

The Translatability of Some Qur'anic Verbal Irony into English: A Comparative Stylistic and Pragmatic Analytical Study

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to examine through lexical stylistic analysis and comparison, the differences and the disparateness of meaning and style in rendering the Quranic verbal irony into English, in the work of Mohammed. A.S Abdel Haleem, Mohammed. M Pickthall and Mohammed Khan and Mohammed Taj Al-Din Al-Hilali . Also, the study aims to investigate how the three translators deal with the Quranic verbal irony in their translations into English. This has its powerful consequence in attaining a better understanding on the part of the Holy Quran translators and subsequently of English language receptors in general and for non- Arabic Muslims in particular, where the Qur'anic verbal irony concerned. Also, the study aims to identify the translation strategies employed by the three translators in rendering the Quranic verbal. irony Moreover, the study revealed that the Qur'anic verbal irony is conspicuous occurrence in the Holy Quran and that the process of rendering them into English is generally problematic for the reasons such as linguistic and cultural divergences and discrepancies. Finally, the study gives two ideas; firstly, the equivalence in translation should be examined as a concept that holds a place on a scale that can begin very equivalent to inequivalent. Secondly, better translation of the Holy Quran should bear intelligibility in terms of a total impact of the Message on the language receptor.

Key words: Qur'anic, Equivalence, Verbal Irony, Lexical Stylistic, Translation, Rendering

INTRODUCTION

Equivalence in translation has been an important topic engaged the minds of translators, researchers, language receptors and readers of translation. In his linguistic theory of translation, Catford (1965/2000, p.21) claims that one of the central tasks of Translation Theory is ' defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence'. According to Jackson (1959/2000), full equivalence between any two linguistic codes(i.e., words) is not reachable .In the unison with the structuralist Roman Jakobson's opinions, Vinay and Darbelnet (1985/2004) think that translation is possible in spite of the cultural and linguistic constrains , consequently we should aim at achieving situational equivalence..

Catford'(1965/2000) sees equivalence is taken to be the basis on which source language (SL) textual material is replaced by target language (TT) textual materials, p.20. Moreover, we can figure out the level of equivalence implied in Catford's concept of translation though his emphasis on one certain relation between the SL (source language) and TL (target language). Catford also treats translation equivalence as ' an empirical phenomenon, discovered by comparing SL and TL text" (p.23). This discovery is not dependent merely on the bilingual informant's intuition but objective

analytical procedures. The chief condition that Catford lays down for testing translation equivalence is ; SL and TL texts or items are interchangeable in a given situation (Catford ,1965/2000.p.,24).The TL text must be relatable to at least some of the situational features to which the SL text is relatable .Presumably, the greater the number of situational features common to the contextual meaning of both SL and TL texts, 'the better ' the translation.

More markedly, the structuralist Jackson (1959/2000), underscores the belief that can be no full equivalence between two lexemes (p.141). On closer observation of the aforesaid views on equivalence, one may argue that there are some resemblances between Darbelnet and Vinay's theory of translation and Jakobson's. Accepting a linguistic approach, they both claim that translation is possible notwithstanding cultural or grammatical differences between SL and TL. They both perceive the fact that the role of the translator should not be ignored and acknowledge some limitations of the linguistic approach, thus permitting the translator to also depend on other procedures that will confirm a more efficacious and full rendering of the ST content in the target text.

In this regard, Pym(1992/2018) goes on to perceive a difference between two types of equivalence : directional

equivalence and natural equivalence, the former is not affected by directionality, and, the latter exists between languages prior to the act of translating (p.7) Markedly, natural equivalence is also fundamentally relied on the model of equal value. Contrarily theories of directional equivalence give the translators the freedom to select between several translation methods and procedures which are not guided by the source text (ST). Pym (1992/2018) asserts that the meaning of one language can be rendered into the meaning of another language with the same functions or lexemes. On the other hand, Wendland (2012) claims that there is no marginal between natural equivalence and directional equivalence suggested by Pym (1992/2018), according to him (2018) "there is no full equivalence between any two languages unless they are culturally close. It seems that Pym's notion of equivalence is not clear". (Abdelaal.2019).

