| RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Evaluation of the Performance of KKU's Students in Translating Untranslated Quranic Verses from Skopos Theory Perspective

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| ABSTRACT

This study focuses on evaluating the techniques used by KKU students majoring in the English language, and they study a translation course about translating Islamic religious texts. Furthermore, it accentuates the notion of untranslatability, its causes, and its types. The study also explains the challenges of translating Islamic religious texts. Additionally, the study demonstrates translation strategies taught to the students throughout the course for the purpose of translating Islamic religious texts. The study is based on a qualitative approach entailing a critical interpretative translation case study design, and it employs purposive sampling without a statistical representation, focusing on the students' implementation of translational strategies and techniques at a micro level and macro level regarding untranslated items in the Holy Quran and Hadith. The data was collected by skimming and scanning every verse that was possibly interposed by students' translational work of a focus group. Moreover, the researchers use interviewing as a form of data collection, which involves asking participants open-ended questions. The study concludes that teaching the students strategies and techniques of translating Islamic religious texts, accompanied by immediate practice in terms of tasks, assists students in translating in high quality regarding accuracy and adequacy. The study recommends that students should be taught techniques of translating Islamic religious texts segmentally accompanying from both perspectives -theory and practice.

## 1. Introduction

Translation of Islamic texts into the English language involves accuracy and adequacy, fitting the theme of the text. Religious text is associated with basic assumptions about human matters and divine beings, and it is also problematic because it interacts with invisible beings. Thus, religious text is characterized by inertia, as it has the same and unchangeable terms and concepts. Moreover, the attempt to generate new terms or concepts is risky because of the severe criticism on the part of religious scholars. Therefore, a translator of religious texts must be careful in the process of word selection. Religious translation is one of the most problematic types of translation because it deals with special texts that have their own holiness. These texts are highly sacred and sensitive, involving a tone level and transferring level. Moreover, Students majoring in the English language at KKU study three grading translation courses and the third course is about the translation of Islamic texts. Thus, the course focuses on strategies and techniques for translating Islamic texts, and it is composed of various graded Islamic texts. Pedagogically, the course materials are designed taking into account various factors such as language use, peculiarities of Islamic texts, style, and translation strategies, including preservation, addition, omission, globalization, localization, transformations borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, amplification, deceptive cognates false, explication, and generalization,

creation, translation theory, stylistic foregrounding and untranslatability. This study focuses on evaluating KKU students' achievement in translating untranslated Quranic verses with regard to the purposefulness and usefulness of translation. The study proposes that the evaluation of Islamic texts could be carried out through three main methods: impressionistic, checklist, or in-depth methods (McGrath, 2002). First, the impressionistic method refers to achieving a general impression of the materials, including transparency, clarity of organization and presentation; three dimensions: linguistic, social, and topical; and four essential components of language: use, sample of language, exploration of vocabulary, and exploration of phonological, orthographic or grammatical form. Second, the checklist method comprises three items, i.e. comparison, identification, or verification. This method is easy to do since teachers only check the list of items while analyzing or evaluating a certain text. Last, the in-depth method encompasses the aims and content of the text.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study
The study aims to evaluate KKU students' translational work of Islamic religious texts regarding translational strategies for untranslated items and to apply the principles of the Skopos theory for the translation of Islamic religious texts for the following purposes:

- To find out the validity of KKU students' translational work of Islamic religious texts in the model of translation of Quranic verses and Hadith
- To find out some mutual standards and principles regarding Skopos theory and untranslated items

### 1.2 Methodology
This study is based on a qualitative approach entailing a critical interpretative translation case study design because it studies Islamic religious texts. In addition, a student interview is conducted. It employs purposive sampling without a statistical representation. The study studies ten translations of Islamic religious texts achieved by both male and female students majoring in English and studying a translation course III concerning the translation of Islamic religious texts.

### 1.3 Study Questions
The study finds out the answer to the following question:

- How do students apply translation processes and translational strategies in translating Islamic religious texts?
- How do students retain the accuracy, quality and adequacy of translating Islamic religious texts?
- How do students tackle untranslated items in Islamic religious texts?
- Do students implement Skopos theory principles?

## 2. Review of Literature
### 2.1 Religious Text
Translation is the key to promoting the correct teachings and the true peaceful message of Islam in other languages. Hence, the translation of [1] Islamic text requires consideration of accuracy and adequacy. Islamic translation entails the translation of Islamic texts, primarily the Holy Quran, as well as reports of the Prophet Muhammad's words or deeds known as Hadiths, as well as the accompanying commentary and interpretations (Yahya, 2018). In addition, there are many Islamic books that could be translated into and from Arabic. Religious texts, including scripture, which is a subset of religious texts considered to be especially authoritative, revered, sacred, canonical or supreme authority, and special status to a religious community, are texts which entail beliefs, ritual practices, commandments or laws, ethical conduct, spiritual aspirations, and grand narratology. The relative authority of religious texts develops over time and is derived from the ratification, enforcement, and use across generations. Some religious texts are accepted or categorized as canonical, some non-canonical, and others extracanonical, semi-canonical, pre-canonical or post-canonical (Suaidi and Arifin, 2021). Religious texts are believed to be sacred because they are divinely inspired, and they entail simply narratives pertaining to the general themes, interpretations, practices, or important figures of the specific religion. Moreover, religious texts also serve a ceremonial and liturgical role, particularly in relation to sacred time, divine efficacy and subsequent holy service (Afrouz, 2019). Islam's main sacred text is the Qur'an, which is considered the actual word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the Arabic language through the intermediary of the Archangel Gabriel, according to Muslims (Al-Tarawneh, 2021).

