

Problems of Translating Qur'anic Euphemisms: A Comparative Socio-pragmatic Study

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Abstract

The current study aims at investigating through analysis and comparison, the incongruities and the disparities of meaning and style in translating the Qur'anic euphemistic expressions 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 at exploring how the three translators deal with the euphemistic expressions in their renditions of the Holy Quran. This has its crucial significance in achieving a better understanding on the part of the Holy Quran translators and subsequently of English readers in general and for non- Arabic Muslims in particular, where euphemisms are concerned. The main trust of the current study is investigating how far the three translators are accurate in rendering the Qur'anic euphemisms into English based upon the contexts and the interpretive meaning. The present study hypothesizes that Qu'ranic euphemisms are rhetorical aesthetic devices, but, unfortunately remained unattended by the Holy Quran translators. The study has revealed that euphemisms are evident phenomena in the Holy Quran and that the process of rendering them into English is generally problematic for the reasons such as linguistic and cultural diversity. It is hoped that the study will cast light on two important ideas; firstly, that the translators have been aware of euphemistic expressions in translation. Secondly, translators of the Holy Quran have to translate them accurately as they mean in the source text.

Keywords: Qur'anic Euphemisms, Socio-pragmatic, the euphemistic expressions, analysis, comparison, translating, and problems

1. Introduction

It is assumed that the translators of the Holy Quran encounter many cultural and lexical problems and constraints in rendering this Holy Book. These constraints are embedded in the process of rendering the Qur'anic text to the extent that at some stage, translators conclude that it is untranslatable. It is noted that different translations produce different effects on common readers with varying degrees of comprehension of the message of the Qur'ān in general and euphemistic expressions in particular .

The Holy Quran is rich in the euphemistic expressions dealing with sensitive topics such as sex, divorce, death and so on, that need to be translated and examined. Sacredness and beauty of the Holy Quran makes translation of the Qura'nic euphemisms problematic and challenging. In order to convey the accurate and miraculous Islamic values, the translator is forced to use different strategies such paraphrase, partial equivalents, literal translation, functional translation, addition,etc. It also assumed that due to the shortcomings in the translated text it cannot attain the overall semantic value as well to achieve the pragmatic impact that the original text enjoys. These problems arise from different areas such as:

- a. English and Arabic are never sufficiently similar to express the same realities.
- b. The lack of equivalence at word levels.
- c. Euphemistic meanings of words.
- d. The beautiful and eloquent style of the Holy Quran.(In Arabic)

e. Arabic language is richer not only in vocabulary but also in meaning, for example, euphemism is an obvious semantic problems that translators usually encounter in translating the meaning of the Holy Quran into English.

To meet the above-mentioned issues the following research questions are raised to find out to what extent:

1. Does euphemism constitute as one of the main components of translating the Holy Quran into English?.
2. Do the selected translations reflect the euphemistic meanings of the Holy Quran?
3. Do the three translators adopt the strategies to ensure interaction between the translated texts and the Arabic socio-cultural contexts and compensate for the loss?

2. Related Literature:

2.1 The Concept of Translation

The word “translation” is a combination of two Latin expressions “trans” and – “lation” .The meaning of the combined expressions “ translation” is to take somebody across. In other words, translation means that the subject/content presented in the source language (SL) is taken and represented in the target language (TL) without loss of the sense involved in the source language and without much deviation. In due course it may not be out of place to consider the definitions of translation provided by various scholars. According to Venuti (2000, p.30) .

Translation continues to be an invisible practice, everywhere around us, inescapably present, but rarely acknowledged, almost never figured into discussions of the translations we all inevitably read.

This definition reveals that, all living and no-living things are unknowingly translating, whatever is happening all around them, round the clock, wherever they are. Whether we read or listen or speak or write or taste, interpretation and translation are inescapably natural phenomena. Even then this area of study is overlooked all over the world and particularly by the Muslim community for not translating the Message of the Quran as in needed.

A rather simple definition of translation as: *The replacement of textual material (SL) by equivalent textual material in another (TL).*

In the light of this definition which is suggested by Catford,(1990,p.20). In this respect, Catford is more concerned with formal language rules and grammar, rather than the context or the pragmatics of the text to be translated. Nonetheless. He stressed that: *since every language is formally sui-generis, and formal correspondence is, at best, a rough approximation it is clear that formal of (SL) items can rarely be the same.(Catford, 1990,p.36).*

Indeed, form is a vehicle of meaning, and translation consists mainly of transferring the meaning of the (SL) text into the (TL). Hence, translation, according to Nida (1969,p.12).

Consists of reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.

