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Zeynab Fallah; Afsaneh Ghanizadeh

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International Journal of Textual and Translation Analysis in Islamic Studies (TTAIS) is a double blind peer reviewed electronic quarterly publication concerned with appropriate aspects of Islamic terminology. TTAIS is an open access publication, which publishes of original research papers, review papers, case reports, and short communications across the fields of Islamic terminology.

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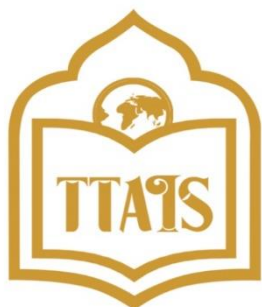
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- Methodology of translating Islamic texts and terms;
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Table of Contents

Volume 1, Issue 4 - Serial Number 4, October 2023

1	A Study of Qur’ānic Proverbial Verses and Their Translations in English	327-350
	Samad Mirza Suzani	
2	Assessing the Quality of Hidden Proverbs Translation in the Holy Qur’ān: Human vs. Artificial Intelligence English Translations	351-367
	Fatemeh Rajabi Fakhrabadi; Ebrahim Davoudi Sharifabad	
3	Translation Strategies for Rhetorical Questions in the Qur’ān: A Comparative Analysis of Arberry and Asad Using Molina and Albir’s Model	368-399
	Mahdi Habibolahi	
4	Persian and English Renderings of Cultural-Specific Terms in the Holy Qur’ān: An Adequate Translation Perspective	400-413
	Samad Mirza Suzani	
5	A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Sermons from Nahj al-Balagha: A Translation Quality Assessment of Seyyed Ali Reza’s English Translation	414-438
	Maryam Seyyedi; Ebrahim Davoudi Sharifabad	
6	The Contribution of Argumentation to Learning Approach, Inference, and Interpretation: The Case of Seminary Education at the Islamic Propagation Office (IPO)	439-458
	Zeynab Fallah; Afsaneh Ghanizadeh	



A Study of Qur'ānic Proverbial Verses and Their Translations in English

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ABSTRACT

The Holy Qur'ān, considered a miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family), is rich in stylistic and rhetorical structures, figures of speech, and cultural references that convey its profound concepts in the Arabic language. This sacred scripture employs a distinctive rhetoric, specifically proverbial expressions, which can present challenges in translation. This study aimed to examine various English translations of proverbial verses from the Qur'ān based on Baker's (1992) model. Out of 245 proverbial expressions in the Qur'ān, 100 were randomly selected and analyzed along with their English translations by Pickthall (1930), Irving (2011), Saffarzadeh (2010), Asad (1980) and Shakir (1980). The findings indicated that the most commonly used translation strategy was the omission of idiomatic play (literal translation), while translating an idiom with a similar meaning and form to the source language was the least frequent. Additionally, it was found that a literal translation with added explanatory notes was the most suitable strategy for translating proverbial verses. However, overall, the study revealed that due to various factors, including cultural disparities, the translators struggled to capture all the aesthetic and captivating elements of the Qur'ānic proverbial verses in their translations.

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1. Introduction

Many individuals worldwide, both Muslim and non-Muslim, show great enthusiasm for reading the Holy Qur'ān. Given that the Qur'ān is deeply rooted in Arabic and Islamic culture, translators of the Qur'ān must possess a thorough understanding of the Arabic language, culture, and Islam. They should consult various dictionaries, reference books, theologians, scholars, and Qur'ānic commentaries to accurately interpret the words and convey the intended meaning. The challenge lies in ensuring that the translation captures the unique essence of the Qur'ān, as readers with diverse ideologies, beliefs, and backgrounds may interpret it differently. Therefore, the translation of the Qur'ān is a complex task that requires meticulous attention to detail due to the sacred nature of the text. Additionally, Qur'ānic proverbs reflect Islamic culture, Arab traditions, actions, and beliefs. These proverbial verses are intrinsic to Arabic culture and Islamic traditions, containing valuable insights, teachings, notifications, and warnings. Indeed, the Holy Qur'ān contains a total of 245 proverbs that are commonly used in everyday speech and were compiled by ancient Islamic scholars. Handling these verses can be challenging due to the sanctity of the Qur'ān on one hand and the intricate nature of idioms and proverbs on the other. Some examples of these proverbs include:

صُمُّكُمْ عَمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (بقره، ١٨)

Deaf, dumb, and blind, they will not return [to the path]. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 18)

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا (بقره، ٢٨٦)

On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 286)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ (آل عمران ، ٣)

Every soul shall have a taste of death. (Surah Ali 'Imran: 185)

Given the examples provided, the Holy Qur'ān is rich in cultural expressions, and the disparities between Arabic and English languages and cultures can pose challenges during the translation process, particularly when dealing with figures of speech and cultural elements like proverbs. This study aims to explore how translators approach verses where proverbs play a crucial role in understanding the intended meanings. Additionally, alternative translations or English equivalents of the relevant verses, based on authoritative Qur'ānic interpretations, will be presented. The goal is to enhance translators' understanding of the meanings and messages conveyed in the verses and to transform some verses into common proverbs that resonate with people, utilizing strategies commonly employed in proverb translation. Furthermore, the study seeks to introduce translators and interested readers to potential English equivalents for Qur'ānic proverbs that may not be widely recognized by the general audience. The study aims to address the following questions:

- ✓ What strategies do translators of the Holy Qur'ān employ when translating verses containing common proverbs?
- ✓ Are there suitable English equivalents for translating Qur'ānic proverbs effectively?

1. Review of literature

1.1. Theoretical background

The Oxford Learner's Dictionary (2017) defines a proverb as a well-known phrase or sentence that offers advice or expresses a generally true statement. Ghazala (1995) describes proverbs as special, fixed phrases with unchanging meanings that represent the history and culture of a nation, serving as didactic tools conveying wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional perspectives (Mieder, 2004). Nida (1985) highlights that proverbs are unique metaphoric expressions, emphasizing the importance for translators to understand proverbial concepts in both the source language (SL) and target language (TL) by recognizing their similarities and differences. Rowland (1926) emphasizes that proverbs are memorable, enrich vocabulary, and exemplify the idiomatic expressions of a foreign language. Baker (2011) explains that idioms and fixed expressions, including proverbs, are rigid language patterns that offer limited variation in form. Despite their apparent transparency, the meaning of a fixed expression or proverb transcends the literal interpretation of its individual words. Baker (2011) further notes that non-native translators often struggle to match the nuanced understanding of idiomatic expressions that native speakers possess, particularly in determining when and how to manipulate idioms effectively. The challenges posed by idiomatic and fixed expressions for translators lie in accurately recognizing and interpreting idioms and conveying the nuanced meanings they carry in the target language (Baker, 2011).

Baker (1992, p. 65) has outlined six strategies for translating idioms, fixed expressions, and proverbs, which are as follows:

a) Using an idiom in the target language that mirrors the meaning and form of the source-language idiom: This strategy involves selecting an idiom in the target language that closely matches the meaning of the source-language idiom and includes equivalent lexical items. Achieving this level of correspondence is challenging and may only be possible on rare occasions.

b) Using an idiom in the target language with a similar meaning but different form from the source-language idiom: It is often feasible to identify an idiom or fixed expression in the target language that conveys a similar meaning to the source idiom but employs different lexical items.

c) Borrowing the source-language idiom: Similar to the incorporation of loanwords for culture-specific items, borrowing idioms in their original form from the source language is a common practice in certain contexts.

d) Translation through paraphrasing: This method is frequently employed when an exact match is unavailable in the target language or when using idiomatic language in the target text may not align with stylistic preferences due to differences between the source and target languages.

e) Translation by omitting the play on an idiom: This approach involves conveying only the literal meaning of an idiom in a context that allows for a straightforward interpretation, disregarding any playful or figurative language use.

f) Translation by omitting the entire idiom: In some instances, an idiom may be entirely omitted from the target text, similar to omitting a single word. This omission may occur due

to a lack of close equivalents in the target language, challenges in paraphrasing the meaning, or for stylistic considerations.

