holy Qur'an. He describes these challenges as gaps that lacked equivalence in the translated language. Thus, employing a literal translation may not utterly transfer the intended meaning. The researcher found that Qur'anic CLIs should be rendered either by explanation, accompanied by interpretative commentaries, or by employing circumlocution.

Lachgar (2023) studied the rendition of Qur'anic terms into English. The researcher found that the task of the translator as a mediator between tongues, cultures, and persons is not an easy job. Also, the researcher found that transfer can assist the translator in subduing the difficulties that occur during the rendering. Furthermore, he found the aim of rendering the meanings of the Holy Qur'an is to ensure that Allah's Message is conveyed and comprehended by people. Finally, the researcher concluded that the transfer strategy can support the translator in communicating the message to the target language receptors, and the procedure for conveyance is of great significance in rendering Qur'anic terms since it seeks communication. Shunnāq (1998) investigated challenges in rendering Arabic texts into English. The researcher found that it is problematic to find out exact equivalence in English for some Arabic terms and asserted that translators may have to find English items that have incomplete equivalence. Finally, the researcher concluded that using transliterating translation strategies accompanied by exegetical rendering leads to minimizing the loss of meaning when conveying some Arabic terms into English.

Khuwaileh (2010) explored cultural, lexicographic, and linguistic problems encountered by Gulf users of the computer in university institutions as well as English Arabic translators. The researcher found that many computer terms are problematic. He also found that those challenging words were harder to render due to the inadequacy of dual-language dictionaries. Bahumaid (2017) examined the problems met by novice translators at the American University of Sharjah and the University of Sharjah in translating culture-bound terms into English. The results showed the novice translators' very poor performance in rendering Arabic culture-bound terms into English. The researcher also found that four chief types of errors were made by novice translators as follows: inaccurate, under translation, omission, and rendering errors. These errors have been mostly attributed to the novice translators' insufficient knowledge of the importance of the rendering brief, as well as incompetence in tackling idiomatic culture-bound terms, inadequate training in translating, and improper handling of lexicons.

Roodashty, Mozaheb, and Ghajarieh (2023) conducted a study that sought to bring to light how Cultural-Specific Items (CSIs) are rendered in *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), *Surah Ali 'Imran* and *sūrat l-nisāa* (The Women). The researchers found that the first language background could impact the translators' structure concerning translation alternatives in The Holy Qur'an. Ayyad, Obeidat, and Mahadi (2021) undertook an examination purported to investigate the translation procedures employed by the translators of the Holy Qur'an to render CSIs from Arabic into English and to determine the most widely used procedure. The researchers found that the most common procedure used by translators is definition. Moreover, the less widely used procedure is induction.

Valipoor, Heidari Tabrizi, and Chalak (2019) explored the role of CSIs in the Qur'anic English rendering by Irving (1985) and how he has employed various strategies in translating them. The researchers found that Irving utilized domestication as the core technique to translate CSIs into English.

Sanjarani and Abedi (2023) searched the strategies utilized by male and female translators to render Qur'anic cultural items, as well as the equivalency of these strategies. The researchers found that the most frequent strategy employed to render Qur'anic cultural items was to phase them out with broader words as well as using paraphrasing, cultural transposition, and explication strategies. Finally, the two

researchers concluded that there are a low number of pragmatic strategies for rendering Qur'anic cultural items into English.

Having introduced the problems of translating some Qur'anic CLIs into English, one can reveal that an in-depth study is needed to render new light on such problems faced by the translators Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Muhammad A. S. Abdel-Haleem (2004), and Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930). None of the investigations above used Nord's (1991) model of text analysis in translation to compare and assess the strategies used by the three authors in translation when encountering some Qur'anic CLIs. Hence, this study seeks to bridge the gaps by exploring problems of translating some Qur'anic CLIs into English based on Nord's model of text analysis in translation.

