
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Nuances in the Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Quran into English

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ABSTRACT

This study uses a comparative method. The author refers to the translation methods and techniques to indicate some shortcomings that rise from the translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an into the English Language. The aim of the study is to reveal the inaccuracies that result from the said translations. One of the purposes of this study is to suggest methods that may enhance the process of the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. This attempt may guide young and trainee translators. The method used will elucidate the misleading literal translations. So, the shortcomings may be avoided, and this will ameliorate human as well as linguistic relations with other nations. The study concludes that the comparative method and techniques reduce the shortcomings found in the translations of the study material.

KEYWORDS

Qur'anic Translation, method, shortcomings, literal translation, Translation Process

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1. Introduction

Allah[1] Almighty revealed to His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) the Holy Qur'an in the Arabic language as a challenge to the people of the Arabic peninsula as well as for the entire world through all times. He also revealed other Holy Scriptures to the previous Messengers (Peace be upon them).

The Holy Qur'an is revealed in Arabic and at the same time, it is a Book destined to the entire human beings as Guidance and life system. This necessitates its translation into other languages. In fact, there are about 700 translations in the different languages of the globe, and some of them in the English language and 25 in the French, language, etc.

This study tackles the translation of some Quranic terms and units as revealed in the Holy Qur'an, extracted from some different Chapters or Surahs. The purpose is not to draw a theory on how to translate the meanings of the Holy Qur'an, nor to demonstrate a frozen framework for the application of such processes. The study doesn't attempt to facilitate the translation of the linguistic and lexical units of the Holy Qur'an. The analysis, description, and comparison of the units are done within the linguistic theory of translation as mentioned in the abstract here-above. To develop such themes, the author will extract some Qur'anic Verses or Ayahs from the books studied in this research mentioned in the section 'study material'. The author, then, analyses the translation and sees the outcome. The translations of these Verses (Ayahs) could have been taken from a translation done by other known translators or Institutions specialized in these types of religious translation works. However, the study focused on the mentioned study material for their spread in the non-Arabic speaking Muslim communities in the world.

1.1 Importance of the issue

The problem of religious translations and that of the Word of Allah constitutes a challenge to translators in general. Converting a religious Message of the Holy Qur'an tells us about the importance as believers and translators. The means taken for converting a novel or a speech delivered by a human being lay and reveals linguistic and cultural difficulties. Yet, it is a unit produced by a person like us in many features. Maybe the cultural barriers and the lexis used such as collocations, proverbs, idioms, etc. constitute obstacles to some translators. If this the case with manmade texts and units, what will be the importance and necessity of

converting the Word of Allah? The importance is evident that the Message must be conveyed to other people, nations communities to help them understanding the content of the Qur'anic Message.

Thus, the present study will have links to other disciplines and fields due to the General characteristics of the Holy Qur'an: it is the Word of Allah explained by the Prophet and the Muslim scholars. Moreover, the Qur'anic Message is addressed to the Muslims, and to the non-Muslims. It speaks about the present life, the future life beyond, the relationship between humans, judgment and governance the mysterious life of the Demons and their attempts to control the humans, the means of the application of the Laws of Allah, etc.

The present study is linked to other studies of the field of translation, mainly the literary one. It also relates to the Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the translations and explanations of these domains.

These different fields necessitate different types of translators and style. However, the present study will accentuate on the translation of the material of study. It will point out the nuances that may exist in the studied translations. Its main aim is to show out the utility of the process of translation and reveal any shortcomings that may exist in the studied translations.

As well, the study tries to point out how the problems that face the translator of the meanings of the Qur'anic Verses may be resolved. It also focuses on how the translation of their can be beneficial to those to the non-Arabic speakers. It tries to answer the question: can we rely on the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an? It, also, tackles the problems that encounter the translator.

The importance of the present comparative study is enhanced by the efforts undertaken by some Institutions in the Islamic world to convert the meanings of the Holy Qur'an.

1.2 Qur'anic lexical terms and translation problems

The author means by Qur'anic lexical terms those revealed in the Holy Book of Muslims. Thus, they differ from other studies that tackle single units.