When translating proverbs, it is essential for the translator to be well-versed in the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of both languages. Non-linguistic features, such as cultural nuances, play a crucial role in conveying the intended meaning of a proverb within a specific context. Therefore, translating a proverb requires careful consideration to ensure that the cultural conventions embedded in the original proverb are preserved. Dabaghi et al. (2010) emphasize that translating a proverb solely based on the literal meanings of its words from a dictionary is not sufficient and may overlook the deeper cultural implications conveyed by the proverb.

1.2. Empirical background

Given the unique rhetorical beauty and elegance of the Holy Qur'ān, the proliferation of English translations has raised concerns about potential misrepresentations, misinterpretations, and textual discrepancies in conveying Islamic concepts, principles, and cultural norms. Whissell (2004) conducted an analysis of an English translation of the Qur'ān, focusing on word usage patterns, emotional language, and style using computational tools and the Dictionary of Affect in Language. The study revealed that the translation prominently emphasized themes related to Allah, His Prophets, His Message, and Believers based on word frequency. In terms of emotional tone, the translation exhibited a slightly less active and concrete style compared to everyday English, with a notable presence of negatives and a lack of rare or lengthy words. Variations in emotion, style, and word usage were observed between early and late surahs (chapters) in the Qur'ān, with a distinct inflection point identified in the Meccan surahs.

Horri (2007) explored the linguistic challenges in translating the Qur'ān as a literary text, examining the resistance encountered in translating its subtle linguistic and complex rhetorical elements. The study juxtaposed arguments for and against translating the Qur'ān, delving into the methods employed in literary translation. Through the analysis of Qur'ānic instances from various Persian and English translations, including considerations of phonology and rhetoric such as alliteration, minimal sets, wordplay, rhyme, and rhythm, the study concluded that while the Qur'ān's linguistic intricacies may not be entirely untranslatable, they remain resistant to translation. Al-Salem (2008) investigated the translation of Qur'ānic metonymies by evaluating five different translations of the Holy Qur'ān. The study focused on thirty examples representing various types of metonymies from Surah Al-Baqarah, translated by Pickthall, Arberry, Al-Hilali and M. Khan, Ghali, Abdalhaq, and Aisha Bewley. Through a linguistic analysis and comparison, the study assessed the accuracy and intelligibility of the translations, concluding that a literal translation method is most effective for rendering Qur'ānic metonymies. While literal translation preserves both the direct and indirect meanings of metonymy, linguistic and cultural constraints may pose challenges. The study highlighted the importance of footnotes in Qur'ān translations to provide essential background information for bridging cultural gaps and ensuring a correct understanding of the text.

Akbari, Yazdani, and Ghamkhah (2011) conducted a study on the transference of simile components in Persian and English translations of the Qur'ān. The research compared translators' strategies in rendering the figurative language of the Qur'ān by analyzing all the similes present in the text. Using chi-square analysis, the study examined the changes in similes during the translation process into Persian and English to assess the significance of

differences in transferring simile components. The findings indicated that while some alterations occurred in the transference of simile components, there was no significant difference between the partial point of similarity and explicitation strategies in Qur'ān translation.

Mohaghegh and Ketabi (2012) explored the vitality of metaphors in the Qur'ān, which were revealed over 1400 years ago, by analyzing their presence in three English and three Persian translations of the Qur'ān. The study revealed that out of 70 metaphors examined, approximately 32.85% were classified as live metaphors, around 67.14% as moribund, and none as completely dead. The translations predominantly treated moribund metaphors as dead, resulting in the omission of their imagery and failing to capture the metaphorical and literary essence of the original text. Najjar (2012) delved into the challenges of translating metaphors in the Qur'ān, focusing on English speakers' comprehension of selected Qur'ānic metaphors from three prominent English translations. The study also identified potential sources of misunderstanding Qur'ānic metaphors. The research concluded that debates surrounding faithful versus dynamic translation approaches have yielded insightful explanations but have not led to a consensus on the most effective translation methods for Qur'ānic metaphors.

Arab and Farshchiyan (2012) addressed the topic of literal allegories in the field of Qur'ānic sciences by reviewing the translation of literally allegorical verses in seven Persian translations of the Qur'ān, including works by Ayati, Dehlavi, Fuladvand, Mojtabavi, Meshkini, Naser Makarem Shirazi, and a group translation. The study examined discrepancies in allegorical verses, such as lexical variations and disagreements regarding the number and composition of these verses. The translators' attention to maintaining consistent translations was also evaluated. The findings revealed that many translators did not give sufficient consideration to translating allegorical verses, with the group translation by Mohammad Ali Rezaee Isfahani and colleagues being identified as more successful in this regard. Kiani and Tohidi (2012) explored the paraphrasing of Qur'ānic proverbs by drawing on nuanced paraphrases derived from the teachings of the Innocent Imams. The study focused on the careful and subtle rephrasing of Qur'ānic proverbs to elucidate their meanings.

Ali, Brakhw, Fikri Bin Nordin, and Shaik Ismail (2012) identified linguistic challenges in translating the Holy Qur'ān from Arabic into English. The study highlighted lexical, syntactic, and semantic difficulties encountered in the translation process, supported by examples from Qur'ānic verses. Abdulwahid (2013) investigated the translation of idioms in the Glorious Qur'ān into English, aiming to demonstrate how translators handle verses where idioms are integral to understanding the meanings. The study found that in many cases, translators provided inaccurate translations by rendering Qur'ānic idioms literally. The study recommended revising these translations idiomatically to enhance comprehension for English-speaking readers.

Al-Hamad and Salman (2013) conducted a study on the translatability of euphemisms in the Holy Qur'ān, focusing on the challenges of translating Qur'ānic euphemistic expressions into English in the works of Ali, Hilali and Khan, Pickthall, and Arberry. The research collected 23 euphemistic expressions from various surahs of the Holy Qur'ān, categorizing them based on the mechanisms of lexical euphemism: substitution and deletion, as well as the topics requiring euphemism. Evaluation of the translations centered on criteria related to meaning and euphemism, revealing that euphemism is prevalent in the Holy Qur'ān and that its translation into English poses difficulties due to linguistic and cultural differences.

Translators were observed to prioritize conveying direct meanings over preserving euphemistic nuances.

Halimah (2014) sought to assess five different English translations of the Qur'ān using concepts, principles, and norms as parameters for analysis. The study highlighted the need for a standardized explanatory translation of the Qur'ān that is authoritative in form and content, emphasizing the importance of a mechanism to facilitate the creation of such a version for use across the English-speaking world. Jassem (2014) critically evaluated Al-Hilali and Khan's translation of the Holy Qur'ān, identifying grammatical, lexical, stylistic, and discursal errors resulting from language transfer, overgeneralizations, ignorance of rule restrictions, and language loyalty issues. The study concluded that while the translators aimed for factual accuracy and linguistic fidelity in their English rendition, the translation was overly literal and lacked practical value. Moradi and Mohammad Sadeghi (2014) investigated the strategies employed in translating culture-bound elements in three English versions of the Holy Qur'ān, focusing on terms related to Islamic law. The study analyzed the Arabic text of the Qur'ān and its English equivalents in translations by Shakir (1980), Yusuf Ali (1996), and Pickthall (1996), particularly in Chapter 30. The research highlighted the challenges posed by cultural differences in translation, underscoring the complexities faced by translators and linguistics scholars. Al Azzam, Al Ahaydib, and Al Huqail (2015) explored cultural issues in Qur'ān translation, specifically addressing culture-bound expressions. The study selected nine verse examples to examine the cultural aspects of the Qur'ān and the challenges associated with translating culture-specific elements.

