Developing a Model for Translating Euphemism in the Qur'an: An Intratextual- and Contextual-based Approach

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the role of intratextuality and contextuality in the mechanisms of understanding euphemism in the Qur'an, which in some cases would provide evidence for the intended meaning or a way of interpreting and translating euphemisms. It hypothesises that the dependence only on dictionary, exegesis or single text may yield misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the euphemistic meaning. The paper develops a linguistic model for critical evaluation of the translation of Qur'anic euphemisms based on the textual level, which goes beyond word or sentence levels. Methodologically, certain euphemisms in different verses in the Qur'an which require intratextual or contextual references for their identification and interpretation are selected and then possible interpretations of their meanings are verified via checking semantic coherence with other Qur'anic verses. The size of the selected sample is representative to cover the most common taboos in any society; namely health, death, sex and sodomy. Six translations of these euphemistic expressions of the Qur'an are fully analysed. The paper gives evidence that translation decisions made by translators need to rely on information beyond traditional dictionaries or exegetic works and require the recognition of intratextual and contextual ties within the Qur'an. It also finds that most translators attempt to convey the intended meaning of euphemisms, while the euphemistic style is sacrificed. The study concludes that the translation of euphemism in the Qur'an should adhere to the syntactic patterns and lexical units of the source language (SL) structure, and make cultural and linguistic shifts in the target language (TL).

INTRODUCTION

Linguistic communication is a process of exchanging or transferring information between speakers in a stimulus-response situation for a specific purpose via a variety of channels and media tools. It is a matter of being polite using appropriate and pleasant words to express a particular idea. Politeness is an important resource which enables speakers to engage with a range of socially sensitive concepts and unspeakable topics, such as taboo, tactfulness, decency, personal dignity, appropriate linguistic register, rudeness, etc., which require the use of certain types of metaphor and metonymy. One of the metaphoric resources which enable users to engage and gracefully address such socially sensitive issues is euphemism, which can be defined as an intentional substitution of an offensive, unpleasant or stylistically inappropriate expression with a more agreeable or inoffensive one for rendering a certain meaning implicitly. Euphemism may also be employed as a linguistic device for its rhetorical force.

The Holy Qur'an is a divine text consisting of rhythmic verses and consistent chapters revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It can be classified as an expressive text since it deals with the Attributes and Names of God. It can be also classified as an argumentative, instructive or persuasive text because it focuses on its followers and their behavioural responses. For Muslims, this book is the main source of Islamic teachings and approaches all daily-life aspects through giving beliefs, instructions, guidelines and values. It has a unique discourse with a coherent content, grammatical variations and rhetorical expressions. For instance, euphemisms in the Qur'an are employed to functionally address taboo themes and sensitive topics such as sex, sodomy, death, excretion and disability. A significant attention has been paid upon the superiority and coherence of the Qur'an by scholars in the fields of religious and social studies, applied and computational linguistics, and translation and interpreting.

Translation is broadly understood as a process of transferring meanings from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Some linguistic and cultural differences between the SL and the TL exist where each language has its own style, structure and features. Translation from Arabic into English is not an easy task because of culture-specific items and linguistic dissimilarities. Specifically, translating the meanings of the Qur'an into English poses an immense

challenge for the translator due to the unique style of the Arabic of the Qur'an. In addition, the Qur'an extensively includes linguistic and rhetorical devices such as collocations, metonyms and euphemisms which are difficult for any translator. The English translation of euphemism in the Qur'an presents a special difficulty since the translator should firstly identify or annotate whether the Qur'anic expression is a euphemism or not by understanding its original meaning; and then preserve the euphemistic style in English. Thus, this paper approaches the English translation of euphemisms in the Qur'an which require intratextual and contextual links within the Qur'an with reference to the principle of the textual level which suggests the text is the key factor in the process of translation (Newmark, 1988, p. 22).

This study is mainly concerned with investigating the role of intratextuality and contextuality in critically evaluating certain Qur'anic euphemisms in six different translations. It aims to show the mechanism of the interpretation of the Qur'an with the Qur'an in recognising and translating euphemisms through exploring how intratextual and contextual signals in the Qur'an can allow translators to understand these euphemisms, and then render them into English successfully. Most studies previously conducted on the translation of Qur'anic euphemisms depend mostly on traditional dictionaries, exegeses or single sentences to find whether the euphemistic style and implication are lost or conveyed by translators. Therefore, this study illustrates how translators may sacrifice the intended meaning of euphemism if they rely solely on exegetical resources, local context, or the Arabic language.

The employment of euphemisms is frequently evaluated on word, phrase, or sentence levels. For example, 'senior citizens' is a euphemistic substitute for 'elderly person'. 'To make love' is a euphemistic phrase for 'to have sex'. 'Visually challenged' is the politically correct alternative expression describing the 'blind person'. Such euphemisms can be comprehended easily regardless of context. By contrast, the perception of euphemistic meanings on the textual level has not yet received due attention. On this level, translators are required to mainly examine the transference of the syntactic patterns and lexical units of the SL structure into the TL. Further, they need to make cultural and linguistic shifts when expressing the target text (TT) based on the fact that the text is the main principle in the process of translation (Newmark, 1988, p. 22). I assume that intratextuality and contextuality play a powerful role in understanding the purpose and function of euphemism particularly in the Qur'an. Therefore, this paper proposes a linguistic model for critically evaluating the translation of Qur'anic euphemisms on the textual level, and extends beyond word or sentence levels. It also hypothesises that the translation of Qur'anic euphemism, based on intratextuality and context, could be more coherent, appropriate, consistent, and felicitous. In brief, the present paper aims to answer these questions:

(1) To what extent can Qur'anic euphemisms be interpreted or translated on the textual level?

(2) What is the role of intratextuality in interpreting and translating the intended meaning of Qur'anic euphemisms successfully?

(3) What is the role of contextuality in interpreting and translating the intended meaning of Qur'anic euphemisms successfully?