This definition shows a notion of equivalence in translation at the semantic and stylistic levels. It views translation as a reproduction of a similar response of the TL reader by reproducing equivalent meaning and style. In other words, it favors a maximum equivalence of meaning and effect as suggested by Taylor (2002; p.15):

a good translation is one in which the merit of the original is so completely transfused into another language as to be distinctly apprehended and as strongly felt by a native of the country to which that language belongs as it is by those who speak the language of the original.

2.2 The Concept of Euphemisms

Euphemisms constitute an integral part of every language to talk about aspects which would otherwise be face threatening. Bell (1991,p.29) maintains that " a language without euphemisms would be a defective instrument of communication". Up to date, there is no universal agreement about the definition of euphemism. Generally, euphemism is often defined as “substituting an inoffensive or pleasant term for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using kind words” (Neubert & Shreve, (1992 p.4) Many definitions have been given to the concepts of Euphemism. Euphemizing is generally defined as substituting an inoffensive or pleasant term for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby veneering the truth by using kind words. Euphemism is a necessary means of language economy. As Hudson(2000,p.261) opines that:

The extensions of ordinary words and phrases to express unpleasant or embarrassing ideas. The indirectness of the meaning. The words so extended are called euphemism, and some examples are.... pre-ward, and pass away.

In his turn Rawson (1981, p. 1) defined euphemism as: *Powerful linguistic tools that are embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plainspoken, never get through a day without using them.*

Moreover, Wilson (2001, p.67), defined euphemisms as: *Words with meanings or sounds thought somehow to be nicer, cleaner or more elevated and so used as substitutes for words deemed unpleasant, crude or ugly in sound sense.*

Also, in his turn Fowler (1998, p.151) gives a more precise and adequate definition of euphemism as "the use of a mild or vague or periphrastic expression as a substitute for blunt precision or disagreeable truth." Neaman and Silver (1983, p.4) similarly explain that euphemism describes a speaking (or writing) manner "which leans towards indirectness in the service of pleasantness".

Allan and Burridge [1991, p. 14] offer this definition: *Euphemisms are alternatives to dispreferred expressions, and are used to avoid possible loss of face. The dispreferred expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful, or for some other reason have too many negative connotations to felicitously execute speaker's communicative intention on a given occasion.*

Euphemism enables us easily and smoothly and without conflict due to social issues. It is something one cannot ignore in order to maintain safe communication. House (1982, p.5) links euphemism to social motives emphasizing that:

When a word produces a shudder or a blush, or a glint of fear in the eye, it is discarded for an alternative, something less direct, more subtle and sweeter sounding.

He also further states that it is a linguistic evasion of the unpleasant aspects of life and death which has been used in English for an untraceable time (ibid, p.4).

Leech (1981, p.53) gives a semantic meaning to euphemism:

Euphemism is the practice of referring to something offensive or delicate in terms that make it sound more pleasant or becoming than it really is.

He also adds that: *This technique consists of replacing a word which has offensive connotation with another expression, which makes no overt reference to the unpleasant side of the subject, and may even be a positive misnomer*

It is believed that most of these avoided words or phrases are central to our life but they cannot be uttered publicly because they are felt to give actual realization to what they refer to. Thus, whenever there is a taboo against speaking about certain subjects, it is certain that such prohibited subjects are difficult, important, and central to our own lives. In so many societies, for example, death is something feared, but it is not forbidden to talk about, hence there are a number of euphemisms that have been created to deal with this subject Weizhang and Shujuan, 2006, p.17).

To conclude that the distinctive relationship that connects euphemism to taboo, taboo issues stimulate the evolution of euphemism. Badldinger et al (2001, p.479) depict this relation by giving the definition for euphemism as "expressions (words or phrases) used to replace taboo words or avoid unpleasant subjects." It reveals what topics or things are considered taboo so that the society where they are used can move forward to find replacements that are milder and more acceptable alternatives. There is an agreement, in their dictionaries, between the definition of R Martin and Rose (2007) where euphemism is defined as "the use of a word which is thought to be less offensive or unpleasant than another word" and it "is a mild and agreeable expression for the disagreeable thing", respectively. Thus, he went to his return and pass away are milder than 'die'

2.3 The Etymology of euphemism

No wonder euphemism is such a topic of interest in the study and description of natural languages, as it poses special problems both in semantics theory and semantic applications, such as translation in general and translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an in particular. Here, the translator will encounter oblivious difficulty when s/he tries to convey the intended meaning of the euphemistic expressions because s/he will be confused by the various meanings and senses of the expressions.