Anari and Sanjarani (2016) conducted a study to analyze the translation strategies employed by three translators with varying ideological backgrounds when dealing with Qur'ān-specific cultural items. The research utilized Baker's (1992) theoretical model for translating culture-specific items and found that many Qur'ān-specific cultural items were translated using more generic terms, resulting in the loss of their specific cultural significance. The most commonly used strategy was "Translation by more general word (superordinate)," while "Translation by paraphrase using an unrelated word" was the least utilized strategy. Additionally, the translators did not employ translation by omission or translation by illustration at all.

Despite the presence of culture-specific items in Qur'ānic proverbial verses and the cultural gap between the source and target texts, there is a lack of specific studies addressing the translation of Qur'ānic proverbial verses as a challenging aspect in Qur'ānic translation studies. This study aims to investigate the strategies employed in translating Qur'ānic proverbs, analyze the frequency of these strategies, and examine the availability of English equivalents for these proverbs.

3. Methodology

3.1. Materials

In this study, three authoritative reference books were utilized: *Proverbs of the Qur'ān* by Ali Asghar Hekmat (1981), *Tafsir al-Mu'in* by Mohammad Huwaydi (1998), and *Tafsir Noor* by Mohsen Qara'ati (1999) as key interpretations. Additionally, five translations of the Holy Qur'ān were examined, translated by renowned scholars including Pickthall (1930) in *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (referred to as R1), Irving (2011) in *The Qur'ān: The Noble Reading* (referred to as R2), Saffarzadeh (2010) in *The Holy Qur'ān* (referred to as

R3), Asad (1980) in *The Message of the Qur'ān* (referred to as R4), and Shakir (1980) in *The Holy Qur'ān* (referred to as R5).

3.2. Data collection and analysis

The present study involved several key procedures. Initially, the Holy Qur'ān in Arabic served as the primary source of data collection. Out of the 245 proverbial verses in the Holy Qur'ān, a random selection of 100 proverbs along with their English translations by Pickthall (1930), Irving (2011), Saffarzadeh (2010), Asad (1980), and Shakir (1980) was made. The selected verses were then analyzed based on authoritative interpretations, forming the basis for the analysis of the target language (TL) text. The English translations of these verses, guided by Baker's (1992) model for translating idioms and proverbs, were compared and contrasted, with the frequency of each translation strategy being documented. In cases where no accurate translation was available, new translations were attempted based on the insights gained from the analyses. In this study, Baker's (1992) six strategies for translating idioms and fixed expressions, including proverbs, were applied as follows:

- ✓ Utilizing an idiom with a similar meaning and form to the source language (SL) idiom;
- ✓ Employing an idiom with a similar meaning but a different form from the SL idiom;
- ✓ Directly borrowing the source language idiom;
- ✓ Translating through paraphrasing;
- ✓ Omitting a play on an idiom in the translation;
- ✓ Omitting the entire idiom in the translation.

4. Findings

Out of the 245 proverbial verses in the Holy Qur'ān, a random selection of 100 proverbs, along with their English translations by Pickthall (1930), Irving (2011), Saffarzadeh (2010), Asad (1980), and Shakir (1980), was analyzed. The following section presents a selection of proverbial verses along with the corresponding findings.

Example #1 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 18):

صُمُّكُمْ عَمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿2:18﴾

The verse refers to hypocrisy which prevents mankind from understanding the Truth, Divine Knowledge, and Wisdom. So, God says that hypocrites are “صُمُّكُمْ عَمِّي” which means that anyone who does not benefit the bounties and the gifts of God in Right is as someone who is not blessed. They are deaf (not hearing the truth), dumb (not telling the truth), and blind (not seeing the truth) because they are stubborn fanatics (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Deaf, dumb and blind; and they return not.

R2: Deaf, dumb and blind, they will never respond!

R3: [They are] Deaf, dumb and blind, so they will not return [to the Path from their Darkness]

R4: deaf, dumb, blind - and they cannot turn back.

R5: Deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they will not turn back.

Based on Mona Baker's model all translators used a proverb with similar meaning and form from TL to translate the proverb. There are some proverbs in English that can be an equivalent to the proverb "صُمُّكُمْ عَمِّي" like: "There's none so deaf as those who will not hear", or "There's none so blind as those who will not see", which in both of them, "will not" has the force of "does not wish to" or "refuse to".

Example #2 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 156):

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿2:156﴾

The verse is the motto of the patient in hard time and calamity. They take refuge in God instead of losing their selves (Qara'ati, 1999). The proverb is recited by Muslims when a person experiences a tragedy or disaster in life, especially upon hearing the news of a person's death. It is like a consolation and condolence. The proverb also may be recited in a situation that invokes risk of any sort, or when they are troubled or frightened (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010).

Translations in English:

R1: we are Allah's and lo! Unto Him we are returning.

R2: We belong to God, and are returning to Him!

R3: Verily, to Allah we belong and to him We shall return.

R4: Verily, unto God do we belong and, verily, unto Him we shall return.

R5: Surely, we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return.

According to Mona Baker's model all the 5 translators translated the proverb literally.

No English equivalent was found for the proverb.

Example #3 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 195):

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ﴿2:195﴾

The verse means not to go to destruction and ruin with our own hand. The proverb warns and stops people from doing any extremes (excess and wastage) in any aspect of their life. It also orders people to be moderate in charity. One must not spend or do charity to extent that it will make him/her miserable, poor, and empty-handed (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: and be not cast by your own hands to ruin;

R2: yet do not expose yourselves to ruin through your own hands.

R3: And do not Throw yourselves into destruction [by Not spending your wealth in the Path of Allah.

R4: and let not your own hands throw you into destruction;

R5: and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands.

According to Mona Baker's model all of the translators except Saffarzadeh translated the verse literally; but Saffarzadeh translated it by paraphrasing. There are some English equivalents for the Arabic proverb "وَلَا تُفْلِقُوا بَأْيْدِكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ", such as "Don't put your hands in the lion's mouth"; "Look before you leap"; "Never wade in an unknown water", and "No safe wadding in an unknown water". All of the mentioned English equivalents are similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb. But they are not acceptable equivalents in this context.

Example #4 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 249):

﴿2:249﴾ كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً

The verse means that the great number of enemies is nothing against the will of God. Although the qualitative forces are small, they are superior and better than the quantitative force (Qara'ati, 1999). The proverb is used when a difficult task like removing a person or a group from a strong position can't be done quickly but it should be achieved gradually, by small steps, and a little at a time.

Translations in English:

R1: How many a little company hath overcome a mighty host.

R2: How often has a small detachment defeated a larger detachment.

R3: How often a small group Overcome a big host.

R4: How often has a small host overcome a great host.

R5: How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host.

Based on Mona Baker's model all of the translators translated the proverb literally.

The English proverb "a righteous few can defy great evil" is an acceptable English equivalent for the Qura'nic proverb in this context. There are other English equivalents for the proverb "كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً" like, "Little strokes fell great oaks"; "Great oaks from little acorns grow"; "A small leak will sink a great ship"; "A small cloud can hide the sun and the moon", and "Little fellow are often great wits". All of the mentioned English

equivalents are similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb. But they are not acceptable equivalents in this context.

Example #5 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 260):

وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي ﴿2:260﴾

The Holy Quran attributes the heart as a place for confidence, peace, and serenity. Confidence exists within the heart and is considered a property of the heart. This proverb is often used when individuals seek reassurance and aim to enhance their certainty and belief. Faith is believed to have various degrees and steps, with the heart serving as the center of tranquility (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: but (I ask) in order that my heart may be at ease.

R2: but just to set my heart at ease.

R3: but only my heart may be at rest.

R4: so that my heart may be set fully at rest.

R5: but that my heart may be at ease.

According to Baker's model, Asad almost used a proverb with the similar meaning and form to translate the Qur'ānic proverb. The other translator translated the proverb literally. There is an English equivalent for the proverb “وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي” which is “Peace of mind”, which means the absence of mental stress or anxiety, and it is similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb. Also, there are phrases in the Bible like: “Believe with all your heart”, and “Set our hearts at rest”, which the former is similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb, and the latter is similar in form and meaning with the Qur'ānic proverb. All English proverbs are acceptable equivalents in this context.