### 3. Methodology

The current study adopted the qualitative research method because this method can make robust results and conclusive findings. This method includes close readings, in-depth searches, and extensive analyses of the translation to find out problems encountered in translating some Qur'anic CLIs into English. The theoretical perspective of this study is based on Nord's (1991) model of text analysis in translation because it can deal with problems in translation and offer useful help for translators facing obstacles in understanding the usefulness and practicality when demonstrating the role of the original wording compared with function in the culture of the translated text. To conclude, Nord's model gives a strong foundation for translators and supports them to grasp the nuanced and pragmatic meaning of the original text; thus, they will utilize appropriate translation strategies that explicate the desired objectives and express and transfer its meaning adequately to the intended audience and target language receptor.

#### 3.1 Data Analysis

The current comparative study concentrates on some Qur'anic CLIs that are commonly difficult to understand from translations by Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel-Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930). Furthermore, the researcher has looked up Qur'anic exegeses by Ibn Kathir (2009), Al-Qurtubi (1999), and Al-Tabari (1981); and Cambridge dictionaries online (2011), *Al-Mawrid: Kāmūs Injilīzī- 'Arabā* (in Arabic) (Al-Balbakī, 1969) and *Dictionary of Flags Al-Mawred* by Al-Baalbaki (1992) as well as the Qur'anic Arabic Corpus (QAC) which has been established by a team of community of scholars from the University of Leeds. This corpus was chosen by the researcher first and foremost because it provides an open information stand for Qur'anic translations by translators and exegetes in our day and bygone days from divergent cultures, knowledge hubs, and backdrops (Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023). Additionally, the QAC presents a stylistic, explicative, structural analysis and lexical token analysis of the texts.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The analysis data on which this study was built comprises some Qur'anic CLIs from translations by Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel-Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930). To consider the rendering of Qur'anic CSIs in this study, the original text of the Holy Qur'an in Arabic and its English translation rendered by the above-mentioned translators were studied. After reading the verses comprising Qur'anic CSIs and their translations, every verse and its translation in English was investigated to determine problems encountered in translating some Qur'anic CLIs into English as well as the translation strategies utilized by the three translators to translate them into English.

#### Example One

Source Surrah: Chapter (4) *sūrat l-nisāa* (The Women), verse.1.

ST: (وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ) (النساء: 1)

Target Texts:

- (1) Abdel-Haleem (2004): "Beware of severing the ties of kinship" (p. 78).
- (2) Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "(do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship)" (p. 105).
- (3) Pickthall (1930): "and toward the wombs (that bear you)" (p. 79).

#### 4.1 The Analysis

##### The General Intended Meaning of the Ayah:

The meaning of this verse is "Similar it is to what is said: 'I ask you by Allāh and the womb'. Dabag said: 'And fear Allah through Whom you set your contracts and give your promises; and be you keen on observing your kinship, lest you should cease it'" (qtd. in Ibn Kathir, 2009, p. 296), i.e. Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over all your conditions and deeds. It is authentically narrated: "Worship Allāh as if you see Him, and that if you cannot achieve this state of devotion, then you must consider that He is looking at you" (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 1. p. 293). "This indeed is guidance and a command to fear Allah, the Ever Watching. Therefore, the Almighty states the fact that all of mankind originated from the same father and mother ('Adam and Eve) so that they may be intimate to each other and that they may be kind and helpful to the weak amongst them" (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 1, p. 294).

##### 4.1.1 Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating the Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Item wal-arhama وَالْأَرْحَامَ into English, Chapter (4) sūrat l-nisāa (The Women), verse.1.