Nida and Taber (1982/2017) outlined two types of equivalence: formal and dynamic. the former can be defined as the "quality of a translation in which the features of the form of the source text have been mechanically reproduced in the receptor language. (Nida and Taber, p.201).

The current paper is a comparative linguistic stylistic study that aims at exploring transability of the translation of some Qur'anic verbal irony meanings into English,

The Problem of the Study

It is presumed that the translators of the Noble Quran face many lexical, cultural difficulties, challenges, and restrictions in rendering this Noble Book. These lexical, cultural, and pragmatic difficulties, challenges, and restrictions are enclosed in the process of rendering the Quranic text to the extent that at some phases translators of the Holy Quran determine that it is unrenderable and unattainable to render the Word of Allah into the English language in particular and into another language in general since we ignore the overall capability meaning of the Noble Quranic text. Moreover, cultural figures of speech and rhetoric have made the rendition of the Quranic text untranslatable. It also presumed that on account of flaws and imperfection in the rendered text it cannot achieve the overall sense value as well to attain the pragmatic effect that the original text raptures. These lexical, cultural, and pragmatic difficulties, challenges, and restrictions arise from different areas such as:

- A. Dissimilarities among Languages in expressing the same realities.
- B. The problem of equivalence absence at lexemes levels or lack of the equivalent of some Islamic lexemes.

The language of the Holy Quran is assumed to be full of verbal irony. When tendering such rhetoric Arabic language into English, for example, conveying quite the same degree of such tropes to the receptor of the English language, should be given attention. This could be obtained through a stylistic personal touch, or more scrupulously, through the use of certain syntactic and stylistic means. Yet, the errand of achieving a full knowledge about semantic and pragmatic devices to give an adequate, accurate, and appropriate translation of the Holy Quranic text, therefore to achieve the rendition of Qur'anic verbal irony; is not an easy task.

Research Objectives

The study intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the semantic and stylistic problems encountered in translation of Abdel Haleem, Khan and Hilali and Pickthall, of some Qur'anic verbal irony meanings into English.
- To explore how these semantic and stylistic problems can be managed?
- To examine the influence of employing translation strategies on managing these problems?

Research Questions

To meet the stated objectives, the following research question was raised:

1. What problems are encountered in the translations of Abdel Haleem, Khan and Hilali and Pickthall of some Qur'anic verbal irony meanings into English?
2. How can these problems be managed from both theoretical and practical perspective?
3. What is the influence of adopting translation strategies on tackling these linguistic problems?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Verbal Irony

Irony is an effective stylistic device to convey sarcasm and ridicule. It is also quite viral issue in linguistic research nowadays. From stylistic aspects, Fowler (1926/2010,p.608) in *Modern English Usage* describes irony as a mode of expression which postulates a double audience, one of which is 'in the know' and aware of the speaker's intention, whilst the other is native enough to take the utterance at in face value.

The verbal irony shows the strong relationship between the irony and the metaphor, In this regards Abrams (2015, p.8) believes that, verbal irony is categorized traditionally as a trope. This means it is a form of figures of speech in which there is a contrast between what it is said and what is actually means..At its simplest definitions, verbal irony is a mode of speech in which the meaning is contrary to the words. (Cuddon,1995,p.430) .On his turn Brooks(1951/2009) defines verbal irony as "the language of thought, creativity, and subtlety". According to him, the most important determinants of the verbal irony are: a) the existence of two levels of meanings in same ironic utterance :the surface level and the underlying level of speech, the former is captured through the proportions of the discourse, meanwhile, the latter is not reflected and which the reader insists on eliciting its meanings. An important point to consider is that: the main characteristic of ironic utterances is the use of irony markers (Attardo 2000, p. 7). Irony markers are clues a writer can give that —alert a reader to the fact that a sentence is ironicall (Attardo, 2000, p. 9).

To conclude that, verbal irony is more complicated than the aforementioned definition, because verbal irony is achieved at different levels or where more than one element meets and has an element that is relevant to the meaning or illocutionary (the intention of the speaker). These levels include locutionary for instance, antiphrasis.