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[1]*As unique text types, the translation of sacred texts constitutes a highly sensitive task as any deviation from the source text (ST) might have significant consequences on the faith and practices of believers.*

### 2.2 Translating Religious Text

Translation of religious texts disseminates divine messages by transferring the source language into the target language. Thus, the religious text entails a unique phonological identity in such genres as spoken prayers, graphological identity is found in liturgical leaflets, a strong grammatical identity, archaic morphological identity, syntax identity and lexical identity (Venuti, 2017). Hewson (2011). Argues that the subject matter of religious texts implies the existence of a spiritual world that is not fictive but has its own external realities and truths. One of the distinctive features of religious texts is the use of sound devices to make the content easy to recite, memorize and quote. Thus, a translator should do his/her best to retain such devices (alliteration- the use of the same consonant at the beginning of each stressed syllable, assonance - the same vowels are repeated and rhyme scheme. In religious English texts, translators use archaic words to historically link to established beliefs throughout the course of time and to ensure consistency and continuity, which can be traced back to Old and Middle English, such as thou, thee, thrice, behold, whence, henceforth, thy, thence and thine. Amirdabbaghian and Shunmugam (2019) contend that religious translation is characterized by its use of specialized lexical items, and it entails the occurrence of distinctively theological words such as "Islam," "belief," "statement of faith," "alms -giving'', ''pilgrimage," "paradise," "hell," "death," or names and attributes of God such as "Allah," "Almighty," "the Merciful," as well as names of religious figures like "Prophet Muhammad," and "Prophet Abraham,". Religious lexical entails vocabulary requiring explicit historical elucidation, usually with considerable emotional overtones depending on the intensity of the user's belief. Furthermore, vocabulary referring to commonly-used, specifically-religious concepts other than the above can be given a historical basis, such as 'heaven', 'hell', 'heresy', 'the creed' and 'the sacraments'. Religious lexical items can be classified into three categories in the Islamic context: Islamic terms, which are totally unfamiliar to the lay translator because they are only used in the Islamic context; Islamic terms, which are familiar to the lay translator because they are only used in non-Islamic context; Islamic terms which are familiar to the translator because they are also used in non-religious contexts. Arabic religious discourse is, by definition, formal because it is based on sacred scriptures and is mainly delivered in the classical style. In English, formal language is also used in religious language. This formality extends to other forms of discourse, such as talking or writing to people in authority and lecturing. Parallel structures are widely used in religious language. By parallel structure, we mean the use of two adjacent synonyms to make the utterance more intense and impactful. This phenomenon, also called "quasi -synonymy" or "doublets," uses word pairs that are syntactically equal and semantically related(Chesterman, 2000).

### 2.3 Quranic Arabic Language

The Quran's language differs slightly from that of the Arabic language used by Muslims nowadays, and the Quranic Arabic language has several peculiarities that make it even more challenging to translate, in addition to other peculiarities that are specific to the Quranic text itself. The classical Arabic, or Quranic Arabic, is based on the ancient languages of Arab tribes. The grammar is the same as that found in the current standard Arabic language( Zequan, 2003). However, the word usage and context differ greatly. The Quranic and standard versions of Arabic include a few minor variances in word punctuation and grammar as well. Thus, translation of this kind of text requires complete awareness of the correct practices of Islam Arabic translation and a translator should have Knowledge of Arabic and English Syntax from a competent perspective, be bicultural and bilingual and be faithfulness and sincere in conveying the meanings of source texts into target language. Furthermore, a Quranic Arabic translator should try to evoke the audience's emotions in a closer way than the original text. Many Quranic words have no single English word that can accurately translate their meanings. Therefore, a Quranic Arabic translator must construct a whole sentence to be able to convey their exact meaning (Yaakub and Othman, 2016).

### 2.4 Islamic Translation Challenges

Nord (2018) proposed the following translation challenges:

- Absence of Islamic terms in English as a target language
- Islamic terms have special and peculiar signification and meaning, which require finding the proper equivalent in terms of function, culture, style and meaning.
- Cultural gap between in terms of Islamic terms which lack cultural symmetry of a target language
- Islamic religious texts stand out for their eloquence and distinct stylistic characteristics, including many aspects such as figures of speech, unconventional use of verbs and tenses, the double meaning of Arabic vocabulary, and many other linguistic features that make Islamic translation a tough job.
- Complexity of Qur'anic Arabic entailing the complexity of writing systems and unfamiliar linguistic standards used in the Qur'an

Khatib lists the following as the main difficulties he encountered when rendering the Qur'ān into English ( Munday, 2016).