Example #6 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 286):

لَا يَكْلِفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ﴿2:286﴾

The proverb means that Divine's task is not more than human power and potency. Islam is an easy religion and not a rigor or harsh one (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope.

R2: God only assign a soul something it can cope with.

R3: Allah does not put a task on a person beyond his ability.

R4: God does not burden any human being with more than he is well able to bear.

R5: Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability.

Based on Baker's model, Pickthall and Saffarzadeh translated the proverb literally; but Irving, Asad, and Shakir translated the proverb by paraphrasing. The English proverb "He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear" is an acceptable English equivalent for the Qur'ānic proverb in this context. Other English equivalents for the proverb "لَا يَكْلِفُ" are: "God makes the bag to the burden"; "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb", and "God sends cold after cloth". All of the mentioned English equivalents are similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb. But they are not acceptable equivalents in this context.

Example #7 (Surah Ali 'Imran, 185):

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ﴿3:185﴾

The verse points out that all God's creatures are equal in death. Even His prophet Muhammad (PBUH&HF&HF) is not safe in the face of death (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010). Death is not failure; it is a transition from this world to Hereafter. At death every soul will be summoned by the God Almighty (Qara'ati, 1999). The proverb is recited when someone dies and the news of his death is announced.

Translations in English:

R1: Every soul will taste of death.

R2: Every soul will be tasting death.

R3: Every man shall taste death eventually.

R4: Every human being is bound to taste death.

R5: Every soul shall taste of death.

According to Baker's model all of the translators translated the proverb literally. The English equivalents for the proverb "كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ" are: "Death is no respecters of person", and "Death and grave makes no distinction". All of the mentioned English equivalents are similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qur'ānic proverb which the former is more acceptable in this context.

Example #8 (Surah Al-Ma'idah: 99):

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ ﴿5:99﴾

The verse emphasizes that the Messenger's responsibility is solely to convey the message of religion and faith, without any coercion or enforcement. The Prophet (PBUH&HF) is not affected by whether people accept or reject the religion (Qara'ati, 1999). This proverb is often used when people disregard warnings given to them. Throughout history, messages were typically delivered by human envoys, such as messengers sent between opposing camps in times of war. If the message was unwelcome, the recipient might direct their frustration towards the messenger who delivered the news. In this context, the messenger

declares, “مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ”, meaning that the blame or punishment should not be directed at them for the message they conveyed as they are simply messengers.

Translations in English:

R1: The duty of the messenger is only to convey (the message).

R2: The Messenger has only to proclaim matters.

R3: The Messenger's duty is but to convey the Message.

R4: No more is the Apostle bound to do than deliver the message [entrusted to him].

R5: Nothing is (incumbent) on the Apostle but to deliver (the message),

According to Baker's model all of the translators translated the proverb literally.

The phrase “That's all I can say” can be an English equivalent for the Qur'ānic proverb “مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ”, but it isn't an acceptable equivalent in this context. Also, in English there are some metaphoric phrases used to describe the act of blaming the bearer of bad news like:

“Shooting the messenger”,

“Killing the messenger”,

“Attacking the messenger”,

“Blaming the bearer of bad tidings”.

Example #9 (Surah Al-An'am: 160):

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا ﴿٦:١٦٠﴾

In Islam, encouragement comes with a tenfold reward. God bestows His grace upon individuals as a reward and administers justice as a form of punishment. The verse signifies God's promise to reward individuals in the Hereafter for their virtuous deeds in this world. It implies that those with good intentions will receive a reward at least ten times greater than their virtuous actions. This proverb emphasizes the significance of charity and encourages people to be charitable (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Whoso bringeth a good deed will receive tenfold the like thereof,

R2: Anyone who comes with a fine deed will have ten more like.

R3: [on the Resurrection Day] Whoso comes with a good deed, he shall have ten the like of it as his rewards.

R4: Whoever shall come [before God] with a good deed will gain ten times the like thereof;

R5: Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it.

According to Baker's model, all the translators, except Saffarzadeh, rendered the proverb literally, while Saffarzadeh opted for a paraphrased translation. English also has proverbs relating to charity, such as "He gives twice who gives quickly" and "Charity covers a multitude of sin." Although these English proverbs share similar meanings to the Qur'ānic proverb mentioned, their forms differ, making them unsuitable equivalents in this context.

Example #10 (Surah Al-A'raf: 31):

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ﴿٣١﴾

Eating and drinking are inherent to human nature, but it is important for individuals to practice moderation and balance in both. It is essential for humans to maintain a moderate approach in all aspects of life, including economics, expenditures, relationships, eating habits, resting patterns, and more, rather than adopting extreme or fanatical behaviors (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010). This proverb emphasizes that excessive spending and overeating can lead to various physical and mental ailments and promote cruelty. True blessings lie in moderation, and God favors those who practice thrift. Enjoying food and material possessions should be done without resorting to extravagance (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Eat and drink, but be not prodigal.

R2: Eat and drink, yet do not overdo things.

R3: Eat and drink [from Allah's bounties]; but do not be extravagant.

R4: And eat and drink [freely], but do not waste.

R5: Eat and drink and be not extravagant.

According to Baker's model, all the translators rendered the text literally. There are English equivalents for the Qur'ānic proverb "كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا" that emphasize moderation and thrift, such as: "Moderation in all things"; "More than enough is too much"; "Safety lies in the middle course"; and "Enough is as good as a feast" which convey the message that one should not indulge excessively (Proverb Hunter.com). While these English equivalents share similar meanings, they have different forms compared to the Qur'ānic proverb and may not be suitable in this context.

Example # 11 (Surah Al-A'raf: 179):

أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ﴿١٧٩﴾

Human-like animals possess eyes and ears. However, the true value and purpose of utilizing the blessings bestowed by God should be superior to that of animals; otherwise, one can be likened to an animal or even lower. A person who, despite having the ability, fails to use these divine blessings appropriately, is deemed to be below a creature devoid of such blessings. The essence of humanity lies in comprehending and fulfilling religious education and responsibilities (Qara'ati, 1999). This saying pertains to individuals who lack

understanding of humanity and are consumed by base desires such as eating, sleeping, lust, and anger, living like animals or worse (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010).

Translations in English:

R1: These are as the cattle - nay, but they are worse!

R2: Those persons are like livestock; in fact, they are even further of the track.

R3: They are like cattle; no, they are more astray.

R4: They are like cattle - nay, they are even less conscious of the right way.

R5: They are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors.

According to Baker's model all of the translators except Asad translated the proverb literally but Asad translated it by paraphrasing. No English equivalent for the Qur'anic proverb was found.

Example #12 (Surah Hud: 114)

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ﴿١١٤﴾

The proverb illustrates that human actions have repercussions on one another, implying that a single positive deed, such as prayer or charity, can negate a negative deed (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English

R1: Lo! Good deeds annul ill-deeds.

R2: Good deeds remove evil deeds.

R3: Verily, the good deeds of man [such as performing prayers] will cause to remove his evil deeds.

R4: Verily, good deeds drive away evil deeds.

R5: Surely good deeds take away evil deeds.

Based on Baker's model, all translators, with the exception of Saffarzadeh, rendered the proverb literally, while Saffarzadeh opted for a paraphrased translation. The English counterpart to the Qur'anic proverb, "Charity covers a multitude of sins", closely aligns in both form and meaning with the original proverb, making it a suitable equivalent in this context.

Example #13 (Surah Yusuf: 28):

إِنَّ كَيْدَكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

In this verse, the cunning of women is deemed significant; while Satan's temptation is covert and unseen, women's temptation is characterized by charm, love, and continuous verbal persuasion. The proverb cautions against associating with impure women and emphasizes the need to be wary of their deceptive tactics, which can be perilous (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Lo! The guile of you is very great.

R2: Your wiles are serious!