Due to the fact that English and Arabic are never sufficiently similar to express the same realities, the beautiful and eloquent style of the Holy Qur'an, 'In Arabic', and the lack of equivalence at Qur'anic word levels make translation of the Qur'anic expressions problematic and challenging. Hence translators of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an usually encounter the difficulty in rendering these expressions into English. For instance, euphemistic meanings of words. (Alhaj ,2020). In this regard Peachy, 2013, p.52) believes that translator of the Holy Quran should stay trustworthy and reliable to the formal interpretation of the word of Allah. Consequently, the translator should shift not word-for-word but use a sense-for sense methods of translation in rendering scared text of Islam.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To achieved the aforementioned objectives of the current study the researcher will analyze ten examples of selected ayahs (verses) containing some verbal irony from the Holy Quran into English, and examine these ayahs based on conversational analysis and comparative stylistic approaches. Furthermore, the researcher identifies the verbal irony lexemes based on the definition of the commentaries of Tafsir Ibn Kathir (2010) and Tafsir Al-Jalalayn (1975/2010). Then, after selecting and reading these Quranic verses from three English translations of the meaning of the Holy Quran, namely by Mohammed, A,S,Abdel Hakeem, Mohammed M.Khan and Mohammed Taj Al-Din Al-Hilali and Pickthall. Furthermore, the researcher identifies the overt (direct meaning) and covert (oblique meaning) of the verbal irony lexemes and highlight them. After that, compare their meanings with the two commentaries to ensure the verbal irony senses whether it has succored or diversely. To conclude, the results of the study are worked out based on the data analysis.

Data Collection

To attain the objectives of the research, a qualitative research method is adopted by the researcher. Moreover. this method is congruous with the current study because the translation of the Holy Quran is multiplex and difficult and cannot be enormously and profoundly explored using any other possible approaches (Creswell,2007).In practice ,ten ayahs (verses) of the phenomena under the study, namely , constrains and challenges encountered in rendering some Qur'anic verbal irony meanings into English . Fittingly, three famous translations of the meanings of the Holy Quran were adopted, Mohammed, A,S,Abdel Hakeem, Mohammed M.Khan and Mohammed Taj Al-Din Al-Hilali and Pickthall..

Data Analysis

Data analysis was guided by Baker(1992) who considers paraphrase a useful strategy used by professional translators for dealing with non- equivalence between two languages,(Alhaj,2019,p,42) and Newmark's(1993,p.69)

notion of paraphrase (periphrasis), who believes that: "paraphrase is the last translation procedure, which simply irons out the difficulties in any passage. This can be achieved by an amplification or explanation of the meaning of the segment of the text". Moreover, the Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexemes (The STs) were compared with the translation of Quranic meanings into English (The TTs), and the failure to convey Arabic Quranic verbal irony meaning into English (ST) was underlined and explained by the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the study, ten collected examples of Quranic verbal irony meaning into English are analyzed by the researcher to identify the loses in translation and thusly the non-success to attain faithful equivalence in their renditions into English language. Also, this section of the study aims to identify the translation strategies adopted by the three translators, namely by Mohammed, A,S,Abdel Hakeem, Mohammed M.Khan and Mohammed Taj Al-Din Al-Hilali and Pichthall in translating the Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexemes into English.

Example 1

Source Surrah " The Family of Al-'Imran whoAal-i-Imraan", ayah, verse 21

ST: وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

Transliteration: wa yaqtulu_nal lazina ya'muru_na bil qisti minan na_s(i), fa basysyirhum bi'aza_bin alim(in).

Target Text:

- (1) **Abdelhaleem:** "who kill those who command that justice is done, give news of agonizing torment."
- (2) **Khan and Al-Hilali:** " and kill those men who order just dealings-then announce to them a painful torment."
- (3) **Pickthall:** "and slay those of mankind who enjoin equity: promise them a painful doom."

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to *tafsir* books (e. g. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010, Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, 2009), the ayah indicates, their killing of the Prophets was indeed the utmost of arrogance; as the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Arrogance is the denial of the right and being iniquitous towards people." It is narrated on the authority of ' Ubaydah Ibn Al- Jarah: 'I said, 'o Allah's Messenger! Who of men will be seized with the most panful of torment on the Doomsday?'. He (PBUH) said, "'The one who had killed either a Prophet or a man who calls for good deeds and forbids the committing of that which is unlawful".