There is, perhaps, no better description of the meaning and role of euphemisms. The word "euphemism" was first put forward by George Blunt in 1580s. The word "euphemism" comes from the Greek euphēmismós(*eu*, "good," and phēmē's, "speech" or "saying,") and thus means literally "to speak with good words or in a pleasant manner." More clarification is given by McCarthy (1991,p,189) about its morphology; euphemism, euphemistic, and euphemize. The word 'euphemize' is derived from the Greek word 'euphē'mizein', to use expressions of good omens or to speak favorably. He adds that eu, well+a c/f of 'phanai' to speak so that derivative euphē'mismos comes euphemism. Euphemism means, according to Steiner (1998,p,330), the replacement of a favorable expression for a more accurate but offensive one. The word 'accurate', as it is thought, reflects its fact being religious since the verb 'phemi', to speak, is in the imperative form to warn the worshippers to utter no words but accurate and befitting terms when in the temple, (Bryant,1948,p.332). This point indicates the first and the original motivation, being religious, behind the use of euphemistic expressions in language.

3. Methodology

3.1 research approach

In the current study the researcher used descriptive qualitative methods. Secondly, text analysis design was to find euphemistic expressions in English translation of the meanings of the Holy Quran. The Qur'anic translations explored in the study are:

- (i) Mohammed A.S Abdel Haleem (2005)(a native Arabic speaker),
- (ii) Mohammed M.Pickhall(1997(a native English speaker), and (iii) Mohammed Muhsin Khan and Mhammed Taqi Al-Din Al-Hilali(1996)(a native speaker of neither Arabic nor English).

3.2 Data Collection and procedures

The current research aims at describing, analyzing and evaluating the principles, methods and procedures of translating the meaning of the Holy Quran, and particularly, explaining the problems of translating euphemistic expressions in three translations of the meaning of the Holy Quran .The objective of the current research is the establishment of the basic and secondary meaning of euphemistic expressions and their derivations in the translation of the meaning of Holy **Quran**. The most vital and crucial research instrument is reading, analyzing and comparing the translated text of selected Surrah by the three different translators. This study is an eclectic, three translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an have been analyzed and identified as the different kinds of translation, i.e. semantic translation, communicative translation etc. When analyzing the three translations, the researcher followed the following procedures:

- a. Quoting the Arabic versions of Quranic ayat in which euphemistic expressions under investigation occur, enumerating euphemistic expressions in both versions Arabic and English ,and then putting the three translations of the same ayah into a table directly under each one of the three translators.
- b. Studying euphemistic expressions in terms of the problems of meaning and textual problems based on (strong/mid/weak) connotation.
- c. Analyzing euphemistic expressions aspects of meaning focusing on some selected ayahs in which euphemistic
- d. Expressions appear in the Holy Quran , here the researcher chooses some examples for the context particularly in which either euphemistic expressions appear.
- e. Analyzing Abdel-Haleem, Khan and Hilali and Pickthal's translations and identifying their accuracy, effectiveness, and then giving comments on the three translations.

4. Results and Discussions

Regarding the analysis of the collected data, some Quranic ayahs have been selected by the researcher. The selected ayahs contain some euphemistic expressions .The analysis of the of the data was carried out by utilizing comprehensive tables displaying : SL texts, TL text, meaning, types of methods, Furthermore, the analysis of the data has been devoted to euphemistic expressions and the way each selected translator used them. However, all ayahs have not been analyzed in this thesis due to the limitations of the current study. Then, only the translations that appear give different meanings from what have established have been explored. Finally, in case of having effective renderings, which coincides with the religious interpretation, it will be chosen as a proposed rendering; otherwise a new rendering will be suggested.

4.1. Examples of euphemistic expressions in the Holy Quran Translation

• Example 1

{(المنافقون:5) وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَوَّأُ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ

Waitha qeela lahum taAAalaw yastaghfir lakum rasoolu Allahi lawwaw ruosahum waraaytahum yasuddoona wahum mustakbiroona

The trilateral root **lām wāw yā** (ل و ي) occurs in 3 Surahs and appears 5 times in the Qur'an, in 3 derived forms.