-The omissions, additions, and figurative words that are part of the beauty, eloquence, sequence, and rhythmic pattern of the Book.

-The commitment to extreme precision in translating letter by letter and word by word while maintaining the exact sequence and construction of the Arabic verse.
-Finding English words that precisely match the Arabic meaning.

### 2.5 Untranslatability

The notion of untranslatability can be clearly understood by juxtaposing it with the notion of translatability. Translatability is generally defined as "the capacity for some kind of meaning to be transferred from one language to another without undergoing radical change" (Lefevere, 2002).).Catford's conception of linguistic ²untranslatability, occurring when the functionally relevant features of a given text are cultural ones, and there exists no cultural correspondence of these features between the source language and the target language, is deemed straightforward in comparison with cultural untranslatability, which is more problematic. Catford considers this type of untranslatability as less 'absolute than linguistic untranslatability (Baker, 2003). Butkuvienė (2004). proposed that translation is ultimately impossible, and it is apparently an attempt at finding a solution to some insoluble problem.

### 2.5.1 Causes of Untranslatability

Al Farisi (2020) stated two causes of untranslatability: the concurrence or combination of referential meaning, pragmatic meaning, and intralingual meaning in a linguistic sign in different languages is a matter of convention.  The three categories of sociosemiotic meaning carried by an expression in one language will often not coincide with those of a comparable expression in another language. These two causes combined render it frequently difficult for the translator to find in the target language a specific linguistic unit which corresponds to the source language item on all the three levels of sociosemiotic meaning, i.e. referential meaning, pragmatic meaning, and intralingual meaning.

### 2.5.2 Types of Sociosemiotic Untranslatability

According to the property of the untranslatable elements in a source item, Zequan (2003) distinguished three types of sociosemiotic untranslatability, i.e. referential untranslatability, which occurs when a referential element in the source message is not known or readily comparable to a particular item in the target language, pragmatic untranslatability, which arises where some pragmatic meaning encoded in a source item is not encoded likewise in a functionally comparable unit in the target language, or where the exact pragmatic meanings carried by the source sign is/are unclear or indeterminable due to historical reasons or to the intentional equivocation on the part of the author (as may be found in some theological and mystic writings), and intralingual untranslatability, which means any situation in which the source expression is apparently not transferable due to some communicatively foregrounded linguistic peculiarity it contains (Molina and  Hurtado, 2002).

Catford (1965) distinguishes two kinds of untranslatability: linguistic untranslatability, which occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the target language for a source language item,  and cultural untranslatability, which is due to the absence in the target language culture of a relevant situational feature for the source text (Boori, 2000).  From the socio-semiotic perspective, meaning is the conventional relationship between a sign and something outside itself entailing three facets or dimensions of sign relationships may be distinguished: the relationship between signs and entities in the world which they refer to or describe is semantic; that between signs and their users - pragmatic, and that between signs themselves, syntactic. Thus, three categories of socio-semiotic meaning: referential meaning,  pragmatic meaning including identification, expressive, associative, social or interpersonal, and imperative or vocative meanings), and intralingual meaning, which may be realized at

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² *Fazlur Rahman (1988) asserts that the inspired language of the Qur'ān "can never be completely satisfactorily translated into another language" (p. 24). He puts forward two reasons for difficulties in adequately translating the Qur'ān into other languages. The first reason is "the style and expression of the Qur'an", while the second one is the very nature of the Scripture. He writes: The fact that the Qur'an is not really a single 'book' because nobody ever 'wrote' it: it is an assembly of all the passages revealed or communicated to Muhammad by the Agency of Revelation, which the Qur'an calls Gabriel and 'The Trusted Spirit' or 'The Holy Spirit'. This agency, according to the Qur'an itself, emanates from the 'Preserved table', the Book on High, and 'descended upon your heart' (2:97). Clearly, the divine messages broke through the consciousness of the Prophet from an agency whose source is God (p. 24).*

phonetic and phonological, graphemic, morphological/lexemic, syntactic, and discoursal/textual levels and is termed accordingly. From the sociosemiotic point of view, untranslatability is an undeniable reality, at least so far as the base units of a language are concerned. Basically, there are two causes underlying untranslatability: The concurrence or combination of referential meaning, pragmatic meaning, and intralingual meaning in a linguistic sign in different languages is a matter of convention. According to the property of the untranslatable elements in a source item, we may distinguish three types of sociosemiotic untranslatability, i.e. referential untranslatability, which occurs when a referential element in the source message is not known or readily comparable to a particular item in the target language, pragmatic untranslatability, that arises where some pragmatic meaning encoded in a source item is not encoded likewise in a functionally comparable unit in the target language, or where the exact pragmatic meanings carried by the source sign is/are unclear or indeterminable due to historical reasons or to the intentional equivocation on the part of the author, and intralingual untranslatability, which means any situation in which the source expression is apparently not transferable due to some communicatively foregrounded linguistic peculiarity it contains (Jaleniauskienė, and Čičelytė, 2009).