The translation of any religious Verses (Ayahs) is difficult due to the existence of translation problems that the concerned text may include, such as:

- **Problems of synonymy:** Close, perfect or absolute ones may cause problems for some translators. The synonymous words cause a problem of translation, as a translator may choose an equivalent word in the TL that is not the accurate term for rendering the meaning embedded in the SL. This phenomenon will yield grave translation in the religious Qur'anic Verses unless the translator is cautious regarding the context and the intended meaning in the SL. Any lacunae on the level of the choice of equivalent in the TL is the responsibility of the translator.

- **Problems of literal translations:** These are frequent in the translation of the meaning of the Qur'anic Verses for many reasons, such as:

The fear of the translator to fall in blasphemy.

The false idea, of the translator, to produce semi-identical text in the TL. So, he/she converts the SL text by literal translation.

- **Problems of polysemy:** This may produce shortcomings in the TL when the terms that constitute the concerned Qur'anic Verses (Ayahs) are polysemous words.

- **Problems of monosemy:** Here, the problem is less critical compared to the other ones. The translator can look for the one meaning that the term denotes and solve the problem.

- **Problems related to the gaps in the cultural knowledge of the translator:** this regards the commentary of the Qur'anic Chapters, the cultural built-up about the Arabic and Qur'anic studies, etc. which constitute a background for the translator.

- **Problems of the Islamic Schools of commentary of the Holy Qur'an:** the translator may follow a school that follows the text and doesn't make interpretations such as those of Abdullah Ibn Abbas (may Allah be satisfied with them both), even though the principles of the translator are based on scientific or traditional Qur'anic methods.

- **Problems of Islamic Schools of jurisprudence:** The Schools have a mission: to clarify the understanding of the Verses (Ayahs) related to the laws and jurisprudential attitudes regarding some Qur'anic Verses (Ayahs).

- **Problems related to matters of creed, thought, etc.**

Generally, in case of mistranslations of Qur'anic units, the result will be a misunderstanding of the Qur'anic Verse (Ayah), and in consequence a failed practice or deviation from the principles and morals to which the concerned Verse (Ayah) calls! So, the translator must be aware of what he/she translates.

1.3 The Quranic language features

In simple terms, the language of the Holy Qur'an is exemplary. This language is considered a model. It has spiritual and linguistic features. So, translating such a religious text and focusing only on the lexis necessitates high qualifications. The Qur'anic Verse is

not based on human language criteria. Human language has ordinary terminological, phonological, syntactic, and stylistic features. In the Holy Qur'anic Verse (Ayah), there are traits connected to spirituality, faith, and the Unseen (religious mystery). As in human language, there are cultural features that play an important role in formulating meanings. These spiritual ones perform further linguistic and extra-linguistic functions regarding the lexis of the material of the Holy Qur'an. However, the author will focus on the linguistic terminological aspects to develop this study.

The Holy Qur'an was translated into many languages. Only in English and French are there more than one hundred translations. This causes problems at the level of the translation process.

1.4 Background

There are many studies related to the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. We count the following major works:

- Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1946). The Holy Qur'an, Translation and Commentary, published by Islamic Propagation Centre International, 124 Queen Street, Durban, 4001, Copyrighted, by Khalil Al-Rawaf. This translation of Yusuf Ali is widespread. The book is composed of 1813 pages of translation and notes, plus 48 pages in form of indexes. Even though the Arabic language is written from right to left, Yusuf Ali follows the English system in writing: from left to right.

Another widespread translation is that of Al-Hilali, Muhammad Taqi-ud-din, and Muhammad Muhsin Khan 1404H. Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language. www.qurancomplex.org. ISBN9960-770-15-X: Medina.

There are many other translations in the same field, some online.

1.5 Study material

The translations concerned in his study are the followings:

A. Yusuf Ali, the Holy Qur'an, Text, Translation, and Commentary.

It is very useful and one of the pioneer translations in English.

Al-Hilali, M. Taqi-ud-din, and M. Muhsin Khan (1404H). Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language.

2. Method

The present study uses the comparative method. It has two major purposes: (1) to discuss the conformity and effectiveness of the translations done in the languages of study. (2) to determine the status of these translations and their compliance with the Holy Qur'an Verses, according to the text and the received explanations, and how readers still consult these translations. The study analyses some Verses extracted from the Holy Qur'an to explain and analyse the process of the selected examples. These examples will be analysed considering the methodology used in this study. In the near future, other studies might be conducted to determine the utility or conformity of the translation to the original Qur'anic Verses.