ST (euphemism)	T1 Abdel-Haleem	T2 Khan and Hilali	T3 Pickthall
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَوَّأُ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ (المنافقون:5)	. They turn their heads away in disdain when they are told, 'Come, so that the Messenger of God may ask forgiveness for you,' and you see them walking away arrogantly. (Al-Munaafiqoon:5)	And when it is said to them: "Come, so that the Messenger of Allah may ask forgiveness from Allah for you", they turn aside their heads, and you would see them turning away their faces in pride. (Al-Munaafiqoon:5)	And when it is said unto them: Come! The messenger of Allah will ask forgiveness for you! they twisted their head and thou seest them turning away, disdainful. (Al-Munaafiqoon:5)

Discussions

The meaning of this ayah is:To state that the hypocrite may the curses of Allah be upon them, are used to averting, most arrogantly neglecting this call and in conceit belittling that to which they are invited . (Tafisir Ibn Kathir (Abridge) Volume (4)2315.

That is, they not only refuse to come to the Messenger to seek forgiveness, but also on hearing the invitation they shake their heads with arrogance and pride, and remain adamant, thinking that it would be disgraceful for them to approach the Messenger to seek forgiveness. This is a clear sign that they are not believers <http://quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/tafheem/sura63-aya5.html#tafheem> Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali's renditions for the euphemistic expression lawwaw ruūсахum لَوَّأُ رُءُوسَهُمْ are adequate in conveying the intended meaning and producing the same equivalent in the TT(target text).Their rendering is (They turn their heads away in disdain). (they turn aside their heads) respectively. Hence, their translation has mild connotation. Pickthall rendered it into(they twisted their heads),fittingly, the translator tried to find the accurate and more appropriate equivalent for the verb lawwaw لَوَّأُ .Hence, their translation has strong connotation

Type of translation	Strong connotation	Mild connotation	Weak connotation
Tr(1)communicative method		+	
Tr(2)communicative method		+	
Tr(3)communicative method	+		

Also deserving of our attention, here, is the two translators' involvement in understanding and rendering the euphemistic expression lawwaw ruūсахum لَوَّأُ رُءُوسَهُمْ which they rendered as that a kind of head tilt(لها إمالة), but different in degree of tilt, aside(جانبا) or (away بعيدا) . Moreover, the two translators used the same idiomatic expression(turn one's head) which means (arrogance or vanity) to produce the same equivalent in target language(TL). Furthermore, Pickthall rendered it into(they twisted their heads),fittingly, the translator tried to find the accurate and more appropriate equivalent for the verb lawwaw لَوَّأُ .

To approach the meaning of (شدة امالة الرؤوس) Pickthall rendered it into (twisted) which is considered a "a closer equivalent" to the verb (لَوَّأُوا). Pickthall's rendition pinpoints great accuracy or precision, but perfect equivalence of the Qur'anic euphemisms is a fundamental problem.

Type	Semantic translation			Communicative translation		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
No. of Translation						
T(1) They turn their heads away in disdain					+	
T(2) they turn aside their heads					+	
T(3) they twisted their head				+		

Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali as well as Pickthall used the communicative method which hits average degree of translational coincidences but in Pickthall's rendition hits high degree,

• Example:2

لَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ (لقمان:18)

Wa laa tusa'-'ir khaddaka linnaasi wa laa tamshi fil ardi maarahan innal laaha laa yuhibbu kulla mukhtaalin fakhoor

The trilateral root **ṣād 'ayn rā** (ص ع ر) occurs in 1 Surah and appears 1 time in the Qur'an, in 1 derived form as a verb., The translation below is a brief gloss intended as a guide to meaning. The word *tusa'-'ir* (تُصَعِّرُ) may have a range of meanings depending on context.

ST (euphemism)	T1 Abdel-Haleem	T2 Khan and Hilali	T3 Pickthall
لَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ (لقمان:18)	Do not turn your nose up at people, nor walk about the place arrogantly, for God does not love arrogant or boastful people. (Luqman:18)	"And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster. (Luqman:18)	Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk, nor walk with pertness in the land. Lo! Allah loveth not each braggart boaster. (Luqman:18)

Discussions

The meaning of this ayah is: 'Do not turn your face away in arrogance and in despite of people when speaking to them or when they speak to you. Rather handle them gently and let your countenance be cheerful when meeting them; as it is recorded in *the Hadith* that the Messenger of Allah(PBUH) said: "... even if it is only by greeting your brother with a cheerful countenance; and beware of letting your lower garment trail below your ankle, for this is a kind of boasting, and Allah likes boasting."

In verse 18, it was said: وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ (And do not turn your cheek away from people). The expression: لَا تُصَعِّرُ (la tusa"ir) is a derivation from: صَعَرَ (sa' ara) which is a disease among camels that causes a tilt in the neck similar to the stroke among human beings that makes the face become crooked. It carries the sense of turning one's face away (in disdain). Thus, the verse means: 'do not turn your face away from people when you meet them and talk to them for it is a sign of avoidance and arrogance and very much against the norms of gentle manners.'