Vermeer (2000) stated that texts can be categorized according to the degree of their translatability into the following four categories:

-Texts which are exclusively source-language oriented: Relatively untranslatable.
-Texts which are mainly source-language oriented (literary texts, for example): Partially translatable.
-Texts which are both source-language and target-language oriented (as the texts written in a language for specific purposes): Optimum translatability.
-Texts which are mainly or solely target-language oriented (propaganda, for instance): Optimum translatability (De Pedro, 1999, pp. 552-553).

### 2.5.3 Example of Untranslatability in Quran
The names of letters of the Arabic alphabet, called huruf muqatta'at, occur at the beginning of several surahs of [1]the Qur'an. At the time of the Qur'anic revelation, the use of such letters was a well-known literary device used by both poets and orators, and we find several instances in the pre-Islamic Arabic literature that have come down to us.[3]

A divine secret, the meaning of these letters is known to only Allah. Huroof Muqataat are unique letter or alphabet combinations that appear at the beginning of 29 Surahs (Chapters) of the Noble Quran. Huroof is the plural of Harf, meaning word, and Muqattaat literally means abbreviated or shortened but is usually explained as disjoined Arabic letters. Their meanings remain unclear and are considered by most Muslims to be Divine secrets. Muqataat are also known as Fawatih (فواتح) or "openers" as they form the opening verse of the respective Surahs. In simple terms, these Arabic alphabets are referred to as 'isolated letters of the Quran. In the Arabic language, these letters are written together like a word, but each letter is pronounced separately. For example, the Arabic alphabet alif lam meem will be written in Arabic as الم. But while reading, you don't pronounce it as "alm;" rather, it will be read separately as 3 letters – "alif lam meem."

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[3] *1-Hussein Abdul-Raof (2001) in his valuable work Qur'an Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis, where he outlines, exemplifies, and substantiates the question of the Qur'ān's untranslatability by providing Qur'anic examples at linguistic, rhetorical, micro and macro-levels. In his endeavor to give an answer to the fundamental question what makes the Qur'ān an untranslatable text Abdul-Raof (2001) ably provides a comprehensive analysis of the limits of Qur'ānic translatability by explaining the linguistic and rhetorical limitations that shackle the Qur'ān translator. He tackles this issue from all its possible perspectives, including: Style, stylistic mechanism of stress, word order, cultural voids, problems of literal translation, syntactic and semantic ambiguity problems, emotive Qur'anic expressions, disagreement among Qur'an translators, different exegetical analyses, morphological patterns, semantico-syntactic interrelation, semantic functions of conjunctives, semantico-stylistic effects, prosodic and acoustic features, and most importantly the shackles imposed by the thorny problem of linguistic and rhetorical Qur'an-specific texture (p. 1).Furthermore, Abdul-Raof (2001) indicates that the translation of the Qur'ān is not, and should not be considered as, the replacement of the original Arabic version of the Qur'an as "we cannot produce a Latin Qur'an no matter how accurate or professional the translator attempts to be" (p. 1). This is, according to him, due to two distinct reasons. The first one is the Qur'ān-bound expressions and structures, which "cannot be reproduced in an equivalent manner to the original in terms of structure, mystical effect on the reader, and intentionality of source text". Thus, any Qur'ān translation will inevitably come out with its inaccuracies and skewing of sensitive Qur'anic information as a by-product. The second reason is the divine nature of the Qur'ān be it the word of God, which "cannot be reproduced by the word of man" (p. 1).*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

