| RESEARCH ARTICLE

# An Ongoing Project on Assessing the English Translation of Complete *Taḍmīn* (Implication of Meaning) in the Qur'an: The Seventh *Sūrah* (Chapter) *Al-Aʕrāf*

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| ABSTRACT

This paper is a part of an in-progress project which investigates four English translations of complete *taḍmīn* in the whole Qur'an. *Taḍmīn* involves the presence of an explicit verb, noun or adjective, followed by an explicit preposition with which it is not standardly collocated, and the expression of additional meaning through an implicit verb, noun or adjective, which standardly collocates with the explicit preposition. This study is an extension of Nouraldeen (2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2022a ; 2022b), which have investigated six chapters so far. Using the four-element model that was put forward in Nourladeen (2020, p. 240) and modified twice in Nouraldeen (2021a, p. 293; and 2022b, p. 144), this paper proceeds by discussing, analysing and assessing four English translations of complete *taḍmīn* in the seventh *sūrah* (chapter) *al-Aʕrāf*. The importance, and also the challenge, of complete *taḍmīn* lies in its invisibility to the translator and its absence in English. The theoretical framework of this study is established within the theories of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995, p. 342) and Dickins et al. (2017, pp 48-56), which suggest 'explicitation' of the ST, leading to 'loss' and 'gain' in the TT. Textual analysis is applied to the ST and the TT based on two sources and three dictionaries. None of the four translators are aware of *taḍmīn* in translating the Qur'an, except for Abdel Haleem, Hammad and Khattab in *āyah* 1, who translate the four elements of complete *taḍmīn*, and Abdel Haleem in translating *āyah* 5. The Qur'anic style should be taken into consideration when translating the Qur'an unless the translation would sound awkward in English.

## 1. Introduction

This is an in-progress project for assessing four English translations of complete *taḍmīn in the entire* Qur'an. Thus, this literature review abstracts most of the ideas in Nouraldeen (2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2022a; 2022b). *Taḍmīn* is a unique Arabic phenomenon in which a verb a noun or an adjective is followed by a preposition with which does not standardly collocate, for a *balāġah* (rhetorical science) purposes. *Taḍmīn*, which is also considered a form of ellipsis, is used principally for succinctness, which is a characteristic of Arabic. Another purpose is when *taḍmīn* is used in the Qur'an to help its readers and listeners to engage in *tadabbur*, which is reflecting deeply on the meanings of the Qur'an, appreciating them, and reaping the benefits which can be implemented in one's life. The implicitness of the noun, verb or adjective motivates the reader to engage in *tadabbur* and attempt to deduce the implicit meaning. Moreover, *taḍmīn* provides additional, interesting meanings.

### 1.1  How is *taḍmīn* viewed by Classical Arabic linguists?

The *Kūfan and Baṣran,* the two main Classical Arabic linguistic schools, regard *taḍmīn* differently. The former considers it *taqāruḍ* 'mutual borrowing', where one preposition is used metaphorically in place of another one. However, the latter, whose approach

this study adopts, believes that there is an implicit element and a preposition, which collocates standardly with the explicit element and preposition.

### 1.2  Is *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an of one type only?

*Taḍmīn* in the Qur'an is classified according to the presence or absence of the elements of *taḍmīn*, i.e. verbal noun, verb or adjective[1] and preposition. Table 1 below illustrates this clearly. This paper is interested in studying the first type, complete *taḍmīn*, because this reflects the *balāġah* aspect and presents clearly the double meaning embodied in it. I intend to investigate the English translation of the second type of *taḍmīn* in future research after completing studying the first type.

| Type | explicit noun[2]/verb/ adjective[3] | implicit preposition | implicit noun/verb/ adjective | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| complete | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| incomplete implicit preposition | ✓ | N/A | ✓ | ✓ |
| incomplete explicit preposition | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | N/A |
| nominal/verbal | ✓ | N/A | ✓ | N/A |
| incomplete noun/verb | ✓ | ✓ | N/A | ✓ |

Table (1) Different types of *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an (Nouraldeen, 2021a, pp. 292-293)

*Taḍmīn* is linked to *balāġah* in two different but related aspects. It falls within ʾῑjāz (succinctness), as a specific type of Arabic style, including *ḥaḏf* (ellipsis). Likewise, it is categorised as a sub-type of *ḥaḏf*.

The challenging but interesting part of the translation of *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an lies in its invisibility, unless the Qur'an translator is aware of this phenomenon, and pays attention to the non-standard collocation of an explicit noun, verb or adjective with an explicit preposition. Moreover, the translator needs to refer to *tafāsīr* (exegeses) whenever *taḍmīn* is observed. Alternatively, the translator can also engage in *tadabbur* and consequently infer the implicit elements in the *āyah*, as long as the inferred elements are in harmony with the explicit ones and the context of the *āyah*. Another challenging aspect of *taḍmīn* is its absence in English.

Complete *taḍmīn* merits further investigation. This study, as a part of an ongoing project dedicated to the translation of complete *taḍmīn* in the whole Qur'an, is an attempt to fill the gap in studies of this phenomenon by observing carefully how this Qur'anic feature is rendered in English and how these translations can be improved. The extra meaning suggested by complete *taḍmīn* makes it fruitful to convey this implicit meaning in the ST, resulting in an explicit TT.

### 2. *Taḍmīn* in Translation Studies (Theoretical Framework)

*Taḍmīn* indicates that there is 'implicitness' of the verb, noun or adjective and the preposition. Furthermore, it suggests 'loss' of (some) *balāġah* aspects in the ST and 'gain' of information in the TT. In relation to 'implicitness', Vinay and Darbelnet (1995, p. 342) propose 'explicitation' as a stylistic translation technique which makes "explicit in the target language what remains implicit in the source language because it is apparent from either the context or the situation".