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

In the aforementioned example 1, the ST lexeme *فَبَشِّرْهُمْ* fa basysyirhum was translated by Abdel Haleem as " , give news", whereas it was rendered by Khan and Al-Hilali as "

announce to them". However, it was translated as "promise them) by Pickthall. Semotactically, the lexeme فَبَشِّرْهُمْ fa basysyirhum as it was rendered by Abdel Haleem into "give news", is natural and appropriate. However, the verbal phrases "announce to them", and "promise them" used by Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall, respectively are confusing and misleading. Moreover, Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall have used the literal translation strategy. However, Abdel Haleem opted to render it accurately by using paraphrase (periphrasis) strategy which is appropriate for rendering Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexeme فَبَشِّرْهُمْ fa basysyirhum into English. Moreover, Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall's rendering for the same lexeme is devoid of natural flow in the TT. This is a common shortfall of literal translation. It seems that Abdel Haleem's translation is the most adequate and accurate among the three translation, to the ST. Moreover, Abdel Haleem seems to convey the intended meaning of ST, because lexemes (gives the news are approximately the same in English and Arabic languages. The researcher would suggest translating to the lexemes فَبَشِّرْهُمْ fa basysyirhum as "give tidings" to make the meaning clear to receptor's language. According to Collins Cobuild Dictionary (2006). "tidings" it is used to refer to news that someone tells you, *either bad tidings or good tidings* (the italics are mine). To conclude, the researcher noticed that, the conjunction "ف" present in the Arabic lexeme فَبَشِّرْهُمْ fa basysyirhum has been dropped by the three translators, which affects syntactic context of the Quranic Message. Also, the omission of "ف" caused partial semantic loss for Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexeme فَبَشِّرْهُمْ fa basysyirhum into English because the meaning of the ST conjunction was not conveyed in TT.

The ironical word "promise" used by Pickthall, may pose a difficulty of semotactic appropriateness for the receptor of the Qur'anic Message in the TT (English), in the sense that the word 'promise' suggests something valuable and the 'Hell', for the people destined to it is not valuable for them though it is a unique style of the Holy Qur'an. For example, (i) "Allah has promised those who believe and do good deeds, theirs will be forgiveness and immense reward" (Surat Al-Ma'idah [verse 9].

(لمائدة:9)) "وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ (ii)" Allah promises the hypocrites, both men and women, and the disbelievers Fire of Hell for the abode" (sūrat l-tawbah, The Repentance [verse 68]).

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ (وَأَلَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِمٌ) (التوبة: 68).

To conclude, it seems that the use of the word "promise" with the unpleasant things is a satirical style in the Holy Qur'an wherein disbelievers' foolish and wicked behavior is attacked by making fun of it. For example, "The Fire, Allah has promised it for those who disbelievers who disbelieve, a hapless journey's end". (Surat l-haj (The Pilgrimage) [verse:72]

قُلْ أَفَأَنْتُمْ بِشِرِّ مَن دَلِكُمْ فِي النَّارِ وَعَذَابُ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِهِمْ وَيَسْ (المصير) (الحج: 72)

Example 2

Source Surrah "Smoke Ad-Dukhaan, ayah, verse 29

ST: فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنظَرِينَ

Transliteration: Fama bakat AAalayhimu assamaowal-ardu wama kanoo munthareen

Target Text:

- (4) **Abdelhaleem:** "Neither heavens nor earth shed a tear for them, nor were they given any time."
- (5) **Khan and Al-Hilali:** "And the heavens and the earth wept not for them, nor were they given a respite".
- (6) **Pickthall:** "And the heaven and the earth wept not for them, nor were they reprieved"

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to tafsir books (Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010, Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, 2009). The ayah indicates that, that is they did not have of the righteous deeds that which could have ascended through the gates of the heaven; hence, for losing them, they would have then wept for them, nor did they have any spots on the earth where they worship Allah, the Almighty; hence for losing them, such spots would have felt lonely. Hence, they did not deserve to be given respite or be reprieved owing to their disbelief, wickedness, obstinate denial and stubbornness. It was stated in the Hadith that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "There is no servant (of Allah) but that there are two gates for him in the heaven; a gate where from to him his provision is sent, and through the other, his righteous deeds and words ascend. When he dies, they feel lonely for him and for his death they do weep. "Then he (PBUH) recited this ayah (verse): {And the heavens and the earth wept not for them, nor were they given a respite}. This is recorded by Al-Hafiz Abu-Yali.