# Huroof-i-Muqatta'at (Lit.: Disjointed Letters of the Qur'an)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | A.L.M. | Baqarah | The Cow | الٓمٓ |
| 2 | 3 | A.L.M. | Aali-'Imraan | The Family of 'Imraan | الٓمٓ |
| 3 | 7 | A.L.M.S'. | A'-raaf | The Heights | الٓمٓصٓ |
| 4 | 10 | A.L.R. | Yuunus | Jonah | الٓرٰ |
| 5 | 11 | A.L.R. | Huud | Hud | الٓرٰ |
| 6 | 12 | A.L.R. | Yusuuf | Joseph | الٓرٰ |
| 7 | 13 | A.L.M.R. | Ra'd | The Thunder | الٓمٓرٰ |
| 8 | 14 | A.L.R. | Ibraahiim | Abraham | الٓرٰ |
| 9 | 15 | A.L.R. | Al-Hijr | The Rocky Tract | الٓرٰ |
| 10 | 19 | K.H'.Y.A'.S'. | Maryam | Mary | كٓهٰيٓعٓصٓ |
| 11 | 20 | T'.H'. | Taa-Haa | Ta-Ha | طٰهٰ |
| 12 | 26 | T'.S.M. | Shu-'araaa' | The Poets | طٰسٓمّٓ |
| 13 | 27 | T'.S. | Naml | The Ant | طٰسٓ |
| 14 | 28 | T'.S.M. | Qasas | The Story | طٰسٓمّٓ |
| 15 | 29 | A.L.M. | Ankabuut | The Spider | الٓمٓ |
| 16 | 30 | A.L.M. | Ruum | Romans | الٓمٓ |
| 17 | 31 | A.L.M. | Luqmaan | Luqman | الٓمٓ |
| 18 | 32 | A.L.M. | Sajdah | The Prostration | الٓمٓ |
| 19 | 36 | Y.S. | Yaa-Shiiin | Ya Sin | يٰسٓ |
| 20 | 38 | S'. | Saaad | Saad | صٓ |
| 21 | 40 | H.M. | Mu'min | The Believer | حٰمٓ |
| 22 | 41 | H.M. | Fussilat | They are Expounded | حٰمٓ |
| 23 | 42 | H.M, A'.S.Q. | Shuurah | Counsel | حٰمٓ عٓسٓقٓ |
| 24 | 43 | H.M. | Zukhruf | Ornaments of Gold | حٰمٓ |
| 25 | 44 | H.M. | Dukhaan | Smoke | حٰمٓ |
| 26 | 45 | H.M. | Jaasiyah | Crouching | حٰمٓ |
| 27 | 46 | H.M. | Ahqaaf | The Wind-Curved Sandhills | حٰمٓ |
| 28 | 50 | Q. | Qaaaf | Qaf | قٓ |
| 29 | 68 | N. | Qalam | The Pen | نٓ |

In the Table above, the columns, from left to right indicate:

Serial number, Chapter number, English Alphabet denotation, Chapter Name, English Meaning of Chapter Name, and **The 'Muqatta'at Letters**

### *2.6 Translation Strategies*

Jensen (2009) listed various [4]translation strategies:

-Foreignization Strategy

-Domestication Strategy

-The Communicative Maxim (CM)

- Generalization dealing with many types of non-equivalence at the word level

- Amplification technique introducing details that are not formulated in the source text

-Calque: literal translation of a foreign word or phrase; it can be lexical or structural.

-Transference and naturalization are parts of the borrowing technique.

-Phonological borrowing such as transference, naturalization cultural equivalent

-Functional equivalent

-Descriptive equivalent

-Modulation

-Compensation

-Footnotes or endnotes

-Capitalization

### *2.7 Skopos Theory and Action Theory*

According to Action Theory, human action is a kind of purposeful behavior in each situation. Translation is a kind of translational action on the foundation of a source text (Sunwoo, 2007). Therefore, Vermeer names his theory Skopos theory a theory of purposeful action. Vermeer thinks that translating means producing a text in a target setting for a target purpose and target addresses in target circumstances. The theory of action, which proposes that action is the process of acting, which means intentionally bringing about or preventing a change in the world, provides the foundation for Skopos theory[5] (Vermeer, 2000).

Translation theorists of the functionalist approaches view translating as a form of translational interaction, intentional interaction, interpersonal interaction, communicative action, intercultural action, and text-processing action (Green, 2012).

Skopos theory was developed by German translator Vermeer in 1978, and it proposes that the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. The function refers to what a text means, and the meaning of the text is viewed by the receiver. Skopos's theory focuses on the purpose of translation by emphasizing the role of the translator as the creator of the target text. From a functionalist perspective, it is a shift from linguistic equivalence to functional appropriateness. Therefore, translation is considered primarily a process of intercultural communication whose product is a text which has the ability to function appropriately in specific situations and contexts of use (Schaffner,1998). In Vermeer's theory, there is a distinction between the terms aim, which is considered as the final result that an agent tries to achieve via an action, and purpose, which is a provisional stage in the process of achieving an aim. **[6]** Skopos theory focuses on the purpose of the translational action, entailing that each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose.

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[4] *Translation Strategies refers to a technique to tackle translation issues. Davies (2003) proposes seven translation strategies to deal with Islamic religious text: preservation, loan words, addition, footnotes, explanation, repetition, and omission. Ivir (1987) earlier seven strategies to tackle non-equivalence translation problems in translating cultural words into English overlap somewhat with Davies but seems more comprehensive: borrowing, definition or paraphrase, literal translation, substitution, lexical creation, addition, and omission. These strategies give the translator the capacity to produce an intelligible and fluent translation for the target reader. The decision on the strategy choice depends on two main categories: text type and message*.