I believe ellipsis, including *taḍmīn*, which is used implicitly in the Qur'an, should be translated explicitly. The reason for this is that one of the aspects of the unique genre of the Qur'an, the ST, is the use of stylistic features in a *balāġah* manner. This use of them makes Arabic readers familiar with them and does not involve any foreignness in the ST (although some Arabic readers who are not acquainted with Arabic linguistic science might find it difficult to identify some elliptical elements in the ST; however, this does not affect the familiarity of the ST). As long as the *balāġah* feature of ellipsis is removed from the ST, this involves loss because the TT deviates from the ST, and is produced by a different writer (from the ST producer) and for a different audience with a different culture and language norms.

On the other hand, to minimise the possible 'loss', Dickins et al. (2017, pp 48-56) suggest 'compensation'. One of the forms of this is "making explicit what is implicit in the ST" (Dickins et al., 2017, pp 52). This technique can also result in 'gain', which is "a phenomenon which occurs when there is explicitation" (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1995, p. 343).

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[1] The first use of an adjective as an element in complete *taḍmīn* appeared in data in Nouraldeen (2022b, p. 148) in relation to *āyah* 2, Q5:54.

[2] There are different types of nouns in Arabic. The ones that are used with *taḍmīn* so far identified in my data are the verbal noun المصدر and the active participle اسم الفاعل. المصدر (*maṣdar*) or infinitive is defined by Rosenhouse (2006, vol. 4, p. 659) as "a fixed nominal form associated with the derived forms or patterns of the verb (ʾawzān)". اسم الفاعل (*ism al-fāʕil*) "denotes 'the agent noun'" (Carter, 2006, vol. 2, p. 429).

[3] The first use of an adjective as an element in complete *taḍmīn* appeared in data in Nouraldeen (2022b, p. 148) in relation to *āyah* 2, Q5:54.

### 3. Research Questions
This research addresses the following questions:

   a)   Are Qur'an translators of Islamic and Arabic origin aware of *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an?
   b)   How do Qur'an translators of Islamic and Arabic origin translate *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an?
   c)   How can the four Qur'an translations of complete *taḍmīn* be improved?

### 4. Methodology
As this paper is a part of an ongoing project, which studies and assesses the Qur'an translation of the *āyāt* (chapters) including complete *taḍmīn* in the whole Qur'an, this study applies the same methodology as that of Nouraldeen (2021a; 2021b; 2022a; 2022b), but on different *āyāt*.

Four recent complete English Qur'an translations, produced by four Muslim-Arab authors, will be analysed, discussed and assessed in regard to the *āyāt* involving complete *taḍmīn*. The four translations I have chosen are (a) The Qur'an: A New Translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2005), (b) The Gracious Qur'an: A Modern-Phrased Interpretation in English by Ahmad Zaki Hammad (2009), (c) The Clear Qur'an: A Thematic English Translation of the Meaning of the Final Revelation by Mustafa Khattab (2016), and (d) Translation of the Ten *Qira'at* of the Noble Qur'an by Bridges (2020).

This set of criteria is taken into consideration for two reasons. Firstly, being recent indicates that these translations are based on the wealth of previous translations and, therefore, the authors will probably have developed and improved them. Secondly, being Muslims with an established and deep knowledge of Arabic, and bearing in mind the translators are themselves Arabs, suggests producing translations which carefully observe and appropriately transfer the linguistic and *balāġah* aspects of the Qur'an including *taḍmīn*.

As for their established and deep knowledge of Arabic, which presumes their mastery of Arabic and which will probably have a positive effect on Qur'an translation, the first three of the four translators are academics and have received their education at Al-Azhar.

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. i) "was born in Egypt, and learned the Qur'an by heart from childhood. Educated at Al-Azhar, Cairo, … he has taught Arabic at Cambridge and London Universities since 1966".

Hammad (2009, p. iv) is introduced as a professor who taught "at the University of al-Azhar, Faculty of Languages & Translation, Department of English".

Khattab (2016, p. ii) "received his Ph.D., M.A., and B.A. in Islamic Studies in English with Honors from Al-Azhar University's Faculty of Languages & Translation … held the position of Lecturer at Al-Azhar University for over a decade". Khattab (2016, p. 5 in Arabic) considers his translation as distinct in several respects. One of them is that he is acquainted with Islamic Studies, Arabic Sciences and translation principles, as he studied at Al-Azhar for thirty years.

Bridges[4] is a translation written by a team member of translators and linguists (2020, p. xxxvi). The team coordinator and the main translator is Imam[5] Fadel Soliman. "He received his Master's degree in Shariah in 2008" (Bridges Foundation, 2016).

In order to assess the four English translations, particularly semantically, and therefore suggest an appropriate translation, when needed, three online dictionaries will be consulted. The first one is the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Henceforth 'LDOCE'), the second one is Oxford Dictionaries Premium (Henceforth 'ODP') and the third one is Cambridge Dictionary. They provide all possible meanings needed to assess the four translations. They also sometimes identify religious terms, which helps to decide upon the appropriateness of one translation over the others, given the genre of the Qur'an as a religious text. The 'Grammar' entry in Cambridge Dictionary is also useful and provides subtle nuances of meaning, e.g. 'will' and 'shall' and 'certainly' and 'surely' in the translations of *āyah* 1 below.