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

In the aforementioned example 2, the verbal irony expression falls in the ST phrase فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ Fama bakat AAalayhimu was rendered by Abdel Haleem as "shed a tear for them", whereas it was translated by Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall: respectively as "wept not for them". The overall renderings of the verbal irony in the three translations maintain intensity of the Message. Also, in the three translations the dynamic equivalence, remaining faithful to the Message in SL, results in semantic simplicity which is essential for better comprehension. (Khan, 2008). The three translators have utilized the literal translation strategy to render Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexeme فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ Fama bakat AAalayhimu into English, but with different lexical lexemes in translating it. Hence, Abdelhaleem rendered as "shed a tear for them", whereas Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall translated as "wept not for them" respectively. The three translators' renderings for Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexeme فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ Fama bakat AAalayhimu seem quite appropriate. According to Newmark (1990), a literal translation is the most proper translation in case an equivalent exists. The rendering of Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexeme فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ Fama bakat AAalayhimu by three translators into "shed a tear for them," and "wept not for them" respectively is really appreciable. Presumably, the three translators are employ-

ing the literal translation strategy to maintain the context with regard to the expectations of the receptor of the Quranic message in target language. (Khan,2008, p,175).

Example 3

Source Surrah ‘‘ The Family of Al-’’Imran who Aal-i-Imraan’’, ayah, verse 106

ST: أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

Transliteration: akafartum ba'da eemaanikum fazooqul 'azaaba bimaa kuntum takfuroon

Target Text:

1. **Abdelhaleem:** ‘‘How could you reject your faith after believing? Taste the torment for doing so’’
2. **Khan and Al-Hilali:** ‘‘ Did you reject Faith after accepting it? Then taste the torment (in Hell) for rejecting Faith’’
3. **Pickthall:** ‘‘Disbelieved ye after your (profession of) belief? Then taste the punishment for that ye disbelieved. ‘‘

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to *tafsir* books (e. g. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010, Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, 2009), the ayah indicates, Ibn Abbas said: ‘‘On the Day of Resurrection, the face of those who followed the Sunnah and were sticking to body of Muslims will become white; while that of those of heresy and disunion will become black’’. Al-Haasan said that they will be the hypocrites, { then taste the torment (in Hell) for rejoicing Faith}. This is to imply all and every disbeliever. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Volume(1),p.245.)

{ on the Day when some faces will become white and some faces will become black} i.e. the Day of Resurrection; { as for those whose faces will become black} in reference it is to the disbelievers and polytheists who will be cast in the Hellfire and then they will be rhetorically asked: { Did you reject Faith after accepting it?} in reference it is to the Covenant which Allah has taken from the entirety of the Children of Adam while they were still in his lions (Adam's lions) { Then taste the torment (in Hell) for rejecting Faith.} (Tafsir AL- Jalalayn, Volume (1), p.209.).

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

In the aforementioned example 3, the ST lexemes فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ fazooqul 'azaaba was translated by Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali as ‘‘ Taste the torment whereas it was rendered by Pickthall as ‘‘ taste the punishment’’. Renderings of Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali for Arabic Quranic verbal irony lexemes فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ fazooqul 'azaaba seem more adequate and accurate than Pickthall's, because their renditions may convey the ST meaning appropriately in accordance to Tafsir Ibn Kathir and Tafsir AL- Jalalayn as well. Pickthall's use of the word ‘‘ punishment) seems to be implausible to convey the meaning of the ST lexeme الْعَذَابَ azaaba. According to Collins Cobuild Dictionary (2006), the word ‘‘ punishment’’ means ‘‘ the act of punishing or state of being punished’’ whereas the word ‘‘ torment’’ means ‘‘ to