[5] *Skopos theory defines translating as an intentional, interpersonal, partly verbal intercultural interaction based on a source text. Skopos theory has brought a new concept for the status of the source text and target text. An important advantage of this theory is that it allows the possibility of the same text being translated in different ways according to the purpose of the target text and the commission which is given to the translator. In vermeer"s words:What the Skopos states is that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principle respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is: this must be decided separately in each specific case. (Vermeer, 1989/2000, p.228, cited in Munday 2001)*

[6] *According to Vermeer theory of Skopos a translated product does not require the same 'functional equivalence' to the 'source text', hence according to Vermeer a 'translator defines the explicit functionality of translation by a 'translation brief' or according to other 'by a translation commission' as Green called it 'intercultural operative',( Green 2012:109) irrespective of the fact that the translated product under Skopos is target culture oriented. Vermeer defined the 'translation brief as "the self-instructions of the translator or provided by others for carrying out the given action to translate".( Vermeer 2000 in Jenson 2009: 11). Jeremy Munday (Jeremy Munday2016: 127) summarized the principles of Skopos quoting Reiss and Vermeer (2013: 94) in the following 6 points:*

Skopos theory views translation as an action with purpose due to the proposition that every action has a purpose and intentionality. Skopos theory focuses on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed to produce a functionally adequate result.

Purpose can be distinguished in the field of translation as the general purpose aimed at by the translator in the translation process, the communicative purpose aimed at by the target text in the target situation, and the purpose aimed at by a particular translation strategy or procedure (Nord 2001). Nevertheless, the term Skopos usually refers to the purpose of the target text. The top-ranking rule for any translation is the Skopos rule, which entails that a translational action is determined by its Skopos (Munday 2001). [1]Vermeer explains the Skopos rule in the following way: Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The Skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function. Newmark (2000: 259-260) criticizes Skopos theory, saying that to translate the word ' aim ' into Greek, make a translation theory out of it, and exclude any moral factor except loyalty, added on as an afterthought by Nord ( e.g., Nord, 1997 ) to Vermeer ( who wrote that the end justifies the means, ( e.g. Vermeer,1978 ) is pretending too much and going too far. Furthermore, some critics claim that there are actions that do not have any intention or purpose, referring mainly to the production of works of art, often presumed to be literary texts in general or at least some literary texts.

Moreover, it is claimed that not every translation can be interpreted as purposeful, and the translator does not have a specific purpose in mind while translating the ST. Furthermore, Skopos theory limits the job of the translator because the instructions received do not let the translator follow up on his job as he/she wants (Stajszczak, 2011).

## 3. Method
### 3.1 Research design
This study is based on a qualitative approach entailing a critical interpretative translation case study design because it studies Islamic religious texts. In addition, a student interview is conducted. It employs purposive sampling without a statistical representation. The study focuses on the students' implementation of translational strategies and techniques at a micro level and macro level regarding untranslated items in the Holy Quran.

### 3.2 Data of the study
### 3.2.1 Procedures and Data Analysis
Data collection was gained by skimming and scanning every verse that was possibly interposed by students' translational work of a focus group. The model is used to disclose translational techniques used by students in their translation of Islamic religious texts. The researchers implement the following analysis steps:

-Determining which techniques are applied in translating Islamic religious texts;
-Identifying the frequency of translation technique applied;
-Determining the effect of translation techniques on equivalence in terms of meaning, style, accuracy, and adequateness.

## 4. Findings and Discussion
When reading the target text, the voices of the students and their application of translational techniques appear in their translation. Citing KKU students' samples of translation Islamic texts, they use various translation techniques such as transcription, transliteration, description, and calque( Calque is a special kind of borrowing in which the Target Language borrows an expression from the SL by translating each of the original elements literally), concretization( the choice of a more specific word in translation which gives a more detailed description of the idea than does the word in the ST.), generalization(the replacement of the Source

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1-"A translation action is determined by its Skopos.
2-It is an offer of information in a Target Culture and TL concerning an offer of information in a source culture and Source Language.
3-A Target text does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way.
4-A Target text must be internally coherent. (Intertextual coherence).
5-A Target Text must be coherent with the source text.
6-The five rules above stand in hierarchical order, with the predominating. Skopos rule"

Language unit with the Target Language unit that has a broader meaning), compensation( a process of transmitting the meaning of Source Language, which can be lost in the process of transformation, by placing this unit in some other place or using another method of conveying the message. Ali A. Boori (2000, p. 37) states that "compensation is a technique which involves making up for the loss of a source text effect by recreating a similar effect in the target text through means that are specific to the target language and/or text.ll), and mixed translation( a combination of transcription and semantic translation ). The most translational technique used in their translation is the transliteration technique, which is a formal letter-by-letter re-creation of the original lexical unit using the alphabet of the translating language, considering a literal imitation of the form of the original word. Furthermore, translational transcription is used, which is a formal phonetic recreation of the original lexical unit using the phonemes of the translating language, a phonetic imitation of the original word intending to transmit the sounding of the original word.