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The Key Concepts

Willis and Klammer (1981) define euphemism as "a mild or roundabout word or expression used instead of a more direct word or expression to make one's language delicate and inoffensive even to a squeamish person" (p. 193). Similarly, Hudson (2000) defines it as "the extension of ordinary words and phrases to express unpleasant and embarrassing ideas" (p. 261). Euphemism can be defined as a socially acceptable or stylistically indirect utterance with non-literal structure and symbolic features used to substitute an offensive or unpleasant expression having inappropriate reference or meaning. It is widely used to communicate effectively about sensitive, unspeakable or forbidden matters. That is, speakers resort to euphemism as a response to the existence of taboos in society to stay within agreeable established boundaries (Al-Kharabsheh, 2011; Fromkin and Rodman, 1993; Allan and Burridge, 1991; Williams, 1975). Moreover, euphemism intentionally functions as a useful way to consider the listener's feelings and maintain the speaker's approach through showing respect and politeness toward each other (Allan and Burridge, 1991). It can be concluded that most definitions consider euphemism to be a linguistic technique focusing on how the positive meaning of a certain expression can address the negative sense of another one.

Lee (2011) lists two types of euphemism; firstly, the fixed type which refers to an idiomatic expression by which the communicative purpose is closely connected with the taboo substitution. For example, 'to have my period' can be understood individually as an alternative phrase for 'to menstruate'. Secondly, the contextual type which refers to a euphemism relying on context to be understood appropriately. For instance, 'no longer with us' needs to be located within a given context to be explained correctly (p. 355). Therefore, context and euphemisms are correlated, i.e. euphemism beautifies a contextual situation involving taboo topics, and the contextual situation stimulates the euphemistic usage. Each euphemism should not be separated or excluded from its context because the euphemistic quality is constructed and associated with other extra intratextual and contextual information. Nida (2002) believes that 'context actually provides more distinction of meaning than the term being analysed' (p. 29). Likewise, Hatim (2009) argues that the translator's decision is often governed by textual and contextual factors (p. 40). Similarly, Shehab et al. (2014) state that context has a great impact on using, reshaping and translating Arabic euphemisms into English. They indicate that the failure to capture the implicit contextualised meaning of Arabic euphemisms refers to the negligence or misunderstanding of their contexts. Consequently, decontextualisation is regarded as one of the major mistakes committed by translators, which leads to misunderstanding the SL, and hence misrepresentation and mistranslation of euphemism in the TL.

Sharrock and Morales (2000) state that the notion of intratextuality implies addressing a given text from different directions and dimensions, dividing it into various pieces, constructing it again, and reducing or expanding it within its boundaries (p. 5). Thus, any text consists of various parts, and the reader somehow seeks for a convenient way by which internal relations within these parts or the whole text can be built, shaped and perceived. Palmer (2002, p. 23) claims that intratextuality involves a single text or a set of associated texts elaborated as a closed system of contextual and situational aspects. In the Qur'an, intratextuality of euphemism refers to the part of euphemistic meaning that is not contained within the verse with euphemism itself, but is created via its references and associations with surrounding or relevant Qur'anic verses and surahs. Contextuality of euphemism refers to a specific situation or extralinguistic circumstances could be presented in the verse itself or other Qur'anic verses or surahs, explaining how euphemism is interpreted. The intratextual and contextual approach of this paper focuses on Qur'anic details and information by which the whole picture of the euphemistic meaning and technique is established.

Related Studies

Even though few studies have been conducted on translating euphemism in the Qur'an into English, no study to date tackles directly the role of intratextuality or contextuality in the recognition and translation of Qur'anic euphemisms. Albarakati (2014, pp. 146-150) evaluates strategies for translating euphemism in the Qur'an. He claims that Qur'an is full of rhetorical euphemistic expressions, so the translator should endeavour to render them as accurately as possible to elude misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Examples of Qur'anic euphemisms are elucidated, and five translations are analysed. His paper finds that particularisation and metonymy are the most common strategies of euphemisation in the Qur'an. It shows that literal translation is commonly used by translators though it does not work in reproducing euphemistic meanings in most instances. He suggests a paradigm based on understanding the SL meaning of euphemism, using exegetical views and then deciding the appropriate strategy. In fact, this model for translating Qur'anic euphemisms is largely based on the findings of his PhD thesis (2013) in which Nord's version of Skopos together with equivalence and response-oriented theories by Nida and Newmark are adopted from functional perspective. In the thesis, 43 sex-related euphemisms in three English translations of the Qur'an are analysed. He finds that the euphemism translations have a strong adherence toward the SL structure although they embrace TL-oriented norms. Literal and semantic translations are pursued in most euphemistic instances, while idiomatic and free translations are rarely employed in the translations.

Al-Hamad and Salman (2013) produce a qualitative investigation into the translatability of euphemism in the Qur'an. They aim to examine incongruities in translating Qur'anic euphemistic expressions into English. In this study, 23 euphemisms from different surahs in the Qur'an are chosen and classified into taboo topics: sex, genitals, women, excretion, sickness and disabilities, death, and divorce. Four English translations of the selected euphemisms are examined. The study shows that the English translation of euphemisms in the Qur'an is more difficult because of linguistic and cultural diversities, different metaphorical uses, and varied connotations of vocabularies. Therefore, translators often sacrifice euphemisms for the sake of conveying meanings directly. Finally, it suggests paying due attention upon the intended meaning of euphemism, and the cultural and linguistic approximation (pp. 190-214).

Abdel Haleem (2011) examines the phenomenon of euphemism in the Qur'an taking the marital relation as a case study. He indicates the importance of context in the perception of euphemism. He analyses the impact of (i) extracting part of a verse from its context; (ii) keeping part of verse from its social and cultural context; and (iii) lack of the translator's Qur'anic knowledge in understanding the Qur'anic euphemising of woman's status. The study shows the crucial role of Qur'anic and prophetic contexts in interpreting and representing the underlying meaning of sex-related euphemisms in the Qur'an. It clarifies how Qur'anic discourse euphemises sensitive issues related to women such as menstruation, illegal sexual practice, and legitimate sexual intercourse (pp. 125–131).