cause (someone) great pain or suffering’’. Hence, the use of the word (torment) in the renditions of Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali is more plausible and reasonable than Pickthall's who used the word (punishment) in his rendition for the word the ST lexeme الْعَذَابَ azaaba. Thus, rendering the ST lexeme الْعَذَابَ azaaba into ‘‘ punishment’’ instead of ‘‘ torment, ‘‘ which is literal meaning of the ST lexeme does not convey the specific meaning properly. Moreover, the word ‘‘ punishment’’ used by Pickthall with its literal meaning may not be understood by the receptor in TL, losing the sense of the intended meaning of the Quranic Message in general and the Quranic word الْعَذَابَ azaaba in particular. However, Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali's usage of dynamic equivalence, that is, ‘‘ torment’’, gives a true sense of the intended meaning of the Quranic word الْعَذَابَ azaaba.

The use of the relational word ‘ then’ in the beginning of the ayah (verse) by Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall is just over literal translation (strictly formal). Also, Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall used overtranslation (addition) strategy to render the Quranic word الْعَذَابَ azaaba into English. Hence, The conjunction ‘‘ then’’ is added in the translation of the lexeme, in this context we can quote Dickens, et al (2002, p.56) who defines this strategy as ‘‘ translation in which something is added to be the target text which is not present in the source text’’, such a strategy, however, often attempts to insert additional elegant-sounding words or phrases into a TT to counter balance any weaknesses that might creep in’’. Furthermore, the three translators have used another translation strategy that is the omission. In the process of rendition, the prefix (fa- ‘‘ mentioned in the Arabic Quranic word فَذُوقُوا is dropped by the three translators. Markedly, this omission of the prefix (fa- ‘‘ does not destroy or wrap the intended meaning of the Arabic Quranic word فَذُوقُوا. Semantically and even though there is an expunction in the Arabic Quranic word فَذُوقُوا, the meaning of the Quranic verbal ironic lexeme is maintained.

Example 4

Source Surrah ‘‘ The Cow-’’ Al-Baqara, ayah, verse 175.

ST: فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ

Transliteration: ‘‘famā aşbarahum ‘alā l-nāri’’

Target Text:

1. **Abdelhaleem:** ‘‘What can make them patient in the face of the Fire?’’
2. **Khan and Al-Hilali:** ‘‘ So how bold they are (for evil deeds which will push them to the Fire.’’
3. **Pickthall:** ‘‘How constant are they in their strife to reach the Fire!’’

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to *tafsir* books (e. g. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010, Tafsir Al-Jalalayn, 2009), the ayah indicates the Jews have purchased their straying and disbelieving him [Mohammed (PBUH)] for the true guidance which is to make clear the attributes of Mohammed (PBUH), his Message, the glad tiding of him which are stated in their Books, their follow-

ing and believing in him(PBUH). (So how bold they are to the Fire) meaning, the believers exclaim about boldness of those polytheists and disbelievers and those who transgress the limits set by Allah as to send their own selves to the Hell-fire by what they commit of evils, and how constant they are in committing evils for which there in the Fire their ever dwelling to be.

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

In the above-mentioned example 4, the ST lexeme أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum* was rendered by Abdel Haleem as "make them patient" which may convey the ST verbal ironical meaning accurately and perfectly. The ST phrase means, as explained by both Ibn Kathir,(2010), and Al-Jalalayn, (2009), how constant they are in committing evils for which there in the Fire their ever dwelling to be. Khan and Al-Hilali translated as "bold they are" which seems less adequate and appropriate than Abdel Haleem because the lexeme "bold" does not mean "صبر *sbar*" in either TT or "patient" in ST. According to Collins Cobuild Dictionary (2006)." The word bold means" (a) Someone who is bold is not afraid to do things which involve risk or danger. (b) one who is bold is not shy or embarrassed in the company of other people.", therefore, the word 'bold' is polysemic word, Khan and Al-Hilali used literal translation strategy and couplet translation strategy (a translation method that combines two procedures to deal with a single problem "literal translation + explanation") (see Newmark, 1993,p.:96) (see the sample 4) to render the meaning of verbal ironical lexeme أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum*. However, their translation is neither communicative nor semantic. It does not express the verbal ironical meaning of the word (أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum*), which means (endurance, patient), not (bold) as they conveyed. Moreover, Khan and Hilali used brackets to add or clarify idea of (boldc). As for Pickthall, he rendered verbal ironical lexeme أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum* as "they in their strife" which seems less faithful to convey the ST verbal ironical meaning properly. In terms of meaning Pickthall failed to come up with the exact sense of ironical meaning of the word (أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum*).