As there is no reference in Arabic, to the best of my knowledge, that encompasses all *āyāt* with complete *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an, I had to consult different sources to pinpoint some of the places where it occurs in the Qur'an. The references used in this study are Ibn ʕāšūr (1984) and Fadel (2005). Fadel (2005) refers to and quotes from different *tafāsīr* (Qur'an exegeses). Sometimes, he identifies implicit elements and prepositions which are either different from the *tafāsīr* he quotes from or are not pointed out by them. It will be stated when analysing and discussing the translations, whether the implicit element is identified by one of the *tafāsīr* or by Fadel (2005). Sometimes, Fadel (2005) identifies *taḍmīn*, but does not explain it appropriately, in which case I attempt to clarify it based on the information given in Fadel (2005), including the reference to the previous *tafāsīr*. On the other hand, *Ibn ʕāšūr* (1984) is selected in preference to other *tafāsīr*, because although Fadel (2005) is fairly comprehensive, he unexpectedly

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[4] A singular verb will be used when referring to this translation throughout this study, though it is a work of a team.
[5] Imam is an Arabic title for a highly regarded scholar (although the criteria to decide upon this now might be different to those in the past), and is similar to 'doctor', the highest degree awarded by a university.

quotes from Ibn ʕāšūr only once, while Ibn ʕāšūr (1984) discusses complete *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an thoroughly. Sometimes, Ibn ʕāšūr (1984) quotes from other *tafāsīr*.

As noted, this study, coupled with my previous ones (Nouraldeen, 2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2022a; 2022b), is a part of in-progress project which I am working on to cover all *āyāt* with complete *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an. The *āyāt* chosen for this project will be studied as they are arranged in the Qur'an starting from the first *sūrah* through to the final one, unlike in Fadel (2005) where they are not unfortunately arranged in the same order as they appear in the Qur'an. I believe following the arrangement of the Qur'an when studying *taḍmīn* will facilitate analysis and discussion and make it easier for the reader to follow.

The *sūrah* that will be analysed, discussed and assessed in this study is the seventh one *al-Aʕrāf*. The four English translations of the Qur'an will be investigated using the four-element model that was put forward in Nourladeen (2020, p. 240) and modified twice in Nouraldeen (2021a, p. 293; and 2022b, p. 144) (see table (1) above). A suggested improved translation to reflect *taḍmīn*, where needed, will be provided in each *āyah*.

## 5. Analysis and Discussion

In each *āyah* (verse), the four English translations will be presented, followed by a table which arranges the four elements of *taḍmīn* and identifies which element is present or absent in these translations. After that, the ST and the TTs will be analysed and discussed and improvements to the translations wherever needed will be suggested, which will answer the third research question. The first two research questions will be answered based on the outcomes of the analysis and discussion.

### *Āyah* 1

قَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿ لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ ﴾ [الأعراف: 16]

Romanisation: *la aqʕudanna lahum ṣirāṭaka al-mustaqīm*[6]

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 95): I will lie in wait for them all on Your straight path. [Q7:16]
Hammad (2009, p. 250): I shall, most surely, lie ever in ambush for them [with temptation] upon Your straight way [of salvation].
Khattab (2016, p. 122): I will lie in ambush for them on Your Straight Path.
Bridges (2020, p. 101): I will most surely waylay them on Your straight path.

| Elements of *taḍmīn* / Translators | explicit verb | implicit preposition | implicit verb | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abdel Haleem | lie | on | (lie) in wait | for |
| Hammad | lie | upon | (lie) in ambush | for |
| Khattab | lie | on | (lie) in ambush | for |
| Bridges | - | on | waylay | - |

Based on Fadel (2005, pp. 544-46), the source text (ST) has complete *taḍmīn*, following the four elements of it. These elements are the explicit verb أقعد *aqʕud* (literally translated as 'sit'), collocated with the implicit preposition على *ʕalā* (literally translated as 'on'); and the implicit verb أرصد *arṣud* (literally translated as 'surveil'[7]) or أُنَكِّر *unakkir* (literally translated as 'disguise'), collocated with the explicit preposition ل *li-* (which takes the form *la-*, as here, before a pronoun suffix, and is literally translated as 'for').

The collocation of the implicit verb أرصد *arṣud* (literally translated as 'surveil') with the explicit preposition ل *li-* (literally translated as 'for') is found in the Qur'an in Q72:9 يجد له شهابا رصدا *yajid lahu šihāban raṣadā* (*raṣadā*, derived from the verb أرصد *arṣud*, collocated with the fronted prepositional element *lahu*). It is translated by Khattab (2016, p. 502) as "lying in wait for", which is different from his translation of Q7:16. Inconsistency is an interesting element in translation which needs more investigation, but it falls outside the scope of this research.

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[6] In my Arabic transliteration throughout this paper, I have adopted the 'adding case endings' approach, to reflect the actual reading of the Qur'an. However, I have excluded this approach from the final word of each excerpt, as this is a place where it is appropriate to pause while reading the Qur'an (cf. Dickins, 2010b, p. 341, where he adopts a different approach, i.e. 'missing off the (normally) vocalic endings', with the exception of a few instances including the Qur'an).

[7] 'Surveil' gives a sense of something very deliberate and organised, which corresponds to *Iblis*' attitude. For this reason, I prefer 'surveil' over 'observe' or 'monitor'.

The other possible implicit verb is أنكر *ʾunakkir* (literally translated as 'disguise'), collocated with the explicit preposition لِ *li-* (literally translated as 'for'). It is found in the Qur'an in Q27:41 نكروا لها عرشها *nakkirū lahā ʕaršahā* (*nakkirū* is the imperative verb while أنكر *ʾunakkir* is a present tense verb, collocated with the prepositional element *lahā*). Khattab (2016, p. 316) renders it as "Disguise her throne for her".

*Taḍmīn* remarkably conveys the various methods *Iblis* employs to cause human beings and jinn to stray from the straight path of Islam and pleasing Allah with righteous deeds. The explicit verb أقعد *aqʕud* (literally translated as 'sit') is figurative, conveying the way *Iblis* utterly dedicates himself to, i.e. has nothing to do except involve himself with the evil methods he uses.