As can be seen from Example One, the Qur'anic CLI *al-'arhām* الْأَرْحَامَ here connotes in this context "kinship" based on explanations of the Holy Qur'an of Ibn Kathir (2009), Al-Qurtubi (1999) and Al-Tabari (1981). Pickthall's use of a literal translation method to render this Qur'anic CLI with nuanced meaning into "the wombs" is ambiguous, and so, tricky. Lexical sense is important, which is again not easy work for the translator, and Pickthall does not seem to have been familiar with what is meant by this Qur'anic CLI *al-'arhām* الْأَرْحَامَ as

explained by exegetists. Unlike Pickthall, Al-Hilali and Khan and Abdel-Haleem have succeeded in their rendering as they have transferred the accurate meaning of the Qur'anic CLI *al-'arhām* الأَرْحَام into "ties of kinship" and "the wombs (kinship)" respectively, as explained by exegetist, Ibn Kathir (2009); hence, their renderings epitomize the appropriate equivalence which considers the meaning of the lexeme in line with the context. Abdel-Haleem employs a free translation approach, and Al-Hilali and Khan utilize couplet translation because couplet rendering is commonly seen in the translation of CSIs, as has been suggested by Newmark (1982), when the big lacuna between source language and translated language cultures is vast. Al-Hilali and Khan also use a loan translation with the word "wombs" succeeded by a rephrase. This translation approach is advantageous since it expounds the real concept, deepening the prospective reader's understanding. Al-Hilali and Khan's rendering aligns with that alluded to by a reading of the exegetic books such as Ibn Kathir (2009), Al-Qurtubi (1999), and Al-Tabari (1981), to mention a few. This form of rendering appertaining to Nord's model of text analysis in rendition—that they considered some external influences such as the purpose of the author in both tongues together with the meaning because the Qur'anic CLI *al-'arhām* الأَرْحَام has been adequately conveyed to the target language receptor. To conclude Al-Hilali and Khan's and Abdel-Haleem's renderings are the most accurate, as the appropriate cultural lexical equivalence between the SL and the TL has been attained.

#### Example Two

Source Surrah: Chapter (113) *sūrat l-falaq* (The Daybreak), verse.3.

ST: (وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ عَمَّ الْقَلَقِ: 3)

Target Texts:

- (1) Abdel-Haleem (2004): "the harm in the night when darkness gathers" (p. 605).
- (2) Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "And from the evil of the darkening (night) as it comes with its darkness; (or the moon as it sets or goes away)" (p. 859 ).
- (3) Pickthall (1930): "From the evil of the darkness when it is intense" (p. 455 ).

#### 4.2 The Analysis

##### The General Intended Meaning of the Ayah:

The meaning of this verse is: *l-falaq* refers to the daybreak or the creation, or a house in hellfire, or that it is a trench in the bottom of hellfire, or that is one of the names of the hellfire. The first of these views is the most correct of them (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 4, p. 2572).

##### 4.2.1 Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating the Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Item *waqaba* وَقَبَ into English, Chapter (113) *sūrat l-falaq* (The Daybreak), verse.3.

The Qura'nic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ or *waquban* وَقُوبًا means: entering into something (Al-Tabari, 1981, p. 634) and "if it comes" means "when it enters". It also implies sunset when the darkness of the night enters the light of day (Al-Tabari, 1981, p. 702). The Arabic word *falwaqb* فالوقب means: if it enters everything and becomes dark, then dusk is night, and it approaches, if twilight vanishes, then dusk comes (Al-Qurtubi, 1999, p. 212). Scholars differ regarding the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ . Some have said it means "when it comes and enters", and others said that it means "gone", and it was said that it means the moon when it eclipses (Ibn-Manzoor, 2003).

It is from an evil dusk, meaning: a night of massive duskieness, from his saying until the dusk of the night, and its origin is completeness. It is said that the eye darkens when it is filled with tears, and it is said that the emission of water, and the dark of the night is the gushing out and flowing out of its darkness, and the dark of the eye is the flow of tears (Ibn Kathir, 2009, p. 2572). *Waqaba* وَقَبَ means when its darkness enters into everything and its peculiarity because the hurts in it are numerous and it is very hard to fend off, and it was said that what is meant is the moon.