Altaie (2010, pp. 370-380) investigates the inaccuracy of the English translation of Qur'anic euphemisms. She states that most translators have failed in rendering the functional meaning of euphemistic expressions in the Qur'an. She finds that the translator may require sufficient knowledge of other relevant Islamic contexts such as Al-Ḥadīth, i.e. an authentic record of the words, the actions, and the silent approval of the Prophet Muhammad, and it is, for Muslims, the second source of religious law and moral guidance after the Qur'an; and Al-Sīra, i.e. the biography of Muhammad's life and a historical account of the early period of Islam. Similarly, Mohammed (2006) evaluates errors in English translations of euphemism in the Qur'an. The main goal of his study is twofold; to capture the main causes behind the errors in translating euphemism, and to clarify to what extent inaccurate translations may distort the recognition of euphemism interpretations. Two translations of Qur'anic verses with euphemisms are analysed. Both Altaie and Mohammed suggest that the translator could resort to explication, paraphrasing and annotation to assist the target audience in recognising the euphemistic aspect and meaning in the Qur'an accurately.

Al-Dulaimi and Aubed (2012) have conducted research on the accuracy of translating Qur'anic euphemisms with reference to their original context and interpretive meanings. The research hypothesises that the sacredness and miraculous nature of the Qur'an pose difficulty for translating euphemisms. Three English translations of euphemisms from the Qur'an are examined. Exegetical books are used to decide whether the translations convey or sacrifice the euphemistic implications. They conclude that these translations fail to capture both/either the euphemistic style and/or the intended meaning. Similar to Altaie and Mohammed, they propose additional procedures including explication, paraphrase and annotation to accompany the euphemism translation.

All the aforementioned studies have investigated the act of translating and analysing Qur'anic euphemisms on word or sentence levels. Only one study by Abdel Haleem indicates the significance of context in interpreting Qur'anic euphemisms, but we do not come upon any study concerned directly with the role of intratextuality and contextuality in understanding and translating Qur'anic euphemisms. The English translations used traditional dictionaries, referred to exegetical books or adopted a single verse context when rendering Qur'anic euphemisms. The originality of this research stems from investigating intratextual and contextual correlations within the Qur'an for the sake of developing the quality and coherence of the euphemism translation. In other words, the current research attempts to explain how certain verses cited elsewhere in the Qur'an can allow the translator to comprehend possible interpretations of euphemism and hence produce an appropriate translation. It hypothesises that the translator's sole dependence on dictionary, exegesis or local context may lead to less consistent, less felicitous and less coherent translation of euphemism.

METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I assume that the correct understanding of intratextual ties and contextual references within the Qur'an produces felicitous translation of euphemism. Consequently, four euphemisms in different verses in the Qur'an are selected to investigate the role of intratextuality and contextuality in explaining and translating Qur'anic euphemisms. The selected sample of euphemistic examples are then classified into different domains including health, death, sex and sodomy. These themes are predominantly mentioned in the Qur'an and are highly controversial subjects between eastern and western societies and cultures. Each Qur'anic euphemism is highlighted and presented in the original Arabic with my literal English translation. The purpose of providing literal translation is to offer a better understanding and familiarity with the euphemistic context for the receiving audience.

The analysis of the selected euphemisms is carried out from different perspectives. Literature background and exegetical views on the context of these euphemisms are discussed. The lexical meaning and dictionary usage of the euphemisms are investigated as well. Based on the concept of intratextuality and contextuality, other verses cited elsewhere in the Qur'an with literal translation are identified and analysed so as to verify possible interpretations and check the semantic coherence and consistency of the euphemistic meaning with other Qur'anic verses. These interpretations are evaluated by the degree of their coherence and appropriateness on the textual level proposed by Newmark in which the text is the translator's main concern (1988, p. 22). Further, the selected euphemisms are semantically addressed with special reference to Warren's model which suggests various semantic types of euphemism including *particularisation*, *implication*, *metaphor*, *metonym*, *reversal*, *understatement* and *overstatement* (1992, p. 133).

Six English translations of the Qur'an are chosen to evaluate the quality and accuracy of the translation of the selected eu-

phemisms, and translation choices. They include *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* by Pickthall (1938); *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* by Yusuf Ali (1938); *The Holy Qur'an: Arabic Text, English Translation and Commentary* by Maulana (1973); *The Noble Qur'an: English Translation and Commentary* by Al-Hilali and Khan (1985); *The Qur'an: A New Translation* by Abdel Haleem (2004); and *The Holy Qur'an: Arabic Text and English Translation* by Sher Ali (2004). These translations are chosen because they are among the most widespread and popular translations of the Qur'an throughout the English-speaking world. Also, they are renowned for their comprehensible English, clear language, and erudite annotations. The methods and procedures adopted by translators to render these euphemisms are assessed. In addition, to what extent those translators convey or distort the euphemistic implications in the TL is examined. To achieve these goals, I adopt Newmark's model in which eight methods are proposed for translating texts: *word-for-word translation*, *literal translation*, *faithful translation*, *semantic translation*, *adaptation*, *free translation*, *idiomatic translation* and *communicative translation* (1988, pp. 45-47). Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework for evaluating the English translation of euphemism in the Qur'an.

DISCUSSION

This section examines four euphemistic expressions in different verses from the Qur'an. Concepts of intratextuality and contextuality are widely investigated throughout the analysis and discussion. The selected euphemisms are deliberately chosen to encompass sensitive subjects socially and culturally.

Health-related Euphemism

وَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا أَسَفَى عَلَى يُوسُفَ **وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ** مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ (84, Yūsuf)

Lit. And he turned away from them, and he said: "Alas, my sorrow for Yūsuf [Joseph]," **and his eyes whitened** because of the grief, and he was suppressed.

- **Pickthall:** And his eyes were whitened.
- **Yusuf Ali:** And his eyes became white.
- **Maulana:** And his eyes were filled (with tears).
- **Al-Hilali and Khan:** And he lost his sight**.**
- **Abdel Haleem:** His eyes went white.
- **Sher Ali:** And his eyes were filled with tears.