Unlike Bridges, the three other translators manage successfully to render the four elements of complete *taḍmīn*. The explicit verb أقعد *aqʕud* together with the implicit verb أرصد *arṣud* are translated as 'lie in wait' by Abdel Haleem and as 'lie in ambush' by Hammad and Khattab. The explicit and implicit prepositions are rendered as 'for' and 'on' by all translators, except for Hammad who translates the implicit preposition as 'upon'. On the other hand, Bridges translates the implicit verb 'waylay', followed by the implicit preposition 'on'.

Three verbs are used to convey the explicit verb أقعد *aqʕud* and the implicit verb أرصد *arṣud*. The first one is 'waylay', which I believe communicates a sense of أرصد *arṣud*, i.e. wait. However, 'wait' does not necessarily convey the sense of أرصد *arṣud*. In fact, أرصد *arṣud* means 'observe' carefully (in that *Iblis* repeatedly uses different methods in every possible way without admitting defeat), secretly (in that human beings and jinn cannot see him, as stated in Q7:27) and closely (in that he has access to our thoughts and feelings).

The second verb is the English phrase 'lie in ambush', which conveys the sense of 'hiding' and 'waiting'. Here, أقعد *aqʕud* is not conveyed and أرصد *arṣud* is not conveyed appropriately by 'waiting'. LDOCE (2023) defines 'ambush' as "a sudden attack on someone by people who have been hiding and waiting for them, or the place where this happens". The examples used in LDOCE are mostly related to military, e.g. "Armed police lay in ambush behind the hedge" and The old enemies, undefeated, have devised new strategies; new assailants lie in ambush". Also, أقعد *aqʕud* and أرصد *arṣud* do not suggest 'sudden attack', unless the various methods *Iblis* employs to cause human beings and jinn to stray from the straight path of Islam and pleasing Allah with righteous deeds can be considered an 'attack'. In fact, this kind of 'attack' is moral and spiritual, whereas the 'attack' found in the definition of 'ambush' is normally physical, given the military context of the examples.

The third verb is the idiom 'lie in wait'. It is defined by LDOCE (2023) as "to remain hidden in a place and wait for someone so that you can attack them". In the definition, 'remain' conveys some of the sense of أقعد *aqʕud* but 'wait' does not convey أرصد *arṣud* appropriately. The same reasoning mentioned above is applied here to 'attack'. I prefer 'lie in wait' as it is to some extent closer to the ST. As أقعد *aqʕud* connotes a permanent 'sitting', Hammad manages to convey this by using 'ever'.

The verb أقعد *aqʕud* (and this also applies to the implicit verb) has a prefix لِ *la-* and a suffix ن *–nna*. The prefix is the oath particle (Ibn ʕāšūr, 1984, vol. 8b, p. 46) and the suffix is the *nūn* of emphasis. Hammad and Bridges attend to conveying these two forms of emphasis by using 'most' and 'surely', although the prefix لِ *la* would be better conveyed by using 'I swear'. 'Surely', as Cambridge Dictionary (2023) explains, "express[es] a degree of certainty. It does not express as much certainty as 'definitely' or 'certainly', although LDOCE (2023) considers 'surely' formal, among top 2000 words and a synonym of 'certainty'. Therefore, following Cambridge Dictionary, I prefer 'certainly'.

Hammad, unlike the other three translators, uses 'shall', not 'will'. Cambridge Dictionary (2023) differentiates between the two, saying that "'shall' instead of 'will' with 'I' and 'we' [is used] in rather formal contexts to make predictions and to talk about intentions or decisions. It is much less common than 'will'". As the context shows a firm decision made by *Iblis*, confirmed by the prefix and suffix, I find 'shall' more appropriate.

Taken into consideration the elements of the *āyah* discussed above, of which no translation of the four conveyed, a suggested translation reads "I swear that I shall certainly ever lie in wait for them on Your straight path". However, I suggest an explanatory translation to set the scene of the *āyah* conveyed by *taḍmīn* and the two forms of emphasis. It reads "I swear that I shall certainly ever lie in their way towards Your straight path, and surveil them carefully, closely and secretly, to disguise the path and cause them to stray from it in every possible way". The phrase 'in every possible way' paves the way for the next *āyah*, i.e. (I will quote Khattab's translation for the sake of clarification only, though it needs improvement) "I will approach them from their front, their back, their right, their left...".

***Āyah 2***

قَالَ تَعَالَىٰ: ﴿ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ ﴾ [الأعراف: 28]

Romanisation: *ataqūlūna ʕalā Allahi mā lā taʕlamūn*

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 96): How can you say about God things that you do not know [to be true]? [Q7:28]

Hammad (2009, p. 253): Do you say of God what you do not know?

Khattab (2016, p. 123): How can you attribute to Allah what you do not know?"

Bridges (2020, p. 102): Are you [plural] saying about Allah what you know not?

| Elements of *taḍmīn* / Translators | explicit verb | implicit preposition | implicit verb | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abdel Haleem | say | about | - | - |
| Hammad | say | of | - | - |
| Khattab | attribute | to | - | - |
| Bridges | saying | about | - | - |

Based on Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 8b, p. 85), this part of the *āyah* contains four elements from which complete *taḍmīn* is formed. The explicit verb تقول *taqūl* (literally translated as 'say') is standardly collocated with the implicit preposition عن *ʕan* (literally translated as 'about'); and the implicit verb تكذب *takḍib* (literally translated as 'lie') or تقوّل *taqawwal* (literally translated as 'fabricate' or 'make up') is standardly collocated with the explicit preposition على *ʕalā* (literally translated as 'on').