R3: Verily, strong is your guile.

R4: Verily, awesome is your guile!

R5: Surely your guile is great.

According to Baker's model all of the translators translated the proverb literally. There are English equivalents for the proverb "إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ" which are: "Women are the snares of Satan" and "There is no devil so bad as she-devil". Both phrases warn about women and their tricks and they are similar in meaning but dissimilar in form with the Qura'nic proverb and they are not acceptable equivalent in this context.

Example #14 (Surah Ibrahim: 12):

فَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ حَافِظًا وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿12:64﴾

The proverb "فَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ حَافِظًا" advises not to rely solely on material possessions and external factors, no matter how abundant they may be. Instead, place your trust in God, as He is the ultimate protector. Embrace life's events with unwavering faith in God's incomparable mercy (Qara'ati, 1999). This proverb is often used when bidding someone farewell for a journey, wishing them a safe trip and divine protection (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010).

Translations in English:

R1: Allah is better at guarding, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

R2: God is the best Guardian and the most Merciful of Mercy-granters.

R3: But Allah is the Supreme guardian and He is the Supreme Mercy-Bestower.

R4: But God's guardianship is better [than yours], for He is the most merciful of the merciful!

R5: But Allah is the best Keeper, and He is the most Merciful of the merciful ones.

According to Baker's model all of the translators translated the proverb literally. The English equivalent for the proverb is "Godspeed" which is an expression of good wishes or good luck to a departing person or a person beginning a journey and it is similar in form and

meaning with the Qur'ānic proverb and can be an acceptable equivalent in this context (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010).

Example #15 (Surah Ar-Ra'd: 11):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ﴿13:11﴾

God protects men from unexpected events, not from events they deliberately and intentionally create themselves. This proverb implies that God does not withdraw His blessings and favor unless people fail to appreciate them. Therefore, one should not rely on luck or external forces, as one's destiny and fate are ultimately in their own hands (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts.

R2: God does not change what any people may have until they change whatever they themselves have.

R3: Verily, Allah will not change the good and the bestowed condition of a people until they change what is in themselves [from good to evil]

R4: God does not change men's condition unless they change their inner selves.

R5: Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition.

According to Baker's model, all translators, except Saffarzadeh, rendered the proverb literally, while Saffarzadeh chose to paraphrase it. The English equivalents for the proverb include: "God helps those who help themselves", "Every man is the architect of his own fortune", and "You get what you deserve". The proverb "God helps those who help themselves" closely aligns in form and meaning with the Qur'ānic proverb and is an appropriate equivalent in this context. On the other hand, the second and third English equivalents share a similar meaning but differ in form from the Qur'ānic proverb. "Every man is the architect of his own fortune" can also serve as an acceptable equivalent, whereas "You get what you deserve" is not suitable in this context.

Example # 16 (Surah Ar-Ra'd: 28):

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿13:28﴾

The remembrance of God, as indicated by "ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ" goes beyond mere verbal repetition. It requires genuine faith and devotion, not just lip service. Remembrance of God is crucial in all circumstances, particularly during times of wrongdoing (Qara'ati, 1999). It serves as a source of peace and serenity, prompting individuals to recite proverbs to alleviate distress and turmoil and to find solace for their hearts.

Translations in English:

R1: Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest!

R2: Surely hearts feel tranquil whenever God is mentioned.

R3: [O Prophet] Be sure that real tranquility for the hearts rests in Allah's Remembrance, [regarding one's intention and action]

R4: For, verily, in the remembrance of God [men's] hearts do find their rest.

R5: Now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest.

According to Baker's model all of the translators except Saffarzadeh translated the proverb literally but Saffarzadeh translated it by paraphrasing. No English equivalent was found for the Qur'anic proverb.

Example #17 (Surah Ar-Ra'd: 43):

كَفَى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ﴿١٣:٤٣﴾

Having faith in God's guidance and safeguarding is the ultimate defense against disbelief and scorn. At times, the weight of a single affirmation surpasses numerous denials. The proverb suggests that familiarity with the Divine Book elevates one's status to the extent that their testimony is akin to God's own witness (Qara'ati, 1999). It signifies that God and those knowledgeable about the Divine book are sufficient to bear witness between us.

Translations in English:

R1: Allah, and whosoever hath knowledge of the Scripture, is sufficient witness between me and you.

R2: God suffices as a Witness between me and you.

R3: Sufficient as a Witness between me and you is Allah.

R4: None can bear witness between me and you as God does.

R5: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you.

In Baker's model, Irving, Saffarzadeh, and Shakir provided a literal translation of the proverb, while Pickthall and Asad opted for a paraphrased version. In English, the expression "As God be my witness", which invokes God to affirm the truth of a statement, bears a resemblance in both form and meaning to the Qur'anic proverb, making it an appropriate equivalent in this context.

Example #18 (Surah Al-Isra: 11):

وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا ﴿١٧:١١﴾

Haste can be likened to a plague that infects human thoughts and actions. While it is a natural inclination for many individuals, it is crucial to discern when and where to employ

it (Qara'ati, 1999). Human beings are inherently inclined towards impatience and greed. It is important to distinguish between haste and speed in one's actions. Haste is often viewed as vulgar and scorned, considered a taboo. Conversely, acting swiftly in acts of charity is commendable and acceptable. This proverb serves as a reminder to caution against rushing into decisions (Mohammadi Borazjani, 2010).

Translations in English:

R1: For man was ever hasty.

R2: Everyman has been so hasty!

R3: Since man is a hasty being.

R4: For man is prone to be hasty [in his judgments].

R5: And man is ever hasty.

In Baker's model, all translators, with the exception of Asad, rendered the proverb literally, while Asad opted for a paraphrased translation. Various English proverbs cautioning against haste, such as "Haste makes waste", "More haste less speed", "Make haste slowly", and "Haste is from the devil" all highlight the negative outcomes of acting hastily. While these English proverbs convey similar meanings to the Qur'ānic proverb, they differ in their linguistic form. None of these English equivalents are deemed suitable replacements in this particular context.

Example #19 (Surah Al-Isra: 27):

لَئِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ ﴿١٧:٢٧﴾

The wasteful individual is likened to the devil's companion, not under his control or servitude. Engaging in extravagance is a realm beyond the devil's influence, representing a collaborative effort between the devil and the wasteful individual. This association positions the wasteful person as akin to the devil's sibling. Misusing wealth and resources is considered a devilish deed, devoid of generosity or compassion. Rather than being praised or esteemed, the extravagant should be viewed with disdain (Qara'ati, 1999). This proverb serves as a poignant reminder that indulging in extravagance is not only unacceptable but also aligns with devilish behavior.

Translations in English:

R1: Lo! The squanderers were ever brothers of the devils.

R2: Spendthrifts are the devil's brethren.

R3: Verily, the squanderers are the brothers of the devil.

R4: Behold, the squanderers are, indeed, of the ilk of the satans.

R5: Surely the squanderers are the fellows of the Shaitans.

In Baker's model, all translators opted for a literal translation of the proverb. While there is no direct English equivalent for the Qur'ānic proverb, there are English proverbs and phrases that caution against wastefulness, such as "Willful waste makes woeful want" and "Waste not, want not".

Example #20 (Surah Al-Isra: 81):

جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا ﴿١٧:٨١﴾

The preservation of truth and the eradication of falsehood are fundamental principles ordained by the Divine, even though the proponents of truth are few while the advocates of falsehood are plentiful. Truth endures eternally and steadfastly, akin to water, while falsehood is fleeting and perishable, akin to foam. This proverb serves as a reminder not to fear the temporary appearance or manipulation of falsehood, as truth will inevitably prevail and be revealed (Qara'ati, 1999).

Translations in English:

R1: Truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished away. Lo! Falsehood is ever bound to vanish.

R2: Truth has come and falsehood vanished; falsehood is so perishable!

R3: Truth succeeded and falsehood perished, surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.