As people may face physical challenges, disability and sickness which are perceived as unpleasant, undesirable, and something that needs to be avoided, most cultures have developed a system of euphemistic expressions referring to such conditions. The Qur'an addresses disability by employing different semantic resources of euphemism. In this verse, the identification of وَابْيَضَّت عَيْنَاهُ 'wa ibyaḍḍat ʿaynāhu' as a euphemism and setting it aside from other types of metaphoric and non-metaphoric expressions are problematic. This verse shows that Yaʿqūb (Jacob) attempted to hide his grief and sorrow that resulted from Yūsuf's loss, so Yaʿqūb's eyes tended to go white and their black colour disappeared (*al-Tafsīr al-muyassar*, 2009, p. 245).
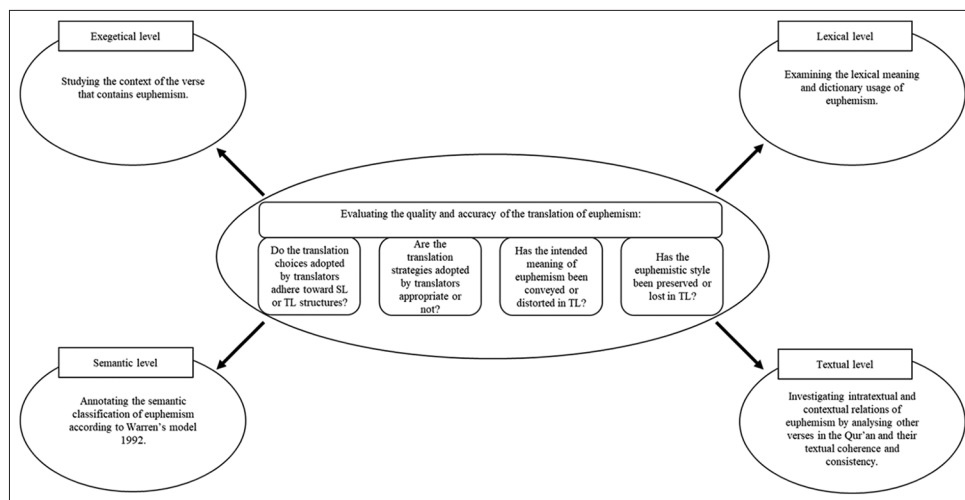
Exegetical level
Studying the context of the verse that contains euphemism.

Lexical level
Examining the lexical meaning and dictionary usage of euphemism.

Evaluating the quality and accuracy of the translation of euphemism:

Do the translation choices adopted by translators adhere toward SL or TL structures?

Are the translation strategies adopted by translators appropriate or not?

Has the intended meaning of euphemism been conveyed or distorted in TL?

Has the euphemistic style been preserved or lost in TL?

Semantic level
Annotating the semantic classification of euphemism according to Warren's model 1992.

Textual level
Investigating intratextual and contextual relations of euphemism by analysing other verses in the Qur'an and their textual coherence and consistency.

Figure 1. A proposed model for evaluating the translation of euphemism in the Qur'an

To understand the euphemistic purpose, we need to make a semantic reference to the meaning of the verb ابْيَضَّ 'ib-yaḍḍ' by investigating the base form and the morphological pattern of افعل 'afʿal'. If we refer, for example, to *A Grammar of the Arabic Language* by W. Wright (2007), we find this pattern serves "to express colours and defects; these being qualities that cling very firmly to persons and things: and hence the doubling of the third radical; to show that the proper signification of both is intensiveness 'المبالغة', e.g., 'اصفر', and 'اصفار' to be yellow or 'اسود' and 'اسواد' to be black". This meaning of intensification conveyed by the morphological pattern perfectly fits the analytical context of the verse. Because of the intensity of Yaʿqūb's sorrow and grief, and the tears which filled his eyes, he became blind. Lexically, whiteness, a physical sign of blindness, is the opposite of the black colour, which is *one* of healthy signs of vision. Thus, the Qur'an, by capitalising on the correlation between whiteness of cornea and blindness, uses euphemism instead of a literal or direct statement of the fact. In addition, suppression of tears may negatively affect one's sight. Yaʿqūb's eyes may have become blind because of the tears abundance resulting from preventing his eyes from shedding tears. وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ 'wa ibyaḍḍat ʿaynāhu' is viewed as a euphemistic alternative expression of blindness. This interpretation may rely on the concept of intratextuality which involves verses 93 and 96 in Yūsuf surah:

اذْهَبُواْ بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَى وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ **بَصِيرًا** وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (93)

Lit. 'Go with this my shirt and lay it over my father's face, **he will become clear-sighted**. Then, bring to me your whole family.'

فَلَمَّا أَن **جَاء الْبَشِيرُ** أَلْقَاهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ **بَصِيرًا** قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللّهِ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ (96)

Lit. 'Then, when the bearer of glad tidings came, he laid it over his face, and **he returned clear-sighted**. He said: "Did I not say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know?"'

The intratextual evidence which indicates that Yaʿqūb regained his sight after it was lost makes the interpretation of blindness more probable. Al-Hamad and Salman (2013, p. 206) support my assumption that the expression وَابْيَضَّتْ

عَيْنَاهُ 'wa ibyaḍḍat ʿaynāhu' is a euphemism substituting blindness. According to them, the pupil, which is responsible for eyesight, and the loss of vision are both related to darkness. I note that they have investigated this euphemism as an individual Qur'anic expression from a scientific perspective, but they have not elaborated how its intended meaning can be grasped through other verses in the Qur'an. Therefore, this study presents more adequate explanation of وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ 'wa ibyaḍḍat ʿaynāhu' as a euphemistic expression by analysing internal textual relationships within the Qur'an. According to Warren's model (1992), blindness is euphemised through employing a colourful metaphoric euphemism.