In fact, the present approach developed in this study aims to answer questions that may be raised by readers concerning the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'anic Verses into English.

2.1 Assumptions and analyses

In the present research, the author will analyse the Qur'anic verses extracted from the Holy Qur'an and will try to come to some conclusions.

2.2 Legal opinion of Muslim scholars on translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an

All Muslim scholars, mainly Imam Abu Hanifa, render permissible the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an into a TL. This was affected by the entry in Islam of Communities of Asia, neighbouring Iraq where Imam Abu Hanifa lived.

Modern scholars speak of the necessity of translating the meanings of the Qur'anic Verses. Some refuse to admit that. For the latter, it is prohibited, saying that the Holy Qur'anic Verses is the 'Word of Allah': so, it is impossible to translate.

In modern times, the General Administration of Guidance and 'Daawa' of Saudi Arabia, 'Al-Azhar El-Sharif', and other similar Institutions in the Islamic world see no harm in translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'anic Verses from Arabic into other languages.

The author, thereby, states and confesses that translating the meanings of the Islamic Scriptures is not prohibited: How do other non-Arabic language speaking people know about the Holy Qur'anic Verses if they do not find or consult proper copies in their own languages?

The author based his works on Ibn Hajar comments on Sahih Bukhari, as well as on the scene of Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb and the letter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) translated to Heraclius, governor of Sham and head of the Christians. The author, as well, based his works on the works of companion Zayd Ibn Thabit (*May Allah be satisfied with him*) who translated some letters of the Jewish to the prophet (PBUH).

3. Analysis

In the following sections, the author will tackle the issue of translating the meanings of the Noble Qur'an and develop the discussion considering the translation methods and techniques. This will be by giving examples of some lexical themes. These words are not considered, by many linguists, as parts of the word-formation process of a language. However, they may constitute a problem for translators from the Qur'anic Verses into English. These lexical themes are developed in the following units of the present research.

3.1 Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronyms: They are techniques used, mainly in the western languages to create new words. This process means that a new word is formed from the initial units of, for instance, a longer phrase. Usually, this new form is created from the initial letters or syllabus of the said phrase or through a process that combines the two processes. Examples are in lexis or dictionaries of languages. Yet, the units that seem like acronyms in the Noble Qur'an are something apart. They are not new words formed by humans. The letters found at the beginning of some Chapters or Surahs of the Noble Qur'an constitute an issue of divergence regards the opinions of Muslim jurists. As well, the commentators of the Noble Qur'an have different views on that issue. The author is not going to develop these opinions due to their specific status and that they do not help in developing the general point and purpose of the present section. The main idea that the author agrees with these commentators is that they are letters to challenge the Arabs and non-Arabic speaking people in the whole world and at every time, till the ends of times: That they cannot produce, even one phraseology or Verse similar to those of the Noble Qur'an.

Abbreviations:

The meaning of the term '**Abbreviation**' in Cambridge English Dictionary is as follows: *"A shorten form of a word or a phrase."* [2] (See, also, Kocourek R, (1982).

Abbreviations denote a process of word construction that is well-known in recent times, mainly in LSP and in general and scientific translations, as well as that of conferences.

For some linguists as for the author, it consists of maintaining in the new morpheme or sequence, the syntagmatic unit of each constituent, either by the first letter of each unit or word or by syllabic fraction reduced.

In fact, these abbreviations are composed of two to four initial letters. In case of being more than that, they will be integrated into the concerned language, as in the case of acronyms given here-above.

The abbreviation may be a fraction in grammar or dictionaries:

g. adj. = adjective

3.1.1 Abbreviations in the Holy Qur'an

There are twenty-nine Surahs that begin with letters.

The commentator of the Holy Qur'an, Imam Ibn Jarir Tabari reports from Mujahid that these abbreviations are used as introductory elements or to open Surahs. (فواتح السور).

3.1.2 Acronyms in the translations of the corpora of the study

In Surah 2 (the Cow), we have the 1st Verse translated as follows: (**Alif Lam Mim**). To translate this Verse, most translators e.g. Al-Hilali and Khan, write: (*Alif Lam Mim (These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an and none, but Allah (Alone) knows their meaning)*).