As illustrated in Example Two, Abdel-Haleem, Al-Hilali and Khan, and Pickthall based on a free translation strategy have adequately translated the meaning of the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ depending on context and transferred the specific meaning of this lexeme in this verse appropriately. Translating the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ into "darkness" by the three translators is adequate because the notion itself is a culture-specific item with cultural equivalent and the prospective reader would grasp the meaning of the term without elucidation for it. Al-Hilali and Khan's rendering makes the meaning of the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ distinct through lexical expansion (addition) that is "or the moon as it sets or goes away". Moreover, Al-Hilali and Khan have been aptly successful in offsetting the loss of meaning of the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَ when they include the word ("night" after "the darkening". Hence, Al-Hilali and Khan's rendering seems to be the best.

#### Example Three

Source Surrah: Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), verse.19.

ST: (أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ) (البقرة: 19)

Target Texts:

- (1) Abdel-Haleem (2004): "Or [like people who, under] a cloudburst from the sky, with its darkness, thunder, and lightning" (p. 5).
- (2) Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder, and lightning" (p. 5).

- (3). Pickthall (1930): "Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder and the flash of lightning" (p. 35).

#### 4.3 The Analysis

##### The General Intended Meaning of the Ayah

The meaning of this verse is: Allah sets forth another parable of the hypocrites who sometimes acquire the truth then suffer doubt, confusion, and disbelief that make their hearts quiver with fear like the rain that comes down during the darkness of doubt, disbelief, and hypocrisy. The lightning refers to the light of faith felt for a while in the hearts of the hypocrites. All that they do to evade the thunderclap, for fear of death is in vain indeed because they are constrained by Allah's all-embracing determination and judgment. The lightning almost yanks away their sight because it is overwhelming in itself, and their sight is too faint to acquire, and hence to embrace, faith. They know the right and speak therewith, yet, when turned to disbelief, in confusion, they then wander. Certainly, Almighty Allah has the power to take away their sight and hearing (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 1, p. 24).

4.3.1 Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating the Qur'anic Cultural Lexical Item *كَصَيِّبٍ* into English, Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), verse.19.

In this context, the Qur'anic CLI *الصَّيْبِ* denotes rain, and Allah sets forth this parable for the hypocrites, as if the meaning is for those who have *الصَّيْبِ* or rain, so He made the religion of Islam an example for them in terms of the fear and adversity they experience to find in it (Ibn Kathir, 2009; Ibn-Manzoor, 2003), and He made the lightning they seek as illumination with an example of Islam; they seek illumination, and their fear of lightning is similar to their fear of death.

From what linguists and exegetists have shown, we can say the following: 1. The Qur'anic Arabic word *الصَّيْبِ* in one context of the Holy Quran implies rain, while the Qur'anic cultural lexical word "rain" was employed in eight positions in the Holy Qur'an, and it came in the past tense form seven times (Nasr, 2017; Manzoor & Selin, 2013), and all these places are about the descent of torture; this indicates that "rain" is used for evil and anguish, and the word *l-ghaytha* *الْغَيْثِ*, "the rain" is referred to in three positions in the Holy Qur'an, all of which have connotations of the good, *l-khayru*, and spreading mercy *l-rahmati*. 2. From the primary point that we have set up, we have come to realize that *الصَّيْبِ* is broader in its meaning than *المطر* *المطر*, "the rain", which is specific to evil, and more general than *الغيث* *الغيث*, "the rain", which is specific to good. The meaning of *الصَّيْبِ* is specific in connotation, but its meaning is more general, as it comprises the meanings of *المطر* *المطر*, the rain, water, clouds, and sky, and these connotations are not embedded in the words *المطر* *المطر* and *الغيث* *الغيث*, and so it was used as a proverb to indicate religion, Islam, and the Holy Qur'an.

The Qur'anic Arabic word *الصَّيْبِ* includes the connotation of strength and speed in falling, rain that falls heavily, and clouds that bring rain. It implies the flowing and gushing of water. When we say, "I poured water", we feel the force and continuance in downpouring and descending. This is a connotation that is not embodied in the Qur'anic word *الغيث* *الغيث*, in which we sense its meaning is lightness and gentleness in the descent. Hence, the Qur'anic Arabic word *الصَّيْبِ* is the most appropriate accurate and expressive word of what is meant by the noble ayah.