Abdul-Haleem, Khan and Hilali as well as Pickthall have monotonously tackled the euphemistic meaning of the word: *tuṣā‘ir* (تُصَعِّرُ). Abdul-Haleem rendered it into (Do not turn your nose up at people) and Khan & Hilali's rendition is (And turn not your face away from men with pride), however, Pickthall's rendition is (Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk). Moreover, the three translators resort to connotation in their renditions of the euphemistic meaning of the word: *tuṣā‘ir* (تُصَعِّرُ). Hence, their renditions for the euphemistic meanings of the intended lexeme is accurately rendered into English. Also, the three translators used the euphemistic expression (Do not turn your nose up), (And turn not your face away) and (Turn not thy cheek) respectively, which means (أي إشاحة الأنف و الخد و الوجه بعيدا). { the sense of turning one's nose, cheek and face away (in disdain) }

The euphemistic expression implies the attitude of a person who shows arrogance and vanity, turns his nose, cheek and face away and treats others with scant respect. *Mukhtal* (مُخْتَال) in the original implies a person who has an over-high opinion of himself, and *fakhr* (فَخُور) is the one who boasts of his superiority over others. A man becomes haughty and arrogant and vain in his gait only when he is puffed up with pride, and wants that others should feel his superiority. (slamicstudies.info/reference.php?sura).

The three translators have successfully rendered this euphemism through semantic translation which hits high degree of translational coincidences with the interpretation.

No. of Translation	High	Average	low	High	Average	Low
T (1) Do not turn your nose up at people	+					
T (2) And turn not your face away from men with pride	+					
T (3) Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk,	+					

The three translators are adequate in rendering the intended connotative and euphemistic meaning (وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ (And do not turn your cheek away from people).) when they render it as ((Do not turn your nose up), (And turn not your face away) and (Turn not thy cheek) respectively). Hence, their translation has strong connotation.

Type of translation	Strong connotation	Mild connotation	Weak connotation
Tr(1) semantic translation	+		
Tr(2) semantic translation	+		
Tr(3) semantic translation	+		

To conclude, Abdel-Haleem, Abdul-Haleem, Khan and Hilali as well as Pickthall have accurately translated (euphemistic expression (وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ) through semantic translation which is the most suitable strategy as it captures the SL linguistic trait without causing damage to the intended meaning. According Newmark (2008.p.78):

semantic translation requires the translators to replicate the original form from the SL to the TL as much as possible. It regards the original words and phrases as sacred, even if there are some ambiguities and errors in the original text. Semantic translation generally applies to literature, scientific and technical literature, and other genres that treat the original language and contents as important as the translated ones.

In other words, the three translators' renditions perform the same function in their renderings (Do not turn your nose up), (And turn not your face away) and (Turn not thy cheek) respectively as far as this text is concerned.

• Example 3

(ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ) (فاطر: 13)

zaalikumul lahuu Rabbukum lahul mulk; wallazeena tad'oona min doonihee maa yamlikoona min qitmeer

The trilateral root **qāf ṭā mīm rā** (ق ط م ر) occurs in 1 Surah and appears 1 time in the Qur'an, in 1 derived form as the noun *qit'mīr* (قِطْمِيرٍ).. The word *qit'mīr* (قِطْمِيرٍ) may have a range of meanings depending on context

ST (euphemism)	T1 Abdel-Haleem	T2 Khan and Hilali	T3 Pickthall
ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ (فاطر: 13)	Such is God your Lord: all control belongs to Him. Those you invoke beside Him do not even control the skin of a date stone; (Faatir:13)	Such is Allah your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmir (the thin membrane over the date-stone). (Faatir:13)	Such is Allah, your Lord; His is the sovereignty; and those unto whom ye pray instead of Him own not so much as the white spot on a date-stone. (Faatir:13)

Discussions

The meaning of this ayah is {Such is Allah your Lord} meaning, the One Who has done all of this is the Almighty Lord besides Whom there is no other deity. The word *qit'mīr* in the original means the thin skin that covers the stone of the date-fruit; but what is meant to be said is that the gods of the mushriks do not own anything whatever. That is why we have translated it "a blade of grass", which is an insignificant thing. To approach the meaning of euphemistic word (*qit'mīr*) in this ayah, Abdel-Haleem Abdel Haleem translates (*qit'mīr*) correctly as he uses the words (the skin of a date stone). Khan and Hilali used brackets to add or clarify idea of (the thin membrane over the date-stone) together with transliteration (a Qitmir). Although Khan and Hilali used bracketed information where they refer to the word *qit'mīr* it may be confusing to the reader. Moreover, the euphemistic word '*qit'mīr*' is translated as 'white spot on a date-stone' in Pickthall. " which seems to be appropriate translation equivalent of (*qit'mīr*)

Here the euphemistic expression refers to "the white spot on a date-stone" which in itself is a symbol of poverty. What is meant by the ayah is poverty and the euphemism expressed is the white spot on a date-stone. In the ayah, there may be a substitution of a pleasant and an agreeable lexeme (*qit'mīr*): the white spot on a date-stone) for an offensive one (الفقر [the] poverty)..