Based on the above analysis, Sher Ali and Maulana appear to fail to understand the implied meaning and the euphemistic message when translating it as 'and his eyes were filled with tears'. Their free translation implies that Yaʿqūb's eyes tended towards whiteness because of shedding tears. Similarly, Al-Hilali and Khan break down the euphemism when adopting free translation using a direct expression, 'lost his sight'. Free translation, which depends on paraphrase, seeks to reproduce the message of the original at the expense of the euphemistic style (Newmark, 1988, p. 40). By contrast, Pickthall, Yusuf Ali and Abdel Haleem adopt literal translation to preserve the euphemism and its implicit meaning when translating it as 'And his eyes were whitened', 'And his eyes became white' and 'His eyes went white' respectively. These literal translations indicate that وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ 'wa ibyaḍḍat ʿaynāhu' is a euphemistic expression for blindness. Albarakati (2014; 2013) points out that literal translation is frequently pursued in rendering euphemistic examples in the Qur'an into English.

To conclude, Sher Ali and Maulana sacrifice the metaphorical euphemism, while Al-Hilali and Khan seek further to directly convey the meaning at the expense of its style. Those translators may rely on individual words, single sentence, or local context as a self-dependent unit. They may not realise that the verse with euphemism could be understood through semantic relations, co-textual cohesion and linguistic coherence with adjacent verses. Thus, their translations seem to be less convenient, less coherent and less consistent.

Pickthall, Yusuf Ali and Abdel Haleem's translations appear more accurate when depending on internal relations with other verses in the Qur'an.

Death-related Euphemism

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِينَةَ عَلَى حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِي مِن شِيعَتِهِ عَلَى الَّذِي مِنْ عَدُوِّهِ فَوَكَزَهُ مُوسَى فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِين

(15, Al-Qaṣaṣ)

Lit. 'And he entered the city at a time of heedlessness from its people, and he found therein two men fighting; one of his own party and the other of his enemy. And he who was of his party asked him for help against him who was of his enemy, so Musa [Moses] struck him with his fist **and made an end of him.** He said: this is of Satan's doing; verily, he is an enemy, a manifest misleader'

- **Pickthall:** and killed him.
- **Yusuf Ali:** and made an end of him.
- **Maulana:** and killed him.
- **Al-Hilali and khan:** and killed him.
- **Abdel Haleem:** and killed him.
- **Sher Ali:** and thereby caused his death.

Death is an unspeakable topic among most of the world cultures and societies although some cultures have it accepted more than others. Allan and Burridge (1991, p. 153) describe death as 'a fear-based taboo.' People try often to avoid talking about death openly because of the fear of loss. Most death-related euphemisms have religious roots such as انتقل الى جوار ربه 'intaqala ilā jiwār rabihi' **lit**. *he went to his Lord*, and انتقل إلى رحمة الله تعالى 'intaqala ilā raḥmat Allāh taʿālā' **lit**. *he transferred to the mercy of Allah*. Mofarrej and Al-Haq (2015) argue that the most important reason of using and constructing euphemisms is the religious requirement that motivates people to be more polite and decent, and strengthens solidarity in society. Many Islamic beliefs, values and norms direct Muslims to be kind, tolerant and merciful through employing acceptable and appropriate expressions to achieve gracious communication and maintain good relationships with others.

In the above verse, فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ 'fa qadā ʿalīhi' is used as an implicit metaphoric euphemism for the accidental act of killing. When Moses went into Egypt, he found two men fighting. One of them, an Israelite, asked for help, so Moses struck the other man, an Indigenous Egyptian, with his fist causing his death. In Arabic, the root of the verb قضى 'qadā' has various meanings such as *finish* and *end* which suggest a negative connotation, i.e. departure from life. In Arabic, this verb is commonly used as a phrasal verb with the preposition على 'on', i.e. collocation. It is also linked with other words to produce several euphemistic expressions describing death, e.g. قضى عمره 'qadā ʿumrahu' **lit**. *he has spent his life*. In addition, قضى نحبه 'qadā naḥbahu' **lit**. *he has fulfilled his vow* is mentioned as a euphemistic suggestion for a martyr's death in verse *23* in Al-Aḥzāb surah:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَى نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

Lit. 'Among the believers are men who have been true to what they covenanted with Allah. Some of them **have fulfilled their vow**, and some are still waiting; and they have not changed in the least.'

Based on the above analysis of semantic and collocational relationships, the typology of the euphemistic meaning can be classified as a fixed type as opposed to the contextual type (Lee, 2011). Nonetheless, it needs to be interpreted through studying contextual and intratextual associations in the Qur'an. The concept of intratextuality indicates that some textual meaning is shaped via closely strong associations with relevant verses or surahs. Based on that, the euphemism فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ 'fa qadā ʿalīhi' can be interpreted through analysing and understanding surrounding verses in the Qur'an. This unintentional act of killing is spoken of openly when it has been accomplished. Using the verb 'to kill', in verse 19 of the same surah, Al-Qaṣaṣ, elucidates the proposed euphemistic meaning of فَقَضَى عَلَيْهِ 'fa qadā ʿalīhi':

فَلَمَّا أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا قَالَ يَا مُوسَى أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا بِالْأَمْسِ إِن تُرِيدُ إِلَّا أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ

Lit. 'And when he decided to attack the man who was an enemy to both of them, he said: "O Moses, do **you intend to kill me as you killed a soul yesterday**? you clearly intend to be a tyrant in the land, and you do not intend to be of those do right".'

This verse illustrates that Moses found, again, the same Israelite man fighting with another Egyptian man. Here, Moses realised that his tribesman was very aggressive and offensive, so Moses rebuked him sharply. Therefore, the Israelite rebuked Moses and reminded him of his killing another man just the day before. This verse helps translators perceive the euphemistic meaning of قَضَى 'qadā'. Moreover, verse 33 in the same surah, Al-Qaṣaṣ, contributes to recognising this euphemism. When Allah commanded Moses to go before Pharaoh and his nation with signs, and present himself as Allah's Messenger, Moses was afraid because they may put him to death as a response to his previous act, i.e. killing the Egyptian man. In this verse, euphemism is obviously discarded and killing is spoken of openly even by Moses himself.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ

Lit. 'He said: "My Lord, **I killed a person from them**, so I fear they may kill me".