Al-Hilali and Khan use a specific translation system like that used by international bodies and journals in writing the Supreme Name 'Allah', with, as said in the French language, a 'chapeau' on the second letter 'a'.

Many translators and commentators of the Noble Qur'an have such similar arguments. Allah tells us that this Qur'an is facilitated for those who wish to remember Allah. It is revealed for those who understand the Arabic language (See Surah 12, Joseph, Verse 2). (الر تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ)

This Surah 12 begins, also, with abbreviations or acronyms: '*Alif Lam Ra*' (ل). The author thinks that comment as said here-above is convincing: to say, for instance, these letters as you see, separated and isolated, but the Holy Qur'an is composed of them. You speak the Arabic language, try to compose similar units; you will fail.

In the translation of Surah, No. 3, Al-Hilali and Khan write a commentary between brackets as they wrote in the translation of Verse one, Surah 2: (*Alif Lam Mim (These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meaning)*). (□□□)

To translate Verse 1 of Surah No. 41, Al-Hilali and Khan write: "*Ha Mim (These letters are one of the miracles (...))Allah (Alone) knows their meaning)*" (□□).

They repeat the same argument between brackets.

But in Verse 3, of the same Surah 41, they translate the meaning as:

"A Book whereof the Verses are explained in detail;

- A Qur'an in Arabic for people who know).

One can ask the question of how could 'A Qur'an in Arabic' be explained in detail and one says that it is for those who know, and at the same time the same person says that some Verses constitute miracles and are not clear?

In fact, the author admits that all the Verses are miracles but have meanings and revealed for guidance! In Verse (1) Surah (50), the letter or word 'Qaf' refers to the name of a Mountain. This is obtained from the Qur'an commentary books.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in one of the battles against the disbelievers, said: (Ha Mim (حَمْ، شَاهَتْ الوجوه) this means that there is an element to be explained by the exegete and commentators of the Holy Qur'an. For Imam Bukhari, 'Ha Mim' is a noun.

3.2 Replica

This process is called 'literal tracing'. It differs from literal translation. In replica, there are single words, as the study tackles lexis and terminologies translation. In literal translation, we have a string of words.

In a way, a replica is a process of loaned words or borrowed ones. The translators borrow the syntagm from the foreign language but translate literary the units that compose it. He/she follows the SL, literally in its method of formation and rules.

Example: To translate (أهل الكتاب) al-Hilali and Khan write in Surah (5), Verse (59): 'People of the Scripture'

They add an explanation as follows: (*Jews and Christians*)

The same Verse that Yusuf Ali numbered as (62), speaks of 'People of the Book'

In some translations this composed word is rendered by complex Lexis: "Those who received the Book"

The same argument can be developed concerning words such as those in Surah (7), Verses 96-98: "People of the towns" (أهل القرى):

The literal equivalent of (القرى) is the word (villages) or (towns or cities). Here is an attempt to render it by the word 'town', but why not the words 'city' or village? The author presumes that we will have a solution in the commentary books.

Partial Replica: Vinay and Darbelnet (1968) call this process 'replica of structure' which others call 'partial replica'.

In this kind, the translator uses two linguistic units to create a composed word.

For example, Al-Hilali and Khan in Chapter or Surah (36) Verse No. (41), (Ya Sin), write: (41:36) "And an Ayah for them", which is in Arabic: (وآية لهم)

The word 'Ayah' is translated by the two translators with what is called in the French language a 'chapeau'.

In Surah No. (46), Verse (36), they proceed by writing: "Ayah from" = (آية من)

The word 'Ayah' is borrowed from the SL: The Arabic language. That is why it is a 'partial replica'.

This type of process may introduce new words in the target language. It may enhance and enrich the it on the lexical level. But in religious translations, the SL texts or units should not be subject to any alliterations.

Lexical Ellipsis:

This is a process in which some words are omitted. It is a process used by those who use comparative methods. It may help the researcher in explaining the loss of meanings that may exist in the translations of the Holy Qur'an.

قال تعالى: (الْيَوْمَ أُجِّلَ لَكُمْ الظَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ جُلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ جُلٌّ لَهُمْ... 5)

In Surah [5:5] mentioned here-above, there is a Qur'anic word omitted, by Allah (Almighty), which is the word 'Marriage'.