The implicit verb تقوّل *taqawwal*, collocated with على *ʕalā*, is used in the Qur'an in Q69: 44 تقول علينا *taqawwala ʕalaynā*. It is rendered by Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 388) as "...attributed...to Us"; by Hammad (2009, p. 1009) as "falsely attribute...to Us"; by Khattab (2016, p. 497) as "made up"; and by Bridges (2020, p. 386) as "falsely attributed...to Us".

In Arabic, when تقول *taqūl* (literally translated as 'say') is collocated with عن *ʕan* (literally translated as 'about'), this means that what is said about someone is always true. However, the beginning of this *āyah* states that the unbelievers claim that Allah has commanded them to do/commit الفحشاء *al-faḥšāʾ*, which is rendered by the four translators as: "something disgraceful" (Abdel Haleem, 2005, p. 96); "an obscene act" (Hammad, 2009, p. 253); "a shameful deed" (Khattab, 2016, p. 123); and "an obscenity". Thus, *taḍmīn* conveys that they say something false about Allah, while they should say something true about Him. Additionally, *taḍmīn* relays that although they should have said something true about Allah, they, in fact, lie to Allah and fabricate their claims. Without *taḍmīn*, these two meanings would not be conveyed.

The four translators render the explicit verb followed by the implicit preposition as follows: "say about" (Abdel Haleem); "say of" (Hammad); "attribute to" (Khattab); and "saying about" (Bridges). Regarding the phrasal verb "attribute to", used by Khattab, Cambridge Dictionary (2023) defines it, in the form of 'attribute sth to sb', as "to say that a particular person was the first person to say something, do something, invent something, etc.". LDOCE (2023) defines it, in the form of 'attribute something to somebody/something', as "if people in general attribute a particular statement, painting, piece of music etc. to someone, they believe that person said it, painted it, etc.". It is noted that the first definition does not correspond to the meaning in this *āyah*, while the second one does. Therefore, to avoid confusion, and to suggest a translation which correlates with the elements of *taḍmīn*, I suggest the use of 'say'.

This part of the *āyah* is a question, which has a different function from just asking. It is, as Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 8b, p. 84) notes, استفهام توبيخي *istifhām tawbīxī* a 'rebuke question'[8]. 'How can' is a form which conveys a similar function to that of the Arabic. LDOCE (2023) states that 'how can/could somebody do sth' is used when one "disapprove [s] strongly of something". Abdel Haleem and Khattab render this function appropriately.

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[8] Abdul Raof (2003, p. 206) mentions three types of interrogative question having the *pragmatic* function of rebuke, of which *al-istifhām at-tawbīxī* is one.

A suggested translation (semantically good but stylistically perhaps less so), which reflects the elements discussed above, reads "How can[9] you say about Allah and fabricate against Him what you do not know?". Another possible translation (perhaps stylistically better), which uses the explicit verb 'say' and the implicit one in a form of adverb, is "How can you say falsely something, which you do not know, about Allah?".

***Āyah* 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| قَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿ سُقْنَاهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ ﴾ [الأعراف: 57] | |
| Romanisation: *suqnāhu li baladin mayyit* | |

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 98): We drive them to a dead land. [Q7:57]
Hammad (2009, p. 260): We drive them to a lifeless land.
Khattab (2016, p. 126): We drive them to a lifeless land.
Bridges (2020, p. 105): We drive them to a lifeless land.

| Elements of *taḍmīn* / Translators | explicit verb | implicit preposition | implicit verbal noun | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abdel Haleem | drive | to | - | - |
| Hammad | drive | to | - | - |
| Khattab | drive | to | - | - |
| Bridges | drive | to | - | - |

Based on Fadel (2005, p. 423-25), this part of the *āyah* contains complete *taḍmīn*. The explicit verb ساق *sāqa* 'drive' (used in the *āyah* in the form of سقنا *suqnā*) is standardly collocated with the implicit preposition إلى *ʾilā* (literally translated as 'to'), but the implicit verb وجه *wajjaha* 'direct' is standardly collocated with the explicit preposition لـ *li-* (literally translated as 'towards'). The four translators, not paying attention to *taḍmīn* in Q7:57, render the explicit verb as 'drive', followed by the implicit preposition 'to'.

The explicit verb ساق *sāqa*, collocated with إلى *ʾilā*, is used in the Qur'an in Q8:6, Q19:86, Q32:27, Q35:9, Q39:71 and 73. The *āyah* which is most similar to the *āyah* discussed here is Q35:9 فسقناه إلى بلد ميت *fa suqnāhu ʾilā baladin mayyit*. There is no *taḍmīn* here, as ساق *sāqa* is standardly collocated with إلى *ʾilā*. The phrase سقناه إلى *suqnāhu ʾilā* is rendered by Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 277), Hammad (2009, p. 748) and Khattab (2016, p. 365) as "We drive them to"; but by Bridges (2020, p. 292) as "We drove them to". Although the preposition used in Q7:57 is different to that in Q35:9, the four translators likely did not notice the *taḍmīn* in Q7: 57. Also, the verb 'drove', suggested by Bridges, is different in tense to the one in Q7:57, although سقنا *suqnā* in both *āyāt* is in the past. How Qur'anic verbs are translated is an interesting area in Qur'an translation studies, which requires further research.

To compare the difference in meaning between *suqnāhu li* in Q7:57 (with *taḍmīn*) and *suqnāhu ʾilā* in Q35:9 (with standard collocation of the verb and the preposition), one needs to first understand the context. In Q7:57, the scene describes the clouds when they are heavy with rain, ready to pour down. However, no rain falls; the universe is governed by Allah, the Almighty, with no chance for spontaneous or haphazardly rain, even though the clouds are ready to rain. They remain as they are until Allah gives permission, directing the clouds towards a dead land and driving them to it. On the other hand, in Q35:9, the scene describes the clouds being formed while at the same time they are driven by the winds to a dead land.