The following examples of translated Islamic religious text achieved by KKU students tabulated below display various techniques applied in the translation processes.

| Students Translation | Islamic Text |
|---|---|
| Deeds are controlled by intentions, and for everyone, is what he intended. | (إنما الأعمال بالنيات، وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى)  I. |
| According to Abu Hurairah, may God be pleased with him; he said: A man came to the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, and said: O Messenger of God, who among the people is most worth my good companionship? He said: Your mother, he said: Then who? He said: Your mother; he said: Then who? He said: Your mother, he said: Then who? He said: Your father. (agreed). | عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: جاء رجل إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: يا رسول الله، من أحق الناس بحسن صحابتي؟، قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أبوك. (متفق عليه) |
| Scare  of the Hell, even with half of a date." | «اتقوا النار ولو بشق تمرة» |
| Say : Allah , the only one ; All is hollow | قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (1) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ  II. |
| Patience is superb, and  Allah is Who can help on what you claim | |

Table I Sample of Students' translation of Islamic religious texts

| Translational Strategy | Islamic Text | Student Translation |
|---|---|---|
| Transliteration | كهيعص | Kaf- Ha-Ya-'Ain-Sad |
| Transference | مكة | Makkah |
| Cultural Equivalent | ذنوب | Sins |
| Functional Equivalent | حدود | Border |
| Calque | حدود الله | God's border |
| Descriptive Equivalent | علمه البيان | Teach him the rhetoric. |
| Modulation | كافر | Non believer |
| Compensation | الكلالة | No father, No sons |

Table II Sample of Students' Applying Techniques of  translation Islamic religious texts

The table displays the students' various techniques taught throughout the course of Translation III. The course Translation III concentrates on the translation of Islamic religious text. Thus,  the course provides students with translation techniques including

: adaptation, which entails  a source language cultural element is replaced with one from the target culture including cultural equivalent;  adding basic  information using explicative or  paraphrasing such as  complete information as in ''Ramadan'' that it is a month when Muslims do the fasting; borrowing ,which is to take a word or expression straight from another language, composing transference and naturalization, which  are parts of borrowing technique; description which refers to replace a term or expression with a description of its form or/and function, generalization which is defined as to use a more general or neutral term, functional equivalent,  which is applied to cultural words, requires the use of a culture-free word, sometimes with a new specific term; it therefore neutralizes or generalizes the SL word; and sometimes adds a particular, modulation which deals with the changing of point of view and it can be lexical or structural.

### 4.1 Interviews as a data collection method
The researchers use interviewing as a form of data collection, which involves asking participants open-ended questions. Furthermore, the purpose of the interview is to give reliable and valid data that is meaningful to the research objectives. Marshall and Rossman (2010:82) support this statement as they claim that An interview is a method of data collection that may be described as an interaction involving the interviewer and the interviewee, the purpose of which is to obtain valid and reliable information. The researchers use semi-structured interviews to obtain highly personalized data on students' translational processes, evaluate the conceptualization of the students on the translation course concerning the translation of Islamic religious texts and understand students' thoughts on the translation of Islamic religious texts in terms of accuracy and adequacy. The semi-structured interview is used to generate rich descriptive data and the interpretation of data. The researchers mainly read the questions during an interaction with the respondent, and every question is recorded on a standardized schedule. This means that every respondent is given the same interview incentive as any other individual participating in the research. A semi-structured interview is used in this study, aiming to explain or rephrase any question that is unclear to the respondent, and it helps examine the students'  translation from various levels of exploring the meaning. Furthermore, the interview assists researchers in gauging the participants' perspectives on the issue of implementing translation techniques.

### 4.2 Selection of Participants
The participants in this study are all from the College of Languages and Translation at the College of Science and Arts at Sarat Obeida and Dharan Alajnoub, KKU, Saudi Arabia. The study focuses on a course of translation III, which is about translating Islamic religious texts. The sample is based on first-hand experience in translating Islamic religious texts, and semi-structured interviews in this study are viewed as a way of supplementing the content analysis method.

### 4.3 Conducting Interviews
The interview was completed at KKU, and the questions were stimulated from the literature on how the students apply translation techniques in their translation of Islamic religious texts and how they consider untranslated items in the Holy Quran.

The researchers were granted official permission from the Deanship of Scientific Researches at KKU.

### 4.4 Analysis of Interviews
Interviews can be analyzed using different methods, such as Thematic analysis, Comparative analysis, Content analysis, and Discourse analysis (Dawson, 2009). In order to analyze the interviews for this study, content analysis, which is a method where the researcher systematically works through each transcript assigning codes, which may be numbers or words, to specific characteristics within the text, has been chosen. It is done in sequential steps: the first step in content analysis is to conceptualize the data, then group them into meaningful categories, and then identify them into themes to explain the data. (Dawson, 2009:122).