Example of the literal translation may give the following: Al-Hilali and Khan write: "Made lawful for you this day are **at-tayyibat** [all kinds of **Halal** (lawful) foods, which Allah has made lawful (meat of slaughtered cattle, eatable animals,..."

The translation of some words like 'eatable' could be replaced by the term 'edible'. The words 'at-tayyibat', and 'Halal' which are transliterated Arabic terms, could have been translated directly into the English language, by their equivalences.

That, this translation is full of loan words and constitutes an over-translation process: extra-linguistic units not existing in the SL are added by the translators. That is why the Arabic terms are put between brackets. But what interests us here is the additional meaning that is omitted in Arabic, which is 'lawful to you in marriage'.

3.3 Figures of speech

Some lexical units are found in the figurative language. It is known that this type of language such as metaphors, simile, idioms, proverbs, etc. is difficult to translate.

In fact, all linguists, figurative usage in a language are not considered as part of the word-formation process of that language. Nevertheless, this shall be mentioned, in the present research, as elements that create challenges and problems for translators.

These problems concern social practices or linguistic units of a language. In the daily life people don't speak frankly referring to scientific names: The following examples may be given to explain this point:

3.3.1 Intimate relationships

In Surah [4:43], we read the following:

يقول تعالى: (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا) (43)

Yusuf Ali translates the part that concerns us of this Verse as follows:

"... If you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and you find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth and therewith your faces and hands. For God doth blot out sins and forgive again and again."

One shall have: Scientific element to be commented:

a. Concerning the part of units: "or ye have been in contact with women," a non-Muslim may think that in matters of purification, Muslims speak of women as they speak of coming out from the toilet and being sick or ill, etc.

But the Qur'an means, and it is the meaning that one always looks for, if someone has sexual relations this needs a special purification, in the sight of Allah.

a. The words: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا) "Forgive again and again" are done with literal translation. The repetition could be manifested otherwise.

Al-Hilali and Khan said: "Ever oft-forgiving".

A) 2: **Verse No. 222:**

يقول تعالى: (وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَظْهَرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ) (222)

To translate [2:222], Al-Hilali and Khan write: "They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: that is an "adha" (A harmful thing for a Husband in a sexual intercourse, therefore keep away from women during menses and go not unto them till they have purified ..."

As usual, the translators use comments, explanatory units and brackets. The Quranic terms: (ولا تقربوهن) is rendered by them as: "keep away from women."

The meaning looked for is really that not to have sexual relations, even if one sleeps with her in bed. As the word 'sex' is taboo in Arabic, it should be explained clearly as in situations when one goes and consults the physician for treatment. To avoid any misleading ideas or concepts: (No Shyness in the Religion) or as said by Muslim jurists.

In Verse 223, one reads in the Holy Qur'an, the following metaphoric Verse:

يقول تعالى: (يَسْأَلُوكُمْ حَرْثَ لَكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنْتُمْ شِئْتُمْ ...) (223)

Al-Hilali and Khan proceed as follows: "Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth (have sexual relations with your wives in any manner as long as it is in the vagina and not in the anus) when and how you will and send (good deeds or ask Allah bestow you upon you pious offspring)..."

The use of a word like 'tilth' is very strange and causes confusion to top the reader!

There are extra morphemes or explanatory units, which could be reserved and used in a commentary: the brackets or parentheses reflect that.

a) Man or woman as spouse: They are source of tranquillity for each other.

b) For example, Surah [2:187] or Surah [7:26].

((187))... أَجَلٌ لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةُ الصِّيَامِ الرَّقْتُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ: (قال تعالى

Al-Hilali and Khan write: "It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of the fast. They are "libas" [i.e. body cover, or screen, or "Sakun" (i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with her as in Verse (7: 189) Tafsir At-Tabari)] for you and you are the same for them."

It obvious for the reader that there are loan misleading words such as "libas" and "Sakun", the latter word is pronounced as follows in Arabic language: 'Sakan' and not Sakun as stated by Al-Hilali and Khan. Some other units are ambiguous: "for you and you are the same for them."

The two translators use braces and long sentences to develop their approach. And instead of using in footnotes or commentary they proceed by explanations.