As can be seen in Example Three, Abdel-Haleem adopted a free translation approach predicated on exegesis of the Holy Qur'an of Ibn Kathir (2009). rendering the Qur'anic CLI *الصَّيْبِ* appropriately into "cloudburst" which signifies a sudden, very heavy rainfall and includes the connotation of strength and speed in falling, rain that falls heavily, and clouds that bring rain (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 1, p. 41).

Abdel-Haleem's rendering differs significantly from Al-Hilali and Khan and Pickthall's. The latter used the literal translation approach to translate the CLI *الصَّيْبِ* into "rainstorm" respectively which refers to a storm with heavy rain (in British English). Hence, their renderings can be a little blurry and muddled for the translated language receptor and do not connote clouds that bring rain as Ibn Kathir opines in his exegesis of Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), verse.19. To conclude, the Qur'anic cultural lexical choice "a cloudburst" used by Abdel-Haleem is the most unique of the choices compared to Al-Hilali and Khan and Pickthall. Hence, Abdel-Haleem's rendering ranks the best.

#### Example Four

Source Surrah: Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), verse.61.

ST: (61) *فَرَادُغٌ لَنَا رَبِّكَ يُخْرِجُ لَنَا مِمَّا تُثْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقَتَائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا* (البقرة: 61)

Target Texts:

- (1) Abdel-Haleem (2004): "of the earth's produce, its herbs and cucumbers, its garlic, lentils, and onions" (p. 10).
- (2) Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumbers, its Fum (wheat or garlic), its lentils and its onions" (p. 13 ).
- (3) Pickthall (1930): "which the earth groweth - of its herbs and its cucumbers and its corn and its lentils and its onions" (p. 38).

#### 4.4 The Analysis

##### The General Intended Meaning of the Ayah

Allah (the Exalted) says: "And remember My Blessing that I bestowed upon you; Al-Manna and As-Salwah; good, healthy, at hand and an enjoyable provision for you, and remember your fretfulness with that which We provided for you, and you're asking Moses to exchange this sustenance with that which is lower of herbs and the like of that for which you asked. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that they were

discontented with that and they remembered the food that they used to have, such as lentils, onions, herbs, and garlic. Endure one kind of food” (qtd. in Mourad, 2005, p. 20). “It is so-called (one kind); as their food was [the] manna wal-salwā and [the] quails; the very and the same that they have every day. Fum means, wheat or garlic” (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 1, p. 40).

4.4.1 Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating the Qura’nic Cultural Lexical Item *وَفُومِهَا* *wafūmihā* into English, Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* (The Cow), verse.61.

This verse 61 of Chapter (2) *sūrat l-baqarah* comprises the Qur’anic CLI *wafūmihā* *وَفُومِهَا*. Based on Ibn Kathir’s exegetics the word *fum* refers to several meanings, as stated by the predecessors. Some of them said that it means “garlic”, and others said that it means “wheat”, or “corn”, which is the wheat grain from which bread is made, and still more said that it means “chickpeas” (Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 1, p. 41).

As one can see in Example Four, Abdel-Haleem employed a free translation approach and relied on the first meaning of the Qur’anic CLI *fūm* *فُوم* and rendered it into “garlic”, which is the equivalent of “garlic” in English. Al-Hilali and Khan retained different perspectives concerning the Qur’anic CLI *fūm* *فُوم*, counting on the borrowing translation method, adding (wheat or garlic) as an explanation, and determining that this lexeme has more than one meaning.

Based on explanations of the Holy Qur’an of predecessors who said that the word *fūm* means “wheat” or “corn”, Pickthall uses a free translation method to render this Qura’nic CLI *fūm* *فُوم* into “corn”. In this context, Pickthall seems to have been familiar with what is meant by this the Qura’nic CLI *fūm* *فُوم* as explained by exegetists.