Type	Semantic translation			Communicative translation		
	High	Average	low	High	Average	Low
T (1) the skin of a date stone	+					
T (2) a Qitmir (the thin membrane over the date-stone)			+			
T(3) the skin of a date stone	+					

The three translators used semantic method which hits high degree of Translational Coincidences with the Interpretation in Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall's renderings, but it hits low in Khan and Hilali's renderings because of using transliteration in their rendering of "*qit'mīr*" Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall are more adequate in rendering the euphemistic word "*qit'mīr*" when they render it as (the skin of a date stone or the white spot on a date-stone) which makes the sense of Message clearer. Hence, their translation has strong connotation. On the other hand, Khan and Hilali are less adequate in rendering. Hence, their translation has mild connotation.

However, contextually, their rendition is appropriate and clear if the receptor or the TL readers are familiar with the word قَطْمِير qit'mīrin". As Khan(2008,p98) opines:

Running translation meeting the expectations of the receptor of the Message in T, that is, English, remaining faithful to the content of the Holy Qur'an in its Arabic context.

Type of translation	Strong connotation	Mild connotation	Weak connotation
Tr(1) semantic translation	+		
Tr(2) semantic translation		+	
Tr(3) semantic translation	+		

To include that, the three translators' rendering of seems quite natural in its context and definitely adds to communication and comprehension. All translation methods have successfully rendered this euphemism, with Hilali & Khan combining their translation with an explanatory note, telling the reader directly about the intended meaning of the text at hand.

As Khan(Ibid,p.98) opines:

Short explanatory notes, where needed, only for better comprehension of the true sense of the Message, and no subjectivity under the pretext of commentary.

• **Example:4**

{ تَمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَتَمَطَّى } (القيامة: 33)

Thumma thahaba ila ahlihiyatamatta

The trilateral root **mīm ṭā wāw** (م ط و) occurs in 1 Surah and appears 1 time in the Qur'an, in 1 derived form, as the form V verb *yatamaṭṭā* (يَتَمَطَّى). The word (يَتَمَطَّى *yatamaṭṭā*) is an euphemistic word, which may have a range of meanings depending on context.

ST (euphemism)	T1 Abdel-Haleem	T2 Khan and Hilali	T3 Pickthall
تَمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَتَمَطَّى (القيامة: 33)	Then walked to his people with a conceited swagger. (Al-Qiyamah: 33)	Then he walked in conceit(full pride) to his family admiring himself (Al-Qiyamah: 33)	Then went to his folk with glee (Al-Qiyamah: 33)

The meaning of the ayah(Then he walked in conceit(full pride) to his family admiring himself (Al-Qiyamah: i.e delightful, imprudent , obstinate, and indolent, having no interest or any desire to do other than his boastful walk. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir volume. 4,2007: 2427).

The three translators' usage of an adverb (then) in the beginning of the rendered ayah by is better rendering which maintains syntactic continuity through an anaphoric reference. Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall also omitted the subject pronoun (he) in their rendering but it used by Abdel-Haleem. The subject pronoun (he) is used only by Khan and Hilali which makes their renderings sounds better than Abdel-Haleem and Pickthall's renditions .

The use of the subject pronoun (he) is just important because it is one of syntactic, morphological and semantic part of the u intended ayah. Abdel-Haleem rendered the lexeme ahlihi أَهْلِهِ as(his people), whereas Khan and Hilali's rendering was(his family).Also Pickthall rendered the same lexeme into (his folk). Folks is definitely less formal, and more colloquial in use.

According to Oxford English Dictionary the word(folk)means(*informal* treated as plural People in general. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/folk>. Moreover, Abdel-Haleem rendered ahlihi أَهْلِهِ into (his people) which is formal but it may confuse the comprehension . According to Oxford English Dictionary the word(people) means(One's parents or relatives.).