R4: The truth has now come [to light], and falsehood has withered away: for, behold, all falsehood is bound to wither away!

R5: And say: The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished; surely falsehood is a vanishing (thing).

In Baker's model, all translators chose to translate the proverb literally. The English equivalent for the proverb is "In the long run, truth will out" or "truth will come to light", which conveys a similar meaning but differs in form from the Qur'ānic proverb. This English equivalent signifies that truth cannot remain hidden indefinitely, although it is not a direct match in this context.

5. Discussion

Upon analyzing the translations of the proverbial verses by Pickthall, Irving, Saffarzadeh, Asad, and Shakir, it is evident that the majority of them rendered the verses in a literal manner.

Table 1 shows the percentage of each translation strategy applied by translators to the 100 chosen proverbial verses. Notably, strategies b, c, and f were unused. Pickthall predominantly opted for literal translation in 87% of verses, with 9% paraphrased. Irving followed a similar pattern with 84% literal and 12% paraphrased. Saffarzadeh used literal translation in 58% and paraphrased 40%. Asad translated 64% literally and 31% paraphrased, while Shakir leaned towards literal translation in 82% and 15% were paraphrased. The nuances of the Qur'ān's linguistics pose challenges in translating proverbial verses, compounded by differences in language, culture, beliefs, and customs

between Arabic and English. The use of literal translation for most proverbial verses may not effectively convey their figurative essence. Potential reasons include a failure to recognize the proverbial nature of the verse, absence of equivalent English expressions, or unsuitability of English equivalents in context. Some suggested English equivalents may not be fitting for the sacred context of the Qur'ān and could mislead readers.

Table 1. Strategies for translating proverbial verses' frequency

Strategy	Description	Translator				
		Pickthall	Irving	Saffarzadeh	Asad	Shakir
A	Using an idiom of similar meaning and form of SL one	4	4	2	5	3
B	Using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form of SL idiom	-	-	-	-	-
C	Borrowing the source language idiom	-	-	-	-	-
D	Translation by paraphrase	9	12	40	31	15
E	Translation by omission of a play on an idiom (literal translation)	87	84	58	64	82
F	Translation by omission of entire idiom	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	100	100	100	100	100

In exploring the research question *Which strategies do translators of the Holy Qur'ān use for translating proverbial verses?* it is clear that Qur'ānic proverbs carry both explicit and implicit meanings. Translators commonly emphasize the explicit meaning by offering literal translations and word-for-word equivalents. However, a thorough translation approach should encompass all facets of Qur'ānic proverbs to ensure a faithful rendition. Addressing the second research question *Are there any appropriate equivalents in English for translating Qur'ānic proverbs?* it becomes evident that the translation of Qur'ānic proverbs poses challenges due to their close ties to Arabic culture. While some proverbs may have similarities in Arabic and English, they can carry different connotations and impacts on target language readers. For instance, the Qur'ānic proverb “إِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعُنْكَبُوتِ” and the English idiom “house of cards” may convey different nuances. Certain proverbs are culturally specific to Arabic and may lack direct equivalents in English, such as the proverb “فَلْيُضْحَكُوا قَلِيلاً وَ لِيُنْكُوا كَثِيراً جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ”, making translation more complex as exact equivalents may not exist in the target language.

Moreover, the intricate nature of Arabic words, with their context-dependent multiple meanings, further complicates the translation process. The Qur'ān, deeply rooted in Arabic culture and Islamic principles, introduces a distinct array of linguistic and cultural subtleties that may not seamlessly translate into English. Qur'ānic proverbs play a crucial role in communicating Arabic and Islamic traditions, norms, and beliefs, showcasing the diverse cultural heritage of Arabic culture and Islam. Despite the translators' diligence, encapsulating the intricate cultural and religious components woven into Qur'ānic proverbial verses continues to pose a significant challenge.

6. Conclusion

The study highlights that translators often struggle to capture the beauty of the original text's figurative language, particularly evident in the proverbial verses. While there may be potential equivalents for Arabic proverbs in English, their direct usage could lead to misunderstandings among target readers. Effective translation requires a deep understanding of both the SL and TL cultures, encompassing religion, customs, languages, geography, history, and overall cultural background. Even when linguistic equivalents exist, cultural disparities may necessitate the use of cultural equivalents to ensure accurate conveyance of the intended message within the context of both cultures.

Translating proverbs with social customs demands careful consideration, as direct translations may not effectively convey the intended meaning. Abo al Timen (2015) suggests seeking approximate equivalents to preserve the message's essence. A successful translation should evoke a similar impact on target language (TT) readers as the original text does on its readers. The translator's task is to convey the meaning, style, and essence of the source text to the TT, emphasizing the importance of finding precise corresponding words in both languages.

Despite the passage of 1400 years since the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, its timeless nature as an educational resource remains relevant. Teaching the Qur'ān in English can enhance student engagement and understanding. The Qur'ān serves as a rich source of proverbs and literary devices like idioms and metaphors. To grasp Qur'ānic proverbs and their implicit meanings, translators must possess a deep understanding of both the source and target languages and cultures, enhancing their cross-cultural knowledge. Finding lexical and cultural equivalents for these proverbs is crucial. Additionally, translators must respect the sacredness and nature of Qur'ānic texts, especially when dealing with idiomatic or proverbial verses.

Baker (2011) highlights two scenarios where idioms or fixed expressions, including proverbs, can be easily misinterpreted if not understood in context: 1) Some idioms may appear transparent, offering a reasonable literal interpretation, while their idiomatic meanings are not explicitly indicated in the text. In such cases, a translator unfamiliar with the idiom may mistakenly interpret it literally, missing the intended idiomatic play; 2) An idiom in the source language may closely resemble one in the target language on the surface but carry a different or partially different meaning. Superficially identical or similar idioms with divergent meanings between the source and target languages can lead inexperienced translators to impose an incorrect interpretation (pp. 69-70).

Robinson (1997) further emphasizes that the study of translation is intertwined with intercultural relations. While some proverbs in English and Arabic share common cultural contexts and pose no translation challenges, differences in religious beliefs, moral values, metaphorical imagery, geographical settings, and ethical characteristics can complicate translation. Both languages encompass distinct cultures, traditions, religious beliefs, customs, habits, myths, and historical legacies, necessitating careful consideration when finding English equivalents for proverbs and literary devices to engage students and enthusiasts.

Translators of the Holy Qur'ān must possess a deep understanding of classical Arabic to grasp the profound meanings embedded in the text. Proficiency in both Arabic and English is essential for recognizing and accurately rendering proverbial verses with suitable

equivalents. It is crucial for translators to diligently research and consult multiple sources, including dictionaries and Qur'ānic commentaries, to ensure the faithful transmission of the Qur'ān's meaning without overlooking the significance of its figurative language. Sharaf Eldin (2014) underscores the importance of seeking insights from various Qur'ānic commentaries to enhance the accuracy of translation.

Translators who lack familiarity with Islam may struggle to accurately convey the linguistic, stylistic, and cultural nuances present in the Qur'ān. It is imperative for translators to possess a deep understanding of classical Arabic, Islam, and utilize Qur'ānic explanations to effectively translate the text. Awareness of the unique nature of the Qur'ān and disparities between Arabic concepts and beliefs compared to other languages, particularly Western ones, is essential. Translators must demonstrate proficiency in both the source and target languages and cultures to ensure the preservation of all meanings within the Qur'ānic context.

To enhance the quality of translations, translators should utilize proper bilingual dictionaries and seek guidance from Muslim scholars, commentators, theologians, linguistics experts, and specialists in cultural and Islamic history. By studying previous translations, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and addressing any shortcomings, translators can produce innovative and refined renditions of the Qur'ān. It is crucial for translators to convey the message of the Holy Qur'ān accurately, without misinterpreting fundamental concepts, norms, and beliefs embedded in the text. Including explanatory notes in the translation can help introduce proverbial verses to target language readers, enabling them to appreciate the figurative language of the Qur'ān and bridge cultural gaps by providing essential contextual information.