Yusuf Ali, sometimes, proceeds, in the same way, using ancient Shakespearean style, with words like 'ye', 'thou', 'cometh'...

There are many other similar usages such as in the Surah [37:177].

Speaking of punishment of the Qur'anic Verse: (نَزَلَ يَسَاحَتِهِمْ)

Al-Hilali and Khan said: *"descends into their courtyard."*

This is a literal translation. The Verse speaks of strike or punishment that will be immense and will cover the whole area. They could have said: "strike them" or descends into their villages (area), instead of *"descends into their courtyard."*

Example: No. 2, Surah [28:57]:

قال تعالى: (وَقَالُوا إِن تَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَى مَعَكَ نُحْطِفُ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا (...)) (57)

It means that then disbelievers think they will lose their land and some of them may die other expelled, but;

Al-Hilali and Khan write: *"If we follow the guidance with you, we would be snatched away from our lands (...)"*

Example No. 3: Surah [108:3].

(إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ) (3) يقول الله تعالى

It means shall not have descendants, but Al-Hilali and Khan write: *"He will be cut off."*

This type of figurative usage is not classified as a kind of word formation, even though it reveals very interesting commentary.

The author remarks that, if there is a shift in the use of a word, for example, from field to field or from one rank to another with figurative usage, there is a question that need to be answered: shall we consider it as a new word or not? If it is a new word, then this use is to be considered as being part of word-formation! But if the concerned word is not considered as so, then how can we understand its new shifted meaning? Some translators may translate it literally. This is to be avoided as the author has demonstrated here-above, in the present study.

3.4 Loan and borrowed words

In Surah [2:2-3], al-Hilali and Khan proceed by introducing Arabic words in their English text: *"... It is a guidance for those who are Al-Mutaqûn."*

The word *"Al-Mutaqûn"* is explained in a footnote as follows: *'The pious'*. The author thinks that they should have used the word 'pious' in the translation of the Verse, as follows: *"(...) is a guidance to those who are 'pious'."*

In [2:3], they write: *"Who believe in the Ghaib ..."*

For a person who has not studied Islam or the Arabic language, the meaning of a word such as 'Ghaib' will be difficult to grasp.

They proceed by a footnote and say that *"Ghaib" means, literally, something unseen... (131)*

In the Islamic belief, the "unseen" (al-Ghaib) is defined as that which cannot be perceived by our intellect or our five senses (or six, according to some people). Examples include the torment of the grave, Paradise, Hell, the terrors of the Day of Resurrection, and the angels. However, matters that God has revealed to His prophets (Peace be upon them all) and that they, in turn, have conveyed to their respective communities are not considered as 'unseen' for those Prophets; they become known, even if they remain hidden from us or have yet to happen. The major signs of the Day of Resurrection are considered 'unseen' because they have not yet taken place; yet, for the believer, they are inevitabilities that will certainly come to pass, by God's Permission.

Accordingly, belief in the unseen is mentioned in the second surah of the Book of God: Surah Al-Baqarah.

In the Holy Quran, a distinction is made between the 'keys to the unseen', which are known only to Go, and 'the unseen' itself. Once God grants permission for the keys to the unseen to be unlocked from the 'Hidden Book' (the Preserved Tablet) in His presence, the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) learns of what was previously hidden from us and from others. Subsequently, God's command is executed through the specific angel tasked with the matter; for instance, an angel responsible for provisions might be directed to water a particular piece of land, or the Angel of Death might be instructed to take a person's soul. In the latter case, the act of taking a soul may be unknown to those far away, yet the angel, having received divine authorization, knows it. This knowledge may then be conveyed to a physician, if the individual is in a hospital, and subsequently to the person's family. In this way, what was once 'unseen' ceases to be so for them; it becomes a 'relative' unseen, remaining hidden only to those who have no connection to the deceased.

Y. Ali renders /al-Mutagain/ by *"those who fear God"* which is a deviated translation.

While in Surah 'The Bees', [16:123], Al-Hilali and Khan write:

"Follow the religion of Abraham "Hanifan".

"Hanifan" is an Arabic word that designates a person who associates nothing to Allah; or a monotheist.

The word 'Surah' in [9:124], and Ayah in (127).