Al-Hilali and Khan’s rendering makes it clear through lexical expansion, that is “(wheat or garlic)”, which maintains various opinions regarding the Qur’anic CLI *fūm* *فُوم*, relying on the calques or loan translation approach to render an accurate sense of the implied meaning of the lexis. Abdel-Haleem’s and Pickthall’s rendering of the Qur’anic CLI *fūm* *فُوم* into “garlic” and “corn”, respectively, are also faithful by dint of the Qur’anic context. To conclude, Al-Hilali and Khan’s rendering is more adequate as compared to Abdel-Haleem’s and Pickthall’s renderings.

#### Example Five

Source Surah: الواقعة Chapter (56) *sūrat l-wāqī ‘ah* (The Event), verse.13.

ST: (13: الواقعة) { تَلَّةٌ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ }

Target Texts:

- (1) Abdel-Haleem (2004): “Many from the past” (p. 535).
- (2) Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): “A multitude of those (foremost) will be from the first generations (who embraced Islam)” (p. 736).
- (3) Pickthall (1930): “A multitude of those of old” (p. 384).

#### 4.5 The Analysis

##### *The General Meaning of the Ayah:*

Allah, the Almighty states that those foremost, who will be nearest to Allah are a multitude from the first generations and a few from the latter time (generations). The scholars of Tafsir differed about the meaning of the first generations and the later generations. It was said that the first generations refer to the earlier nations and the latter generations to this Ummah (nation); the view that Ibn Jarir adopted owing to this statement of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH): “We are the latest Ummah (nation) to come into being, yet we will be the first to be reckoned (and admitted into Paradise)” (Ibn Kathir, 2007, vol. 4, p. 2216). What supports this statement is that Imam Abi-Hātim recorded that Abu-Hurayrah said: “When the statement of Allāh” A multitude of those (foremost) will be from the generations and a few of those (foremost) will be from the time (generations) was revealed, the news implied in the verse became hard for the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH); the matter at which Allah revealed these verses: (A multitude of those (on the right Hand) will be from the first generation and a multitude of those (on right Hand) will be from the latter time generation) (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 4, p. 2216).

4.5.1 Linguistic Obstacles Faced in Translating the Qur’anic Cultural Lexical Item *تَلَّةٌ* *thullatun*, Chapter (56) *sūrat l-wāqī ‘ah* (The Event), verse.13.

In this Qur’anic verse, the translators rendered the Qur’anic Arabic word *thullatun* *تَلَّةٌ* into “many”, “a multitude”, and “a multitude”, respectively. Their renderings for the lexeme *thullatun* *تَلَّةٌ* are inappropriate because the three choices of the words do imply “company”, “a large company”, and “a numerous company” (Ibn Kathir, 2007, vol. 4, p. 2216). These three renderings lead to a semantic loss in the translation of the Qur’anic Arabic word *thullatun* *تَلَّةٌ* because the three translators also relied on synonyms of the lexeme which are more obscure difficulties in the spiritual context in general and the Holy Qur’an in particular. Translators sometimes fail to render some words as synonyms because the Qur’anic Arabic language is the most vivid, evocative, and expressive language, hence rendering what appears to be a synonymous lexeme is also complicated and leads to lexical and syntactic loss. To conclude, a synonym is adopted when translators do not find an equivalent word in the translated language that transfers the meaning accurately. It ought not under any circumstances be a procedure to avert recurrence in the Holy Qur’anic text because every word has the sense that no other word has. Even though a translator may attempt to avert recurrence, he/she becomes erratic and inappropriate in his/her rendering of an authentic text like Qur’anic Arabic words as a whole and the Qur’anic Arabic word *thullatun* *تَلَّةٌ* most importantly

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper indicates that the three translators under the study experienced some linguistic problems in translating some examples of unique Qur'anic CLIs into English and ascertains that in similar cases they should evade translationese and adopt a free translation, couplet translation, a loan translation, calques and borrowing translation approaches. Furthermore, it reveals that it is of the utmost importance that the translator has a thorough knowledge of the language of the Holy Qur'an, as precious information is deep-rooted in its specific linguistic system and lexical structure. Consequently, exegesis books are significant tools and effective instruments for interpreting and understanding the implied meaning of Qur'anic texts. The recent study has only examined five examples of unique Qur'anic CLIs; additional investigations are needed for an in-depth study of other unique Qur'anic CLIs.