One of the key limitations of this study was the lack of specific English resources on Qur'ānic proverbial verses and expressions. Future research endeavors are encouraged to explore proverbial expressions in the Holy Quran and delve into other figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, irony, and euphemistic expressions. Researchers can focus on bridging cultural divides by offering vital contextual information. Drawing insights from successful translators' methodologies and findings can serve as a valuable guide for developing models that aspiring translators can utilize to identify their strengths and weaknesses, create innovative translations, and strive for excellence in their professional pursuits.

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Assessing the Quality of Hidden Proverbs Translation in the Holy Qur'ān: Human vs. Artificial Intelligence English Translations

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ABSTRACT

Linguistic issues are important in the textual analysis of translated texts. Among the most sensitive and significant texts translated into different languages, the Holy Qur'ān stands out. The text and texture of the Qur'ān are so unique that one cannot easily understand it without prior knowledge of its linguistic and extralinguistic aspects. One of the most challenging linguistic issues in the Qur'ān is proverbs, especially hidden proverbs that carry culture-specific meanings. The translator's role in explicating the meanings of these culture-specific items is crucial. This research aims to identify and analyze Qur'ānic hidden proverbs using a technical reference (Esmaeeli, 1986) and to assess translation quality with Na Pham's (2005) translation quality assessment model. In this study, two translation forms, AI and human (Qarai), were compared for their treatment of Qur'ānic hidden proverbs. Data collection and analysis followed a descriptive-qualitative design. Twenty-one verses containing hidden proverbs and their translations by GPT 3.5 and Qarai were analyzed. The study results indicated that, in terms of translation quality, GPT 3.5 performed better than Qarai.

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1. Introduction

The Qur'ān is the holy book of Islam and is considered the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It contains numerous proverbs and sayings of significant cultural, religious, and moral value for Muslims. However, translating Qur'ānic proverbs into English is challenging due to linguistic and cultural differences. With technological advancements, ChatGPT has emerged as an alternative to human translation. This research aims to investigate the translatability and quality of Qur'ānic proverbs in English by comparing human and ChatGPT translations.

Conflicting viewpoints exist regarding the translatability of the Qur'ān. Al-Kharabshesh and Al-Azzam (2008) argue that successful Qur'ānic translation requires translators skilled in both linguistics and religious studies; without such expertise, results may be unsatisfactory. A proficient Qur'ān translator should master both source and target languages, possess linguistic expertise, and have knowledge of contrastive analysis. Understanding the linguistic features and stylistics of the source text helps convey the word of Allah as naturally as possible. Qur'ān translators must strive for authenticity in the target language; without meeting these criteria, translations may be inappropriate (Sajjadi, 2005; Shahsavandi, 2006).

As ChatGPT claims that it can translate the most difficult and challenging texts (according to ChatGPT 3.5), it is worth researching whether this claim is true for translating an ancient but resonant text like the Qur'ān. Since Qur'ānic proverbs are considered among the most culture-specific and difficult elements to translate, it is noteworthy to test the hypothesis that ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence can translate such a rhetorical and multi-dimensional text. The degree and quality of ChatGPT's ability to translate Qur'ānic proverbs can serve as a useful test to determine if such an application is able to handle challenging linguistic elements effectively. Assessing the translation quality of ChatGPT could provide valuable insights into its potential future advancements in translation studies and the profession. By comparing the quality of ChatGPT's translations with Qarai's (2004) English translation of the Qur'ān, this research aims to evaluate whether the claims about ChatGPT's capabilities hold true.

Assessing translation quality and testing new technologies in translation, as well as comparing new technologies' translation quality with human translation, is significant. ChatGPT is claimed to be a high-tech application capable of translating the most difficult texts. This research considers it important to apply this chatbot to Qur'ānic proverbs—one of the most challenging linguistic elements and figures of speech—to assess the translation quality of ChatGPT compared with human translation (specifically Qarai's 2003 translation) so that the translatability of Qur'ānic proverbs by ChatGPT is tested.

This research aims to assess the quality of Qur'ānic proverbs translated by ChatGPT as a new technological chatbot compared with human translation. Since ChatGPT is claimed to have ushered in a transformative shift in human life and can handle different tasks with high quality, it is essential to examine how advanced this chatbot is in translating sensitive and culturally significant texts. Thus, evaluating ChatGPT's translation quality compared to human translation is a central objective of this research. Another purpose is to investigate the translatability of Qur'ānic proverbs by ChatGPT compared with human translation. The human translation is Qarai's English version, which uses a phrasal and idiomatic approach to the Qur'ān and is therefore valuable for examining the translation of Qur'ānic proverbs (Qarai, 2004).

2. Literature review

2.1. Translating proverbs

Due to the difficulties and challenges of translating Qur'ānic proverbs, translators need to understand how to translate these expressions according to relevant models for translating proverbs. Such studies can draw translators' attention to the most effective methods for translating proverbs by introducing applicable models and frameworks. Classe (2000, cited in Thalji, 2015) suggests that differences between the source and target cultures can lead to translation loss, particularly when certain contextual aspects unique to the SL culture are absent in the target culture. These aspects may include distinct lifestyles or habits specific to certain communities.

Newmark (1988, cited in Thalji, 2015) categorizes foreign cultural expressions into ecological, material, and social categories, encompassing aspects such as social organizations, politics, religion, art, gestures, and habits. These cultural nuances are embedded in various linguistic elements like proverbs, collocations, phrasal verbs, and figures of speech, including metaphors. Translating cultural texts poses challenges, requiring translators to be culturally aware of both the source and target cultures. Proverbs, with their cultural intricacies, can be particularly challenging for translators (Thalji, 2015). Baker (1992) highlights the challenges translators face in dealing with cultural expressions, proverbs, metaphors, collocations, and religious terms. Translating goes beyond conveying meaning; it involves navigating cultural nuances, including unfamiliar concepts in the target language. The translator's role extends to bridging cultural gaps to ensure accurate and culturally sensitive communication.

Baker (1992) outlines the difficulties encountered when translating idioms or fixed expressions as follows:

The lack of the TL equivalence because an idiom could be culture specific as well as the difference between the source and the target language in expressing the meaning; it could be expressed by a single word, fixed expression or fixed idiom. 2- The availability of the SL idiom in the TL but its use in context may be different; the two expressions may have different connotations. 3- Both literal and idiomatic senses of the SL idiom are important simultaneously, so it can be rendered successfully if the TL idiom is similar to SL idiom both in form and meaning. 4- The very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the context in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages (pp. 68-70)

According to Kemppanen, Janis and Belikova (2012, cited in Thalji, 2015), there are strategies for translating idioms and proverbs through two main approaches: domestication and foreignization.

Domestication:

1. Rendering foreign phenomena into familiar ones:
 - Translate the source language idiom into a target language idiom with a similar meaning, even if it is not a direct, literal match.
2. Specification:

- Adapt the target language idiom or proverb by replacing general elements with more specific ones, ensuring it aligns closely with target cultural nuances.

3. Intensification:

- Adjust the target language idiom to make it more relevant to the target culture, enhancing certain elements to better resonate with the audience.

4. Adding aesthetics:

- Enrich the expression of the target language idiom by incorporating additional figures of speech, aiming for an aesthetically pleasing and culturally resonant version that reflects folk culture.

Foreignization:

1. Maintaining foreign phenomena as familiar:

- Preserve the information from the source language idiom by translating it into a target language idiom that conveys a similar meaning, even if it is not directly equivalent.

2. Specification:

- Keep the specific details of the source language idiom, avoiding simplification or generalization when translating into the target language.

3. Intensification:

- Retain any modifications from the source language idiom that enhance its cultural context, even if they challenge conventional norms in the target language.

4. Adding aesthetics:

- Include additional figures of speech that respect the cultural expression of the source language, preserving the aesthetic and wisdom of the original.