The noun بلد *balad* (lit. 'region') is described in the *āyah* as ميت *mayyit* (lit. 'dead'). Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 8b, p. 183, my translation[10]) defines *balad* as "a large area of earth". Ibn ʕāšūr goes on to say that there is *majāz* 'figurative language/a trope' in *mayyit*, signifying an area of earth with no plants. Attributing the figurative موت *mawt* 'death' to بلد *balad* is intellectual *majāz* (*majāz ʕaqlī*), because what is dead is the plants and crops[11] of the land[12] [the relationship between موت *mawt* and بلد *balad* is مكاني *makānī* 'spatial' in that the land is a place which does not die; the plants and crops do, which are in the land].

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[9] It is interesting to compare 'how dare' to 'how can'. The latter is preferable to the former, as it connotes strong disapproval in a slightly friendly manner, unlike 'how dare' which is more agressive. 'How can', therefore, reflects how Allah is merciful, even though He, the Almighty, strongly disapproves of what the unbelievers say and fabricate about him.

[10] Arabic source text : والبلد: المساحة الواسعة من الأرض.

[11] 'Plants and crops' is a case of 'hyperonym-hyponym repetition' in Arabic, which sounds a little odd in English (see Dickins et al., 2017, pp 85-88).

[12] Arabic source text : والميت: مجاز أطلق على الجانب الذي انعدم منه النبات، وإسناد الموت المجازي إلى البلد هو أيضا مجاز عقلي؛ لأن الميت إنما هو نباته وثمره.

The four translators render بلد *balad* as 'land' and ميت *mayyit* as 'dead' (Abdel Haleem) and 'lifeless' (the other three translators). Two relevant senses of 'land', outlined by LDOCE (2023), are "an area of ground, especially when used for farming or building"; and "*literary* a country or area". I believe the translators mean the second sense as it is countable, and they use the indefinite article 'a', unlike the first one, which is uncountable.

Regarding 'dead' and 'lifeless', 'dead' collocated with 'planet' means that it "has no life on it" (LDOCE, 2023), but when it is collocated with 'place', it means "too quiet and nothing interesting happens there" (Cambridge Dictionary). However, 'lifeless' collocated with 'planet' means "not living, or not having living things on it" (Cambridge Dictionary). Cambridge Dictionary provides the following example: "The surface of the Moon is arid and lifeless"[13].

Therefore, in this sense, as the Earth is generally has living things, unlike the Moon, I believe using 'lifeless' is inappropriate. 'Dead' is likely appropriate and conveys the *majāz*, but the addition of 'plants and crops' is needed to explain the metaphor involved in it. 'Plants and crops' (or 'crops' only, as discussed below) is more specific and it suggests that there may be other things which can live there or have lived there, unlike using 'dead' alone, which suggests that the whole land is completely dead. This is not meant in the *āyah*, as Ibn ɛāšūr states above.

To reflect the complete *taḍmīn* as well as the other elements discussed above, I suggest the following translation: "We direct them towards a land with dead crops and drive them to it". I preferred 'crops' to 'plants', because I consider the context later on in the *āyah*, when the Qur'an states that the rain will cause الثمرات *aṭ-ṭamarāt* to grow. The word الثمرات *aṭ-ṭamarāt* is rendered as 'crops' (Abdel Haleem); 'fruits' and 'fruit' (Hammad and Khattab, respectively); and 'products' (Bridges).

Ibn ɛāšūr (1984, vol. 1, p. 715, my translation[14]) defines الثمرات *aṭ-ṭamarāt* as follows: it is a plural of *ṭamarah*; it is what a tree bears and produces in which it is food for human being or fruit. 'Fruit' is only a type of الثمرات *aṭ-ṭamarāt*. 'Products' is related to the manufacturing of 'food'. LDOCE (2023) defines a 'product' as "something that is grown or made in a factory in large quantities, usually in order to be sold". 'Crops' is the appropriate translation for الثمرات *aṭ-ṭamarāt*, because it includes food produced by tress, such as 'wheat' and not only 'food'. LDOCE (2023) defines a 'crop' as "a plant such as wheat, rice, or fruit that is grown by farmers and used as food".

It is also preferable that a translator adds a footnote to explain the metaphor, and adds another footnote in Q35:9 to compare it to Q7:57 with regard to the use of standard collocation in Q35:9 while using *taḍmīn* in Q7:57, as explained above.

### *Āyah* 4

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| قَالَ تَعَالَىٰ: ﴿ وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ بِكُلِّ صِرَٰطٍ ﴾ [الأعراف:86] | | | | |

Romanisation: *wa lā taqɛudū bi kulli ṣirāṭ*

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 100): Do not sit in every pathway. [Q 7:86]
Hammad (2009, p. 266): do not sit [as highwaymen] alongside every pathway.
Khattab (2016, p. 129): do not lie in ambush on every road.
Bridges (2020, p. 107): do not sit on every path.

| Elements of *taḍmīn* / Translators | explicit verb | implicit preposition | implicit verb | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abdel Haleem | sit | - | - | in |
| Hammad | sit | - | - | - |
| Khattab | lie | on | (lie) in ambush | - |
| Bridges | sit | on | - | - |

In this part of the *āyah* which has complete *taḍmīn*, the explicit verb تقعد *taqɛud* (literally translated as 'sit') is standardly collocated with the implicit preposition على *ɛalā* (literally translated as 'on'), while the implicit verb ثوى *ṭawā* (literally translated as 'remain') is

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[13] I think 'dead' suggests that it once was alive, while 'lifeless' more suggests that there was never any life there.
[14] Arabic source text: والثمرات: جمع ثمرة وهي ما تحمل به الشجرة وتنتجه مما فيه غذاء للإنسان أو فاكهة له.

standardly collocated with the explicit preposition بِ *bi* (literally translated as 'in/at') (see Fadel, 2005, pp. 546-48) (cf. Q7: 16, discussed above, which has the same explicit verb as this *āyah*, but a different implicit verb).