### 4.5 Participants' profiles and selection criteria
The researchers selected a number of participants to enhance representativeness, focusing on acquiring knowledge based on how translational techniques are applied in Islamic religious texts. The participants were selected based on the following criteria: first-hand experience in dealing with the Quran and other Islamic sources in translation and regularity of attending 90% of the lectures of the translation III course.
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Table D 6.1 Interviewees' profiles

| Interviewee | Gender | Attendance Percentage | Experience Of translating Islamic religious text | Students' Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interviewee 1 | Male | 100% | First time | 7 |
| Interviewee 2 | Male | 97% | First time | 7 |
| Interviewee 3 | Male | 96% | First time | 7 |
| Interviewee 4 | Male | 95% | First time | 8 |
| Interviewee 5 | Male | 93% | First time | 8 |
| Interviewee 6 | Female | 98% | First time | 7 |
| Interviewee 7 | Female | 96% | First time | 7 |
| Interviewee 8 | Female | 94% | First time | 6 |
| Interviewee 9 | Female | 92% | First time | 6 |
| Interviewee 10 | Female | 90% | First time | 8 |

### 4.6 Discussion of interview findings

The researchers construct the interview with introductory questions and follow-up questions:
Have you ever been involved in translating Islamic religious texts?
Can you tell me what translating Islamic religious text requires?
Can you explain how translating Islamic religious texts is special?

The researchers construct the interview with probing questions used to get in-depth information on translating:

How do you apply translation processes in translating Islamic religious texts?
How do you retain the accuracy, quality and adequacy of translating Islamic religious texts?
How do you tackle untranslated items in Islamic religious texts?
What do you think of the use of old English in the translation of Islamic religious texts?

The ten interviewees affirm that it is the first time they have experienced Islamic religious texts, and they believe that translating Islamic religious texts requires accurate equivalent and high-quality language used in translation. They also believe that Islamic religious texts are peculiar due to that they are related to Allah and the Messenger. Furthermore, they state that the application of additions, omissions, and loss of meaning process are inventible processes while translating Islamic religious texts. They confirm that maintaining the accuracy, quality, and adequacy of translating Islamic religious texts and untranslated items in Islamic religious

texts can be achieved by the proper implementation of the techniques and strategies of translation. Seven of the interviewees believe that the use of old English in the translation of Islamic religious texts showed some differences in points of view regarding this issue as all the interviewees except for three students. Seven students were not in favor of the use of old English in the translation of the Quran and for different reasons. Interviewees stated that the translations need to be easy and accessible for a wider audience and that the use of old English in the translations of Islamic religious texts will complicate things. One of three other students proposed that using old English gives the translated text more sacredness.

### *4.7 Summary of Interview Data Analysis*
The interviews displayed various responses entailing the importance of accomplishment translation techniques in translating Islamic religious texts. Hence, adjustment, adaptation, modification, manipulation or accommodation should be considered to transfer the overall meaning of the message, as long as the translation makes sense and reflects and conveys the meaning of the original. The interviewees' responses showed that language is socially and culturally related, and therefore, the target culture should be taken into consideration in the translation of Islamic religious texts. Thus, implementing communicative translation methods makes the translation more accessible for the readers  while
literal translation makes the meaning incompatible.

### 5. Findings and Recommendations
-The voices of the students and their application of translational techniques appear in their translation in their samples of translation of Islamic texts.
-The students apply various translation techniques taught throughout the course, including transcription, transliteration, transference, description, calque, concretization, generalization, compensation, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, descriptive equivalent and modulation.
-It is the first time for the students to practice translating Islamic religious texts.
-The students tend to translate untranslated items, particularly abbreviated letters in the Quran, using literal translation, which makes the meaning incompatible.
-The students comprehend that Islamic religious texts are special in terms of language configuration, rhetoric, and rhythmic modulation of verses.
- The students comprehend that translating Islamic religious texts requires accuracy and adequacy.

The study recommends the following:

- King Khalid University should include Skopos, which views translation as an action with purpose due to the proposition that every action has a purpose and intentionality, in Translation Course II.
-King Khalid University should include a course entailing untranslated items in the translation of the Quran.
-Students should be taught how to avoid literal translation; instead, they should focus on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed to produce a functionally adequate result.
-Students should be taught that the translation of a text has a purpose, which can be a general purpose, a communicative purpose, or a purpose aimed at by a particular translation strategy or procedure.
-Students should implement adjustment, adaptation, modification, manipulation, and accommodation strategies in their translation to convey the meaning of the original text properly.
-Students should implement communicative translation methods to make the translation more accessible and incompatible.

### *5.1 Suggestions for further research*
Future research can focus on the evaluation of translation course textbooks from cultural and linguistic perspectives, and it can be conducted by using a communicative sample of checklists with a combination of techniques of translation Islamic religious texts.

### *5.2 Delimitations of the study*
The present study focused on the students' translation work involving the application of translation techniques taught throughout the semester. Further, it centered on the students studying the Translation III course. Regarding the nature of the study and ethical considerations, translational tasks and student assignments were done in the classroom.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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