Furthermore, Khan and Hilali's rendered ahlihi أَهْلِهِ into(his family) According to Oxford English Dictionary the word (family) means: (A group of people related by blood or marriage <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/family> Therefore, Khan and Hilali's rendition is contextually appropriate and more expressive unlike the two other translators. To approach the meaning of euphemistic expression (يَتَمَطَّى yatamaṭṭā) in the second part ayah. All the three translators used the semantic method which hits average degree of translational coincidences with the Interpretation, in. Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali because their translation is applicable to the real interpretation of (يَتَمَطَّى yatamaṭṭā) as in Tafsir Ibn Katheer, and Al-Al- Jalalayn .Whereas, it hits low degree of translational coincidences with the interpretation in Pickthall's rendition.

The three renditions differed in selecting the accurate and appropriate euphemistic expressions which may convey the intended meaning of (يَتَمَطَّى yatamaṭṭā) explicitly. Abdel-Haleem's rendering is (with a conceited swagger), but ,Khan and Hilali selected(walked in conceit(full pride) and Pickthall's rendition is(with glee).Moreover, both Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali's rendition conveyed the real meaning of arrogance. Furthermore, , the three renditions approached the Quranic euphemistic expressions and it conveyed its meaning into English . Whereas, they opt to conclude that The Holy Quran uses a lofty language; the expressions used are very eloquent and concise and some terms are ellipted. This style is Quran-specific and cannot be transferred to English. In order to transfer the original meaning clearly, the translator has to analyze and interpret the meaning and then render it according to the style of the target language. Lie also has to add some explanatory information in the target text in order to compensate for the ellipted terms and produce an obvious and complete meaning. Otherwise, the whole task will be pointless.

Type	Semantic translation			Communicative translation		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
T(1) Then walked his people with a conceited swagger.		+				
T(2) Then he walked in conceit(full pride) to his family admiring himself		+				
T(3) Then went to his folk with glee			+			

The three renditions differed in selecting the accurate and clearer euphemistic expressions of (يَتَمَطَّى yatamaṭṭā) which may convey the explicitly. Abdel-Haleem's rendering for the connotative and euphemistic meaning (with a conceited swagger).Hence, his translation has average connotation. Furthermore, Khan and Hilali selected (walked in conceit (full pride) for the same connotative and euphemistic meaning. Hence their translation has average connotation as well. Whereas, Pickthall's rendition is (with glee) for the same connotative and euphemistic meaning. Hence, his translation has weak connotation.

Method of Translation	Strong connotation	Mild connotation	Weak connotation
T(1) Semantic method		+	
T(2) Semantic method		+	
T(3) Semantic method			+

To conclude, Abdel-Haleem as well as Khan and Hilali resort to Strong connotation in their renditions of euphemistic expressions of (يَتَمَطَّى yatamaṭṭā), which are the best in comparison with Pickthall's renditions , who resort to weak connotation.

• Example 5

{ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا (النساء: 77) }

(qul mataAAu alddunya qaleelun waalakhiratu khayrun limani ittaqa wala tuthlamoonaa fateelan)

The trilateral root **fā tā lām** (ف ت ل) occurs in 2 Surahs and appears 3 times in the Qur'an, in 1 derived form as the noun *fatīl* (فتيل). The word (*fatīlan* فتيلًا) is a euphemistic word, which may have a range of meanings depending on context.

ST(euphemism)	T1 Abdel-Haleem	T2 Khan and Hilali	T3 Pickthall
قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا (النساء: 77)	Say to them, 'little is the enjoyment in this world, the Hereafter is far better for those who are mindful of God; you will not be wronged by as much as the fibre in a date stone (An-Nisaa:77)	The hereafter is far better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to a scaly thread in the long slit of a date –stone. (An-Nisaa:77)	the Hereafter will be better for him who wardeth off (evil); and ye will not be wronged the down upon a date-stone. (An-Nisaa:77)

The meaning of the ayah is: surely, for them { 'little is the enjoyment in this world } meaning, what is enjoyed of the word is almost nothing for it is doomed to ruin and destruction. (when compared to that of Paradise) { The Hereafter } meaning, Paradise { is (far) better for him who fears Allah } by avoiding His Punishment by abandoning and avoiding committing any acts of disobedience. (Tafsir Al-Jalalyan: volume. 1 2009:293). { and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to a scaly thread in the long slit of a date –stone. } for any of your good deeds, but it will be that you will be rewarded bountifully for them. This promise would rather focus the interest of the believers in the Hereafter than in the life of this world, and to encourage them to perform Jihad (fight in the Cause of Allah). Al-Hassan recited : { Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world..." } He then said: "May Allah rest the soul of he who passed his life observing that. Surely, the like of the whole life is the likeness of someone who slept and dreamt of something that he liked every much then he got awakened." (Tafsir Ibn Kathir volume. 1,2007: 346)