The four translations interpret this part of the *āyah* differently. Abdel Haleem, Hammad and Bridges translate the explicit verb تقعد *taqʕud* as 'sit', followed by the implicit preposition 'in' (Abdel Haleem) and 'on' (Bridges). Hammad uses the preposition 'alongside', which conveys the sense of neither the explicit preposition, nor the implicit one. On the other hand, Khattab renders it as a phrase 'lie in ambush', combining the explicit and implicit verbs.

Abdel Haleem translates the explicit verb تقعد *taqʕud* and the explicit preposition بِ *bi*, paying no attention that they are not standardly collocated in Arabic. Collocating 'sit' with 'in' here seems odd, as 'pathway' is not a container, for example, which one might sit inside, but rather something which one sits on. Khattab uses the same implicit verb as that of Q7:16, discussed above, although they are different.

The word صراط *ṣirāṭ*, in this context, is defined by Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 8b, p. 246, my translation[15]) as the way which leads to the the house of [the Prophet] *Šuʕayb*, [Reuel/Jethro, as in the Bible] or to the village [i.e. Midian, where *Šuʕayb's* people lived]. The word صراط *ṣirāṭ* is translated as 'pathway' (Abdel Haleem and Hammad); 'road' (Khattab); and 'path' (Bridges). 'Road' is defined as "a specially prepared hard surface for cars, buses, bicycles etc. to travel on" (LDOCE, 2023) and "a long, hard surface built for vehicles to travel along" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). These definitions of 'road' do not correspond to the definition of صراط *ṣirāṭ*, and therefore 'road' seems not an appropriate translation. 'Path' and 'pathway' are synonyms according to LDOCE (2023). However, Cambridge Dictionary (2023) shows a difference in meaning between them. 'Path' is "a route or track between one place and another, or the direction in which something is moving", whereas 'pathway' means "a track that a person can walk along". As صراط *ṣirāṭ* here has the meaning of leading to a place, I believe 'path', which is the direction in which something is moving, is an appropriate translation.

An improved translation which encompasses what has been discussed above including *taḍmīn* is "Do not sit on every path and remain in it".

### *Āyah* 5

قَالَ تَعَالَىٰ: ﴿ثَقُلَتْ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ﴾ [الأعراف:187]

Romanisation: *ṯaqulat fī as-samāwāti wa al-arḍ*

Abdel Haleem (2005, p. 107): a time that is momentous in both the heavens and earth. [Q 7:187] A footnote by the translator: Alternatively Suddi gives 'hidden from' as the interpretation of *thaqulat* (Razi), literally 'weighs heavy'.
Hammad (2009, p. 287): It weighs heavy in the heavens and [upon] the earth.
Khattab (2016, p. 138): It is too tremendous for the heavens and the earth.
Bridges (2020, p. 116): Heavy has its weight become throughout the heavens and the earth.

| Elements of *taḍmīn* / Translators | explicit verb | implicit preposition | implicit verb | explicit preposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abdel Haleem | - | - | momentous (adj.) | in |
| Hammad | weighs heavy | - | - | in |
| Khattab | - | - | too tremendous (adjectival phrase) | - |
| Bridges | Heavy has its weight become | throughout | - | throughout |

In this part of the *āyah* which has complete *taḍmīn*, the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul* (literally translated as 'be heavy') is standardly collocated with the implicit preposition على *ʕalā* (literally translated as 'on'), while the implicit verb عظم *ʕaḏum* (literally translated as 'have immense significance') is standardly collocated with the explicit preposition في *fī* (literally translated as 'in') (see Fadel, 2005, pp. 262-64).

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[15] Arabic source text: صراط مبلغ إلى القرية أو إلى منزل شعيب.

Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 9, p. 203, my translation[16]) explains that *aṯ-ṯiqal* [derived from the verb *ṯaqul*) is ʾ*istiʕārah* [*majāz*, i.e. 'figurative language/a trope'], which signifies the difficulty [of the Hour, i.e. another name of the Day of Judgement], being significant and great ... describing the Hour as such is intellectual *majāz* (*majāz ʕaqlī*), because *aṯ-ṯiqal* does not describe time but the incidents which occur in it ... *ṯiqal* of the Hour means it is severe in that terrifying incidents occur on the Earth and in the Heavens such as planets crashing and ceasing to orbit, earthquakes, volcanoes eruptting...

So, complete *taḍmīn* here conveys the meaning of i. the figurative heaviness of the Hour, in that it is hidden, terrifying and severe (expressed by the use of the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul*, collocated with the implicit preposition على *ʕalā*) and ii. its immense significance and great peril (relayed by the use of the implicit verb عظم *ʕaẓum*, collocated with the explicit preposition في *fī*). These two meanings of *taḍmīn* will be used as a guide to assess the four translations below.

The four translations render this part of the *āyah* differently. Abdel Haleem translates the implicit verb as an adjective 'momentous', followed by the explicit preposition 'in'. 'Momentous' is defined as "very important because it will have a great influence on the future" (LDOCE, 2023) and "very important because of effects on future events" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). Given the key term 'importance', Abdel Haleem conveys the meaning of the implicit verb عظم *ʕaẓum*. However, he adds a footnote to note the meaning of 'hidden from', which is expressed by the use of the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul*. Therefore, Abdel Haleem manages successfully to render complete *taḍmīn*. It is not necessary, though preferable when possible to convey the Qur'anic style, to render the prepositions of the ST literally, as the TT has its own grammar. However, it is the meanings, which are conveyed by the use of complete *taḍmīn*, that need to be communicated.