The study also demonstrates that the most appropriate procedure for translating the implied meaning of some Qur'anic CLIs into English is that of free translation. The most paramount of this procedure is its direct attention to the text's intended effect and goal-oriented understanding as well as the goals of the writer. It fixates on conveying the proportion of the original wording into English without giving much thought to the syntactic structures. In the five examples examined by the researcher in this study, the three translators under the study employ a free translation method on several occasions and a literal translation on some occasions.

Linguistically speaking, Nord's model of text analysis in translation can serve as a guide for prospective and potential translators of the Holy Qur'an, enabling them to understand the implied content and connotative meaning of some Qur'anic CLIs, especially as it considers both external and internal causes when studying a text. Nord reminds us that the origin language recipient varies from the translated language receptor within at least two facets: social backgrounds and linguistic group, and consequently the translator should execute changes when rendering from the source language. As an example, the investigation of the Qur'anic CLI *waqaba* وَقَبَّ Chapter (113) *sūrat l-falaq* (The Daybreak), verse.3, surah 4:42, reveals that Abdel-Haleem, Al-Hilali and Khan, and Pickthall created appropriate renderings, "the harm in the night when darkness", "it comes with its darkness", and "the evil of the darkness", respectively, which take into consideration both external and internal factors. Amongst such external considerations are the writer's purpose and the incentives or causal factors of the composition of the text, in addition to the means that the translators utilize to communicate and transfer the information clearly to the language receptors. Otherwise, in some Qur'anic ayahs, the role of revelation (the context of the situation) is an important aspect, and this role should apply to both the original text and translated text, making sure that they are consistent and harmonious. This translation model also considers internal reasons, such as content and assumptions, and its application is extremely valuable when rendering Qur'anic metaphorical language, the Qur'anic CLIs that comprise tropes, synecdoche, and double meaning, together with other lexicalized items that encompass more than monosemy or hold cultural implications.

### 5.1 Recommendation

Given the results of the present study, it is recommended that translators of the Holy Quran should:

1. Raise their awareness of the importance of studying and grasping the linguistics and exegetic books of the Holy Qur'an.
2. Be knowledgeable about the implied meaning of the Qur'anic CLIs while rendering them into English. It is not easy to convey faithfully in English nuance what is included in the Qur'anic CLIs. This is why the researcher advocates for the utilization of expository notes while rendering the Holy Qur'an in general and the Qur'anic CLIs in particular.
3. Be conscious of the Qur'anic CLIs when rendering Qur'anic texts into English. Therefore, it is not enough for the translators to know only the thematic meaning of the Qur'anic CLIs but they must select other meaning variants that correspond.
4. Seek solutions to the linguistic problems of rendering the Qur'anic CLIs from linguistic or cultural perspectives through multifaceted mechanisms such as calque, loans, attached comments, naturalization, and the like.
5. Utilize various translation approaches to translate the Qur'anic CLIs into English and to attain optimal close equivalent to the source language text. One of those strategies is free translation.

This study, we argue, is innovative in the way it analyses the Qur'anic CLIs. It adds an innovative dimension to the purview of translation of the sacred writings in general and the Holy Qur'an in particular and opens more suggestions for further investigations.

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The two authors made significant contributions to the conception and design of the work. The first author carried out the textual analysis. Also, the two authors contributed to the interpretation of the gathered data. All authors edited, proofread and revised the work critically for important intellectual content based on the editor and reviewer's comments. All authors approved of the final version to be published and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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