Further, the act of killing committed by Moses is euphemised in verses 14, 19 and 20 in Al-Shuʿrāʾ surah by using less offensive expressions. In verse 14, ذَنبٌ 'dhanbun' 'charge/mistake/crime' is used by Moses as a roundabout term instead of plainly admitting his act of killing the Egyptian man. Moses rightly felt apprehensive that he would immediately be tried for the murder even before he was able to convey Allah's message.

وَلَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ

Lit. **And they have a charge [of murder] against me**, so I fear they may kill me.

Verse 19 makes one rightly wonder if Pharaoh's euphemism is less offensive than a direct expression. In fact, Pharaoh's rather quaint utterance compels us to reconsider the whole rationale of euphemism and its putative value as a polite form of linguistic communication. From a rhetorical

point of view, Pharaoh's euphemism is far more powerful than a direct accusation of murder, i.e. a euphemistic device for a rhetorical purpose. In verse 20, Moses responded to Pharaoh's accusation frankly admitting that he committed the crime of killing through using the same euphemistic expression.

وَفَعَلْتَ فَعْلَتَكَ الَّتِي فَعَلْتَ أَوَ أَنتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ (19)

Lit. **And then you did your deed, which you did**. You were of ungrateful.

قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَا إِذاً وَأَنَا مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ (20)

Lit. He [Moses] said: **I did it** then, when I was of the erring.

Pharaoh's own resource to euphemism when confronting Moses indicates that intratextuality is a helpful tool in Qur'anic exegesis and translation of euphemism. However, Arabic death-related expressions can be reasonably translated into English even though social, linguistic and referential gaps exist in some areas. Thus, different types of equivalence and supplementary additions could be suggested to avoid miscommunication (Farghal, 1993b, p. 27). This additional information may include explication, paraphrasing or annotation (Al-Dulaimi and Aubed, 2012; Altaie, 2010; Mohammed, 2006). I think that the translator can also resort to footnotes or endnotes. Al-kharabsheh (2011) believes that the difference between Arabic and English is that "Arabic tends to utilize more fatalistic language than English does in depicting death and dying" (p. 44). Similarly, Farghal (1993a) claims that fatalism can be obviously observed in the linguistic behaviour of Arabs who frequently use fatalism-laden death terms when referring to death cases.

Based on intratextuality, understanding and translating قَضَى 'qadā' as a euphemism will be easier for the translator. Except Yusuf Ali, all the remaining translators appear to sacrifice the euphemistic style when adopting free translation. Al-Hilali and Khan, Maualana, Pickthall and Abdel Haleem use an offensive word, 'kill'. The euphemism is also lost by Sher Ali when it is translated into 'caused his death'. Those five translators seek to express the interpretive meaning directly regardless of the euphemistic nature. Newmark (1988) states that free translation "reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original" (p. 40). By contrast, Yusuf Ali translates it appropriately using communicative translation which "attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership (Newmark, 1988, p. 47). He captures the euphemistic aspect of the SL term through employing a metaphorical expression 'and made an end of him'. Based on intratextual ties, Yusuf Ali applies a common conceptual metaphor, 'death is the end', which is frequently used in English to mitigate the fear of loss. In this metaphorical schema, death is cognitively considered the final stage of life. According to Warren (1992), metaphor is one of the most predominant strategies to euphemise offensive acts.

Sex-related Euphemism

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُواْ مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلاَّ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ (152 Al-Anʿām)

Lit. 'And do not approach the property of the orphan except with that (way) which is best, until **he reaches his full strength.**'

- **Pickthall:** he reaches maturity.
- **Yusuf Ali:** he attains the age of full strength.
- **Maulana:** he attains his maturity.
- **Al-Hilali and Khan:** he (or she) attains the age of full strength.
- **Abdel Haleem:** they come of age.
- **Sher Ali:** he attains his maturity.

This verse addresses the way in which people deal with orphans in Islam. It warns Muslims not to use the orphans' possessions until they become more mature and capable of taking their own decisions. Here, يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ 'Yablugh ashuddahu' is used to euphemise سن البلوغ or بلوغ الحلم 'bulūgh al-ḥilm' 'sin al-bulūgh', i.e. reaching puberty. It is a period in which adolescents become usually fully-grown physically and mentally, and attain sexual maturity, i.e. wet dreams or menstruation, the biological sign of reaching the age of marriage and capability of reproduction. Consequently, the Qur'an calls for testing orphans if they are able mentally to take the right decision in their properties as verse 6 in Al-Nisāʾ surah states:

وَابْتَلُواْ الْيَتَامَى حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغُواْ النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُم مِّنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُواْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ

Lit. 'And test the orphans until **they reach the age of marriage**; then, if you find in them sound judgment, deliver to them their property.'

In this verse, بَلَغُواْ النِّكَاحَ 'balaghū al-nikāḥ' is a euphemistic alternative for sexual maturity of orphans. It is also an agreeable indication of the adolescents' capability of organism reproduction and sexual intercourse. In this stage, the mental development of orphans should be examined so as to determine to what extent they have become capable of managing their own affairs. In Arabic النِّكَاحَ 'al-nikāḥ' means الزواج 'Al-zawāj', i.e. marriage. The Qur'an uses النِّكَاحَ 'al-nikāḥ' as an indirect substitute for sexual maturity. This idea is also euphemised in verse 34 in Al-ʾisrāʾ surah:

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُواْ مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلاَّ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُواْ بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْؤُولا

Lit. 'And do not approach the property of the orphan except with that (way) which is best, until **he reaches his full strength**, and fulfil the covenant; surely, the covenant will be questioned about.'

Allah warns Muslims not to use the orphans' money, except in a good way for the purpose of improvement, until they become able to act sexually which is an evidential sign of maturity. Then, they are allowed to invest their properties and financial business. This euphemism which refers to bodily and spiritual development of adolescents is also mentioned in verse 22 in Yūsuf surah in which Allah bestows the prophecy upon Yūsuf through wisdom and knowledge when he became more developed physically and mentally.

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Lit. 'And when **he reached his full strength**, We gave him judgment and knowledge, and thus We reward the doers of good.'