Khattab translates the implicit verb as an adjectival phrase 'too tremendous', followed by the preposition 'for', which conveys the sense of neither the explicit preposition nor the implicit one, but normally collocates with English adjectival phrases involving 'too'. 'Tremendous' is defined as "very big, fast, powerful, etc." (LDOCE, 2023) and "very great in amount or level, or extremely good" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). This translation uses 'too', which is unnecessary, as 'tremendous' is already an extreme adjective. Given the two definitions, Khattab conveys the meaning of the implicit verb عظم *ʕaẓum* only, paying no attention to the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul*.

Hammad and Bridges translate the explicit verb as 'weighs heavy' and 'Heavy has its weight become', respectively. In Hammad's translation, the explicit verb is followed by the explicit preposition 'in'. Interestingly, Bridges renders the explicit and implicit prepositions as 'throughout', giving an additional meaning of "in every part" (LDOCE, 2023; Cambridge Dictionary, 2023), which I think encompasses both prepositions 'in' and 'on'. Hammad and Bridges' translations (to some extent for Bridges as will be explained below) do not render the implicit verb and do not explain the metaphor of the explicit verb, unlike Abdel Haleem, who, in a footnote, manages to explain in what respect the Hour 'weighs heavy'. Stylistically, Hammad's translation is straightforward and concise.

Bridges, however, conveys the pragmatic function of this clause, being a *jumlah muʕtariḍah* 'parenthetical clause'. Ibn ʕāšūr (1984, vol. 9, p. 203, my translation[17]) pinpoints that *ṯaqulat fī as-samāwāti wa al-arḍ* is a parenthetical clause, which is used to emphasise the terrifying ordeal of the Hour [i.e. another name of the Day of Judgement] and to allude to the rationale of having it [the Hour] hidden.

Bridges uses a rather literary form in which the complement of 'become', i.e. 'heavy', is fronted/preposed to the beginning of the clause; 'heaviness' has emphatic effect and gives a sense of emotion, similarly to saying 'how heavy its weight is'. This gives a somewhat emotive feel to 'heavy', adopting what is sometimes termed the 'pathetic word order' (cf. Dickins, 2010a, p. 1097 and Dickins, 2017, p. 165). Although Bridges conveys the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul*, it conveys the implicit verb عظم *ʕaẓum*, but by unclear implication, when using the parenthetical clause as a device to express emphasis.

Although Abdel Haleem (and Bridges, to a certain extent) translate complete *taḍmīn* in this *āyah* successfully, I suggest an explanatory translation which pictures the scene. It could also be used as a footnote. This reads "Heavy it weighs throughout the Earth and the Heavens, in that it is hidden, terrifying and severe, but also has immense significance and involves great peril". A footnote is recommended to explain the function of the parenthetical clause, given the context of the *āyah*, which discusses time in which the Hour occurs, unlike this *āyah*, which shifts the attention onto describing the figurative heaviness of the Hour as well as its significance and peril.

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[16] Arabic source text:

والثقل مستعار للمشقة كما يستعار للعظم والكبر...ووصف الساعة بالثقل...الثقل...لا يكون وصفا للزمان ولكنه وصف للأحداث...وثقل الساعة أي شدتها [و] هو عظم ما يحدث فيها من الحوادث المهولة في السماوات والأرض، من تصادم الكواكب، وانخرام سيرها، ومن زلازل الأرض، وفيضان البراكين.

[17] Arabic source text: وجملة (ثقلت في السموات والأرض) معترضة؛ لقصد الإفادة بهولها، والإيماء إلى حكمة إخفائها.

## 6. Conclusion

It seems that the four translators are not aware of complete *taḍmīn* when translating the Qur'an, except for Abdel Haleem, Hammad and Khattab in *āyah* 1, who translate the four elements of complete *taḍmīn*, and Abdel Haleem in *āyah* 5, who translates the implicit verb عظم *ʕaḏum* as an adjective 'momentous' but adds a footnote to explain the explicit verb ثقل *ṯaqul*. The preposition, whether explicit or implicit, should be translated in accordance with its Arabic use, as noticed in relation to *āyah* 1. Sometimes, however, the prepositions cannot be translated (and it is not necessary to translate them), as noticed in relation to *āyah* 5. It is a matter of the grammar of the language to use the preposition with which the verb is standardly collocated. However, the specific preposition used in Arabic is an indicator that there is an implicit verb (i.e. an additional meaning) if this preposition is not the one which standardly follows the verb in question.

In *āyah* 2, the explicit verb is translated, followed by the implicit preposition. This is interesting because it shows that the translators are likely aware of complete *taḍmīn* in this *āyah*, while, in fact, the implicit preposition is rendered because it standardly collocates with the English verb. This may explain why the translators use 'about' and 'of' for the same verb 'say'.

The Qur'anic style should be taken into consideration when translating the Qur'an. Nonetheless, it happens that sometimes translating the Arabic style may sound awkward in English, as in *āyah* 2. As a result, and in order to communicate the meaning appropriately, the translation of the style should be sacrificed in order to translate the meaning of complete *taḍmīn*.

This study did not include the views of the Qur'an translators on translating *taḍmīn* in the Qur'an. Further research may consider this. As this study is a part of an ongoing project to investigate the translation of *taḍmīn* in the entire Qur'an, more work will need to be done by the researcher to study this.

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