As can be seen from table, Abdelhaleem has utilized punctuations, for instance, interrogation mark or point(?), whereas Pickthall has used exclamation mark(!). This definitely catch up with the Arabic text of the Holy Quran. Moreover, the punctuations have been utilized stylistically by the two translators has made the verbal ironical expressions أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum* more forceful. Furthermore, these punctuations have maintained contextual meaning of verbal ironical expressions أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum* which may meet the demand of the receptor of the Quranic Message.

To sum up, Abdel Haleem translates أَصْبَرَ هُمْ *aşbarahum* correctly as he used the word 'patient'. Khan and Hilali, on the other hand, used the word 'bold' and Pickthall also used the word "strife" which do not seem to fit properly in this context. Although Khan and Hilali used bracketed information where they refer to the word "bold" it may be confusing to the reader to use two words with different meanings.

Example 5

Source Surrah "The Pilgrimage" Al-Hajj, ayah, verse 4

ST: كُنِبَ عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ مَنْ تَوَلَّاهُ فَأَنَّهُ يُضِلُّهُ وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ

Transliteration: "kutiba 'alaihi annahoo man tawallaahu fa annahoo yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa 'azaabis sa'eer.

Target Text:

4. Abdelhaleem: "fated to lead astray those who take his side, and will guide them to the suffering of the blazing flame."
5. Khan and Al-Hilali: "for him (the devil) it is decreed that whosoever follows him, he will mislead him, and will drive him to the torment of the Fire."
6. Pickthall: "For him it is decreed that whoso taketh him for a friend he verily will mislead him and will guide him to the punishment of the Flame."

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to *tafsir* books (e. g. Alt-Tabri,2004,Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010,), the ayah indicates, {For him (the devil) it is decreed ...} Mujahid said:" This refers to the Shaitan," meaning, it is a written matter in the decree, { that whosoever follows him,} and imitates him, { he will mislead him, and will drive him to the torment of the Fire.} i.e. he will mislead him in the life of the world and that in the Hereafter, he will lead him to the torment of the blazing Hellfire, which is horrendously hot, excruciating and distressing.

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

As can be seen from the example 5, Abdelhaleem and Pickthall translated the Qur'anic verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa* as "and will guide them" receptively which seems to be faithful. Comparably, the same ST verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa* was rendered by Khan and Al-Hilali as "and will drive him". Semantically, the renditions of both Abdelhaleem and Pickthall seem to be faithful and they convey to some extent the meaning of the ST Quranic verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa* and they are communicative, as well. Semantically, the three translations have produced a suitable meaning of the verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa*.

Similarly, the conjunction (*و*) at the beginning of the verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa* was retained by the three translators in the translation of this lexeme. This create translation equivalence in the expressive meaning of the ayah in general and the verbal ironical phrase إِلَى وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى *yudilluhoo wa yahdeehi ilaa* in particular. In short, Khan and Al-Hilali used the pronoun "he" with the verbal ironic words وَيَهْدِيهِ *yudilluhoo* (to refer to the one who follows Satan) maintained an anaphoric reference to first part of the ayah. On the contrary, Abdelhaleem used the possessive pronouns (his), whereas Pickthall used the object pronoun "him" receptively (to refer to the devil) .The usage of the pronouns (he, him, his) by the three translators is inevitable for its acceptance in the TT. The pronouns (him, his) may be understood but with some communication load

which affects comprehension. Comparatively, Khan and Al-Hilali's usage seems better.

To sum up, the three translators' rendition of the verbal ironical phrase *وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَىٰ* wa yahdeehi bear semantic simplicity and that too through lexical expansion, that is "and will guide them", "and will drive him" and "and will guide him" collectively.

Example 6

Source Surrah ". The Companies/ The Thrones, Az-Zumar, ayah, verse 8.