The same euphemism is also employed in verses 82, 5, and 67 in Al-Kahf, Al-Ḥajj and Ghāfir surahs respectively to

refer to the peak of people's strength and development which is an indication of sexual practice. For instance, stages of the human life cycle are discussed in verse 67 in Ghāfir surah:

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا شُيُوخًا وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّى مِن قَبْلُ وَلِتَبْلُغُوا أَجَلًا مُّسَمًّى وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

Lit. 'It is He who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clot; then He brings you forth as a child, then **to reach your full strength**, then to become old- though some among you die before- and to reach an appointed term, and you may understand.'

Warren (1992, p. 145) argues that euphemism has usually an ambiguous meaning, so context is very significant in explaining and understating its possible interpretations. Context refers to a given situation or extralinguistic circumstances presented in the text itself or relevant texts which can help in constructing and explaining the intended meaning clearly. If translators depend on the identified contextual ties and intratextual relations amongst verses and surahs in the Qur'an, they can recognise the correct interpretation of يَبْلُغْ أَشُدَّهُ 'yablugh ashuddahu' easily. Translating Arabic sex-related terms into English is problematic for translators because of cultural differences regarding the image of women and sex. This task becomes more complicated in sacred texts such as the Qur'an. يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ 'yablugh ashuddahu' is a metaphorical euphemism employed as a substitution for sexual maturity, i.e. puberty. Al-Hilali and Khan and Yusuf Ali appear to fail to capture the intended meaning of this euphemism when translating it literally into 'he (or she) attains the age of full strength'. From a lexical perspective, the word 'strength' means the state of being physically strong and the capability to deal with difficult situations appropriately, so this literal translation results in the loss of other nuances of meaning, i.e. spiritual and sexual maturation. Newmark (1988) claims that literal translation can be an appropriate method only in case "the SL and TL meaning correspond, or correspond more closely than any alternative" (p. 70). The same euphemism in verse 22 in Yūsuf surah is translated differently by Al-Hilali and Khan, and Yusuf Ali as "attained his full manhood". This shows that context can significantly affect the intended meaning of euphemism, the translator's choices, and adopted translation strategy.

Maulana, Sher Ali and Pickthall have translated the euphemistic expression semantically by using the phrase 'attains/reaches maturity'. The word 'maturity' involves the state of being developed mentally and emotionally and behaving reasonably. They have recognised the euphemistic expression, but they have not conveyed it metaphorically focusing on the functional meaning regardless of its style. Both literal and semantic translations have not addressed this metaphorical euphemism equivalently. Albarakati (2014; 2013) argues that literal and semantic translations are widely applied by translators though they do not reproduce euphemistic meanings in most cases. By contrast, Abdel Haleem uses idiomatic translation when choosing a fixed expression i.e. 'coming-of-age', which means سن الرشد 'sin al-rushd' in Arabic. Newmark (1988, p. 41) claims that idiomatic

translation reproduces the original message of the SL, but it may distort nuances of meaning since the TL fixed expressions and idioms may not exist in the SL. Lexically, 'coming-of-age' is a young person's transition from being a child to an adult at which the change nature is associated with the sexual maturity and emotional development to adulthood, especially menarche and spermarche. This idiom also refers to the age at which someone becomes adult legally, e.g. eligible to vote. Further, it is religiously associated with spiritual responsibilities in Western and Islamic communities such as rights and duties, and praying. All these meanings focus clearly on one aspect i.e. the ability of distinguishing right from wrong. Abdel Haleem may investigate the frequent citations of يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ 'yablugh ashuddahu' in different positions in the Qur'an and recognise the significant role of intratextuality and contextuality which makes his choice more consistent and felicitous.

Sodomy-related Euphemism

وَجَاءهُ قَوْمُهُ يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ هَـؤُلاء بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ (78, Hūd)

Lit. 'And his people came rushing towards him, and before **they used to do evil deeds**. He said: "O my people, here are my daughters; they are purer for you".'

- **Pickthall:** commit abominations.
- **Yusuf Ali:** the habit of practising abominations.
- **Maulana:** doing of evil deeds.
- **Al-Hilali and Khan:** commit crimes (sodomy).
- **Abdel Haleem:** commit foul deeds.
- **Sher Ali:** do evils.

This verse shows the dual function of intratextuality and contextuality in dealing with homosexual-related euphemism. It discusses Lot's dialogue with his people who are described as homosexual. They came quickly with a homosexual desire asking Lot about his handsome guests, i.e. angels, so that Lot offers his daughters for marriage. In this context, السيئات 'al-siyyʾāt' 'evil deeds' is a general term used to refer to a more specific concept, i.e. homosexuality. Similarly, the word سوء 'suū' 'evil' which is morphologically related to السيئات 'al-siyyʾāt' is used in verse 25 in Yūsuf surah when Yūsuf was accused by the Egyptian's wife that he attempted to have six with her. She tried to seduce him, but he rejected her offer. Therefore, she claimed that he shows an evil intention towards her, i.e. trying to have sex with her.

قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا

Lit. She said: What shall be the punishment of one **who intended evil to your wife**?

According to warren's classifications (1992), يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ 'yaʿmalūna al-siyyʾāt' is a metonymic euphemism employed instead of "practicing homosexuality". Based on intratextuality and contextuality notions, Lot's story has been narrated in several Qur'anic surahs. For instance, Lot's offer is euphemistically expressed in verse 71 in Al-Ḥijr surah by using an ellipsis device in place of making mention of sexual intercourse directly. Ellipsis is a linguistic construction in which a certain portion of a sentence is functionally omitted or left out without losing much meaning where contextual clues keep the sentence comprehensible for readers.

قَالَ هَؤُلَاء بَنَاتِي إِن كُنتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ

Lit. 'He said: "Here are my daughters, **if you must do**".'

However, his people rejected to marry his daughters as cited in verse 79 in Hūd surah:

قَالُواْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيد

Lit. 'They said: "You verily know that we have no right to your daughters, **and you verily know what we want**".'