The meaning of (*fatīlan* فتيلًا) is the specks of a date-stone. This is a euphemistic expression which means the least (a very small). All the three translator (Abdel-Haleem, Khan and Hilali and Pickthall) mention the euphemistic expression ignoring the intended meaning. In other words, the translation didn't convey the intended meaning because the three translators go for the main meaning or denotative meaning of the lexemes as to be empty and uses (free). Furthermore, the three translators used a literal translation for the lexeme (*fatīlan* فتيلًا) which carries a connotative meaning which they translators ignore. The result is an incompressible phrase and inaccurate rendition. Moreover, the three translator's renderings of (euphemistic expression) suffer from the effects of literal translation which is often also culturally foreignising and also their renderings are not connotatively equivalent as mentioned earlier. If this euphemistic expression was rendered connotatively into English, respondents would probably have understood the meaning clearly and they would not have selected literal translation and cultural differences as reasons for incomprehensibility.

To approach the meaning of euphemistic expression is **fatīlan** فتيلًا (based on *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn and Tafsir Ibn Kahir*) in the ayah, all the three translators used the communicative method which hits average degree of translational coincidences with the interpretation.

Type No. of Translation	Semantic translation			Communicative translation		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
T(1) wronged by as much as the fibre in a date stone					+	
T(2) scaly thread in the long slit of a date –stone.					+	
T(3) wronged the down upon a date-stone	a				+	

The clause " not be wronged the down upon a date-stone "in Pickthall's rendering for euphemistic expression *fatīlan* فتيلاً may prove a bit skewing and confusing for a young receptor or may be misinterpreted . However , Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali's rendering makes it clear through lexical expansion, that is, " be wronged by as much as the fibre in a date stone/ to a scaly thread in the long slit of a date –stone." Respectively. Moreover, this lexical expansion used by Abdel-Haleem and Khan and Hilali is quite distinctive of the choices of Pickthall. Furthermore, the words like, "wardeth" is not common in contemporary usage. In other words, such lexical items prove archaic for the younger receptor of the Message, whereas the choices like ' fears' and 'mindful of God' are appreciated.

All the three translators are unadequate in rendering the intended euphemistic meaning of (is *fatīlan* فتيلاً) when they render it as (upon a date-stone.). Their translations do not capture the denotative and connotative shades of meaning of the Arabic word (*fatīlan* فتيلاً) Hence, their translations have weak connotation.

Method of Translation	Strong connotation	Mild connotation	Weak connotation
T(1) literal translation			+
T(2) literal translation			+
T(3) literal translation			+

To conclude, the translators have to try their best to remain faithful to the historical and cultural elements of the original sacred text even if annotations are needed and they may seemingly hamper the naturalness of the translated text. It is an accepted fact that a translator, however skilled, cannot produce a translation as natural as the original.

5. Conclusion

5. 1 Summary of the findings

On the bases of the theoretical part and data analysis, the current study has come up with the following conclusions:

1. Translating Qur'anic euphemisms is even more arduous than translating Euphemisms in other genres because the religious genre, to which the Holy Quran has, more connotative meanings and therefore, universality of terms does not prevail". This is however in contrast to scientific terms, which" may be universal and thus entails one-to-one correspondence.
2. Translating euphemistic meanings in the Quranic texts is not quite easy. This is because Qur'anic Euphemisms involve very subtle differences in meaning that are difficult to grasp.

3. Cultural differences; Quranic cultural expressions are rendered through either transliteration or literal rendering. The translators neither analyze the terms and aspects of the Holy Quran nor do they find the closest or best equivalent in the target language to conjure up the same image.
4. The Holy Quran cannot be literally translated because Arabic lexemes and expressions often have more than one literal meaning, and are, more often, used figuratively. Moreover, many Arabic constructions contain subtle shades of meaning which cannot be expressed in another language. Therefore, any translation of the Holy Quran is essentially a mere explanation, paraphrase, or interpretation of the meaning of the source text.

5.2 Implications And Suggestions for Future Research

Integrating this study, and other similar studies, into the course of Translation teaching in Arabic and English course in Arab universities, this may enhance the students' translational performance; the application of the knowledge of translational techniques and strategies to concrete texts.

The results of the current study call for future research on analyzing the problems involving translating, collocations, euphemisms and lexical ambiguity in the Holy Quran. This future research could be applied not only to Arabic and English, but also to other languages, which are genetically unrelated. Additional research is needed to explore, euphemisms's reference to two translations of the meaning of the Hadith.

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