ST: *قُلْ تَمَتَّعْ بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ*

Transliteration: "qul tamatta' bikufrika qaleelan innaka min Ashaabin Naar;"

Target Text:

7. **Abdelhaleem:** "Enjoy your ingratitude for a while you will be one of the inhabitants of the Fire.
8. **Khan and Al-Hilali:** "Take pleasure in your disbelief for a while: surely you are (one) of the dwellers of the Fire."
9. **Pickthall:** take pleasure in thy disbelief a while. Lo! thou art of the owners of the Fire.

EVALUATION OF THE TRANSLATION

The Meaning of the Ayah

According to *tafsir* books (e.g. Alt-Tabri, 2004 Tafsir Ibn Kathir, 2010.), the ayah indicates, [take pleasure in your disbelief for a while, surely you are (one) of the dwellers of the Fire] meaning: "Tell those who lead this path [Take pleasure in your disbelief for a while] this indeed is such a strict threat, and definite warning; the matter which is similarly in this ayah (verse) rendered [Say: 'Enjoy!'] But certainly, your destination is the Fire!]. Furthermore, the ayah also indicates, along the left span for you in the life of the world. { Surely, you are (one) of the dwellers of the Fire}.

The Lexical Stylistic Analysis of the Translation

As can be seen from example 6, Abdel Haleem rendered the Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* tamatta' as "enjoy" which seems faithful to the ST. However, Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall which is less faithful to the ST. Abdel Haleem's rendition is nearer to the meaning of Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* tamatta' more than Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall's translation of the same lexemes. The lexemes "enjoy" (Abdel Haleem) and "take pleasure" (Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall) used in translating of Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* tamatta' are quite different in semotactic context. The former word "enjoy" may convey the ST meaning properly. Whereas the latter, "take pleasure" which seem less accurate than Abdel Haleem's because these words are seen in their context for untrue and guile implications. On the other hand, the translating of the same Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* tamatta' by Abdel Haleem is quite natural in the TT and fulfils the receptor's expectation, that is, "enjoy". Furthermore, the three translators' renditions suffer from two weaknesses, which may affect its readability and comprehensibility. These weaknesses are: literal translation, (Abdel Haleem,

Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall) and use of archaic words (Pickthall)

To conclude, undoubtedly, the three translator's renditions of Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* tamatta' are accurate and are relatively equivalent in terms of verbal ironical meaning. Indeed, their awareness of the contextual and cultural meaning of this context helped them to find such a relevant equivalent, which reflects the tone of irony associations in the original context. However, Abdel Haleem's rendition of the same ironical expression has strong connotation, whereas, Khan and Al-Hilali and Pickthall's renditions have mild connotation and seem less adequate than Abdel Haleem's rendition. Moreover, Abdel Haleem tried to preserve the same stylistic form of the original, and he succeed in doing so, hence his rendition for the lexeme Qur'anic verbal ironical words *تَمَتَّعْ* amatta is the most accurate and appropriate among the three translators.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the lexical, cultural difficulties, challenges, constrains and stylistic problems faced and the translation strategies employed by the translators of the Holy Quran in the rendition of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an into English language in general and the Qur'anic verbal ironical words in particular. Moreover, the rendition of six ayahs (verses) containing verbal ironical meanings were purposively selected and then analyzed by the researcher.

The results of the research revealed that the translators of the Holy Quran adopted several translation strategies such as literal translation, couplet translation to render the Qur'anic verbal ironical expressions into English. Moreover, the study also revealed that both literal translation, and couplet translation are not always appropriate and accurate for rendering the Holy Quran in general and the Qur'anic verbal ironical expressions in particular because they have not successfully maintained the meaning of the Qur'anic Arabic language (ST) into the Qur'anic English version (TT). Furthermore, the study showed that, translation of untranslatable the Qur'anic verbal ironical expressions into English and their representative lexemes may cause further confusion in the comprehension of the Holy Qur'an Message. (See example 4.). In some examples of translating the Qur'anic verbal ironical expressions into English, equivalence of these Arabic lexis is problematic. (see examples, 1,3). Finally, the research suggests that the equivalence in translation of the Holy Quran should be examined as a concept that holds a place on a scale that can begin very equivalent to inequivalent. The research also suggests that better translation of the Holy Quran should bear intelligibility in terms of a total impact of the Message on the language receptor.

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