The second part of the verse وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيد addresses in a euphemistic way the homosexual desire of Lot's people. Circumlocution, i.e. the rhetorical use of many words instead of fewer ones, makes their lust vague. Zhao and Dong (2010) indicates vagueness is a main feature of euphemism (pp. 119). In this context, Warren proclaims the importance of context, arguing that euphemisms "are vague since the interpreter can only conclude from circumstantial evidence whether they are intended or not" (1992, p. 145). In Arabic, الخبائث 'al-khabāʾth' and الفاحشة 'al-fāḥisha', i.e. 'abominations and obscenity/indecency" are used as less offensive terms for practising illegal sex. The word 'abominations' implies shameful or detestable actions with disgust or hatred, while the word 'obscenity' or 'indecency' refers to an utterance or act having immoral behaviour, language, or image. Although these words suggest negative implications, they are more acceptable and less disgraceful for describing homosexuality. By the general-for-specific method, the Qur'an uses semantically a general term, i.e. الْخَبَائِثَ 'al-khabāʾth' 'abominations/obscenities', as a euphemism for a specific evil deed, i.e. sodomy. Albarakati (2013) explains that a hypernym, i.e. evil deeds, is used to refer to a hyponym, i.e. practicing homosexuality (p. 157). This metonymic euphemism is cited in verse 74 in Al-Anbiyāʾ surah.

وَلُوطًا آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَت تَّعْمَلُ الْخَبَائِثَ

Lit. 'And Lot, We gave him judgment and knowledge, and We saved him from the town that **did obscenities**.'

Likewise, the words السُّوء 'al-ssuū'' 'evil' and الفاحشة 'al-fāḥisha', i.e. 'obscenity/indecency' are used as a functional collocation in verse 24 in Yūsuf surah to express adultery in a euphemistic way. By this collocational expression, the verse illustrates that God immunes Yūsuf from committing the sin of sexual intercourse with the Egyptian's wife.

كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ

Lit. Thus it was, that We might turn away from him **evil and indecency**.

Lot's story is also mentioned in Al-Shuʿrāʾ and Al-ʾAʿrāf surahs which clearly state that Lot's people practiced their lusts on men rather than women:

أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (165) وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُم مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُم (166, Al-Shuʿrāʾ)

Lit. '**Do you come (sexually to) the males** of all people (165) And you leave your wives whom your Lord created for you? (166).'

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ إِنَّكُمْ (80)

لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ النِّسَاء (81)   (Al-ʾAʿrāf)

Lit. 'And Lot when he said to his people: "**Do you commit the obscenity** which no one in the world did before you? (80) **you come to men with lust rather than women**".'

It is evident that many verses in different positions in the Qur'an describe Lot's people as homosexuals. Intratextu-

ality and contextuality play a crucial role in analysing and understanding the intention of the employed sodomy-related euphemisms in these verses. Hesse (1985) states that the contextual combination of semantic ties and systematic relations within a textual situation is very significant. Similarly, Wang (2013, p. 157) claims that context has a strong relationship with euphemism because it could reduce or expand the purpose and application of the euphemistic meaning. These associated verses can help translators render the annotated sodomy-related euphemisms into English appropriately and help the target audience perceive their intended meanings as well.

Translating sodomy-related terms into English is affected by cultural heritage and social habits which have a huge impact upon accepting or practicing this behaviour. However, Maulana, Sher Ali and Abdel Haleem adopt literal translation when rendering يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ 'yaʿmalūna al-siyyʾāt' as 'doing of evil deeds', 'do evils' and 'commit foul deeds' respectively. These target expressions are similar to the source euphemism because both the SL and TL structures depend on the same semantic formation of euphemism. That is, a general concept, السَّيِّئَاتِ 'al-siyyʾāt' *evil deeds*, *evils*, and *foul deeds*', substitutes a more specific act, sodomy. By contrast, Al-Hilali and Khan fail to maintain the intended meaning of euphemism when using idiomatic translation. When they find that the intended meaning is lost by adopting a collocational idiomatic expression, 'commit crimes', they add a bracketted explanation as a supplementary clarification, 'sodomy'. This addition may present the exact interpretation of euphemism explicitly, but the euphemistic style is sacrificed. However, Pickthall and Yusuf Ali use faithful translation when employing a common term in eastern and western communities, i.e. 'abominations' which symbolically indicates committing a sin in general or any other detestable acts. By faithful translation, they reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the euphemism within the constraints of the TL grammatical structure. This translation allows the target reader to understand the euphemistic intention and the text-realisation in the SL appropriately (Newmark, 1988, p. 46).

To conclude, Maulana, Al-Hilali and Khan, Sher Ali and Abdel Haleem pay more attention to the SL structure through avoiding the taboo of sodomy. This may pose difficulty for the target reader to comprehend the correct interpretation of euphemism. Even though Pickthall and Yusuf Ali employ a TL equivalence, the cultural difference and the diverse social image toward this behaviour in English and Arabic may affect understanding the euphemistic purpose. The recognition of intratextual and contextual relations identified elsewhere in the Qur'an certainly assists in reproducing an accurate translation of this euphemism.

CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study demonstrates that the interpretation and translation of Qur'anic euphemisms can be critically evaluated on the textual level, and go beyond word or sentence levels, through grasping co-textual connections and closely

semantic relationships associated with euphemisms among verses and surahs in the Qur'an. It finds that intratextuality and contextuality play an influential role in analysing and fully understanding the phenomenon of euphemism in the Qur'an. It also shows that translators can depend on relevant verses in the Qur'an to render the original meaning and preserve the euphemistic style in the TL accurately. It is concluded that using only monolingual or bilingual dictionaries, consulting only exegeses, or relying only on the local context regardless of investigating intratextual and contextual ties of euphemisms may yield misunderstanding or misinterpretation of meaning and, hence, mistranslation of euphemisms. For future research, the paper calls for testing the proposed model for the critical evaluation of interpreting and translating Qur'anic euphemisms to examine the interpretation and translation of other figurative expressions in the Qur'an such as metaphor and metonymy.

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