Strangely, the first one is written as 'Sûrah', but the second one as 'Surah'. These differences in the spelling signal a lack of consistency.

In Surah, Ya Sin, [36:58], Al-Hilali and M. Khan use the word "*salamun*", (*peace*) = (سلام)

And "*Zalim*" (ظالم) in Surah [25:27]. This is rendered in English by the following words: 'wrongdoer', 'oppressor' and 'polytheist', etc.; the last explanation is accurate, the others are linguistic synonyms, but don't convey the meaning.

In Surah [2:255] they use the words '*la ilaha illa Huwa*' and they give the meaning between two brackets (none has the right to be worshipped but He).

They do as well with words such as: (ظالمون). They transcript the word as follows: "Zalimûn". And they give many synonyms: polytheists, wrong-doers, Pagans, Idolaters, and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and His messenger.

While in [12:79], they translate "Zalimûn" by 'wrong-doers'. Yet, it means 'unjust'.

Al-Hilali and M. Khan use terms such as: 'Allah', 'istawâ' (استوى), and 'Zalim', which they borrow them from the Arabic language. Such words may be misleading or propose translations with shortcomings concerning the meaning. Moreover, every language resists to loanwords. It would be better to look for equivalencies in the English language rather than using Arabic transliterated words.

4. Findings

There are difficulties to translate the Holy Qur'an due to its special context and the spiritual aspect and meanings of its Verses. There is also difficulty to translate the figures of speech It contains.

5. Conclusion

The translator must do his/her best to proceed with translations processes avoiding complex and over translations. Through this study the author found out that Yusuf Ali proceeds, sometimes, by literal translations: tries to follow the structure of the Qur'anic Verses. Yet, the translator must avoid literal translation and proceed by the literal translation of meaning. Some translation problems are explained by the researcher by applying the translation processes. At the same level, in the analysis of the studied material, the researcher found problems related to the difference in religions and cultures.

Without consulting or even after consulting a book on the commentary of the Holy Qur'an some translations could be rendered with opposite meanings or misleading ones due to loss of meaning caused by unilateral understanding or meanings taken from a dictionary, which may appear to be inaccurate.

In their, noble, attempt to translate the Meaning of the Noble Qur'an, Al-Hilali and M. Khan proceed by using words between brackets, loan words, etc. They shelter their style by the fact that their work is based on the exegesis of the Holy Qur'an. But it would be better to give the nearest meaning by looking for the nearest equivalent in English. The pronunciation may change as in the case of Surah (15), Verse (45). They give a loan word such as: "*Truly the Mutagun will be admitted to the Gardens and water-springs*" While in the Qur'anic Verse one can read the following: (إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ). The word '**Mutagun**' is not equivalent in pronunciation to (المتقين = Mutageen). For non-Arabic speakers, there may be some confusion. The two translators, despite their grate useful effort, have some difficulties in translating figurative Units.

Initiatives aiming at translating the meaning of the Holy Qur'an have to be governed by a sort of Institute which shall have free hand in working but responsible for its works of translation before a Council or Committee of highly qualified scholars coming from different horizons of sciences, where the majority must be translators. The background in Islamic studies, honesty, and loyalty to Islam of these persons must be known to everybody in this Institution or the Monitoring Body. The work of such Institutions or Organs will be aborted if all the people who work in it or co-operate with each other come from one school of jurisprudence or come from one country that looks for one specific secular idea. At the same time, this Institution must have an Advisory Corp that works freely and out of its power, for control and advice.

As the author said in many parts of his study, there is no one excellent translation of the Holy Qur'an. Everybody must refer to exegesis and the valuable works in a devoted group: teamwork. Otherwise, the said Institution should order a team of translators to translate a commentary book of the Holy Qur'an such as that of Tabari or Ibn Kathir avoiding the translation of Verses. Then one may call it for example: 'Interpretation and Explanation of the Meaning of the Holy Qur'an: Based on Tabari'; or 'Ibn Kathir'

Notes

[1] - Allah, as known, means God = The Lord of all creatures and the Master of the worlds. His Name in the Islamic Scriptures and Writings is 'Allah'.

[2] - Cambridge Content Dictionary © Cambridge University Press.

[3]- P. 2, S. 2.

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