These strategies highlight the translator's role in balancing cultural fidelity and linguistic adaptation when working with idioms and proverbs.

2.2. Translation quality assessment

Translation quality assessment is conducted using various methods. Major approaches to translation assessment include “anecdotal and subjective methods, neo-hermeneutic approaches, response-oriented approaches, and text-based approaches” (House, 2001, cited in Baker, 1998, p. 197). Practical translators, philologists, philosophers, and writers have primarily proposed anecdotal and subjective approaches to translation assessment. Advocates of this approach focus on the translator themselves, asserting that the quality of a translation depends on the translator’s knowledge, intuition, and artistic competence (p. 197). House (2001) notes that the main shortcoming of this approach is its failure to operationalize abstract translation concepts such as faithfulness to the source language text. The neo-hermeneutic school of thought (Stolze, 1992, cited in House, 2001) has also followed this subjective approach to translation quality assessment. According to Stolze

(1992), a good translation is produced when the translator fully identifies with the target text. However, whether such identification guarantees high translation quality and how this quality could be evaluated remains unclear (House, 2001, cited in Baker, 1998).

House (2001) argued that response-oriented approaches to translation quality assessment, which focus on the target language response to the translated text, align with Nida's (1964) concept of dynamic equivalence. Nida proposed that an ideal translation should achieve broad communicative effectiveness, an understanding of intention, and an equivalent response from the target readers. However, House criticized this approach for overlooking the role of cognition in the translation process. While emphasizing the importance of reader response, she suggested that a complete assessment should also consider the cognitive aspects involved in translation, highlighting the limitations of relying solely on the target language response's effectiveness (House, 2001, cited in Baker, 1998).

House (2001) developed a third category, text-oriented approaches, for translation quality assessment. In her research, a text-oriented model is used to analyze ellipsis in selected English translations. These approaches, supported by linguistic and functional models and comparative literature, apply linguistically based methods for assessing translation quality, focusing on syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic features. Reiss's functional approach, Wilss (1982), Koller (1992), and Reiss and Vermeer's (1984) skopos theory are among the text-oriented approaches discussed. Wilss (1982) emphasizes the importance of analyzing source language text and target language text norms, warning that deviations may lead to translation shortcomings. Koller (1992) outlines three phases for translation assessment: analyzing the source text, comparing translations, and evaluating the translation. The primary assessment methods in this study involve comparing and evaluating translations (Reiss, 1978; Wilss, 1982, cited in House, 2001; Koller, 1992).

House (2001) asserted that her model of translation quality assessment is functional-pragmatic, grounded in pragmatic and linguistic theories. In her model, translation types serve as the foundation, consisting of overt and covert translations. Overt translation occurs when the source culture significantly influences the source language. Conversely, covert translation occurs when the source text is not heavily dependent on the source culture (House, 2001).

2.3. Computer assisted translation

The journey of computer-assisted translation (CAT) has evolved significantly since the 1966 ALPAC report, which initially criticized machine translation. This critique, however, paved the way for developing practical computer aids for translators. The redefined approach to machine translation not only led to the creation of CAT tools but also infused new dimensions into machine translation itself. Rather than replacing human translators, the focus shifted toward enhancing their knowledge and skills to produce high-quality translations. Concurrently, corpus-based and statistical machine translation has become a cornerstone of linguistic research worldwide. As we stand at this crossroads, predicting the future trajectory of machine translation remains challenging. Its continued development as part of CAT systems is evident, yet it's conceivable that all CAT tools will eventually transition fully to the cloud, adopting a subscription-based model. This shift is driven by the flexibility of cloud tools and subscription plans, along with the benefit of seamless software updates, which challenge traditional software distribution methods. Consequently, it seems logical to anticipate that even major industry players will migrate to the cloud for long-term sustainability (Munday, 2009).

CAT tools excel in translating technical and specialized texts, such as medical content, due to their effective use of segmentation, where text is broken down sentence by sentence for translation. This method yields optimal results for content-rich sentences, making it more suited to literal translation than free translation. In contrast, literature and poetry often require a broader context than, for instance, a technical manual. The structured approach of CAT tools can make it challenging for translators to achieve a sense-for-sense translation, which disregards the syntax of the source language. Instead, these tools tend to favor a sentence-by-sentence approach, which works well for specialized texts. When an inexperienced translator uses CAT tools to translate a novel, the translation may retain most of the original meaning but may lack the stylistic nuances, leading to an awkward reading experience (Munday, 2009).

2.4. Technology and translation

Since the 1990s, translation has evolved into a global commercial enterprise, outpacing the growth rate of world trade. This evolution is a direct result of globalization in trade. The rapid expansion of the internet has been pivotal, allowing even small enterprises to promote and sell products internationally. At the same time, growing consumer demand for product information, software, user manuals, games, educational materials, and more in native languages has further intensified the need for translation (Munday, 2009).

3. Methodology

3.1. Corpus

Qarai's translation, developed in collaboration with the Centre for Translation of the Holy Qur'ān as a translation consultant, is renowned for its faithfulness and fluency. The language is clear, straightforward, and dignified, avoiding both the archaisms and modernisms found in other English translations of the Qur'ān. Qarai's distinctive paraphrasing style enables readers with basic knowledge of Qur'ānic Arabic to grasp the meaning of the original text. The translation, which has been revised and republished several times, incorporates the perspectives of classical commentators, drawing on both Sunni and Shia works.

3.2. Sampling and data collection

According to Esmaeeli (1986), the total number of hidden proverbs is 21. Therefore, the researcher will analyze all the samples based on proverbial and translational issues. Since the entire population of hidden proverbs listed in the Qur'ān by Esmaeeli (1986) consists of 21 cases, which is sufficient for investigation, the researcher has analyzed the entire population.

3.3. Procedures

The researcher followed the procedures outlined below to carry out the research:

- The hidden proverbs are extracted from the Qur'ān based on the technical list of Qur'ānic proverbs provided by Esmaeeli (1986). All linguistic and interpretational aspects of these proverbs are analyzed in his book.
- The data are presented below, along with a description of the related issues for interpreting these data, based on Esmaeeli (1986).

- The English translations of each verse by Qarai and ChatGPT 3.5 are provided below the verses, and translation quality assessment models (Na Pham, 2005) are applied and analyzed by the researcher.
- The discussion of the obtained and analyzed data is compared with other related studies, and the positive and negative aspects are discussed. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

3.4. *The theoretical frameworks*

The theoretical framework of the study consists of two models: translation quality assessment and the selection of Qur'ānic proverbs. The translation quality assessment model by Na Pham (2005) is shown in Figure 1. His error analysis model includes linguistic, comprehension, and translation errors. This model is applicable to both subject-oriented error analysis research, where a group of translators is assessed, and product-based research, such as this study. Since this research focuses on translation quality assessment, the translation model by Na Pham (2005) is used, which includes the following error types:

- **Pragmatic errors:** These are related to the contextual and paratextual factors involved in transferring source text proverbs to the target text.
- **Omission:** This occurs when the translator fails to understand or render the entire proverb, causing part of the proverb to be omitted. Omissions may occur for various reasons: forgetting to translate a part of the source text, failing to comprehend or interpret part of the source text, inability to find the appropriate word, or intentionally skipping a part of the proverb in the translation.
- **Addition:** This is not necessarily an error unless incorrect or unnecessary information is added to the translation. In such cases, the translator may add information to the proverbs in the TT that misleads the reader, making the translation clumsy and unnatural.
- **Inaccurate rendition of individual lexical items:** This refers to the translator's incorrect rendering of a lexical item from the source text to the target text. It indicates the translator's failure to preserve the meaning of the source text while making a structural translation shift.
- **Distorted meanings:** This happens when the translator "dramatically changes the intended meaning of the source text, which can impede the reader's comprehension" (p. 214). Such errors may result in a translation that presents a different message than the original, causing a severe misunderstanding for the reader.
- **Too literal translation:** This occurs when the translator "focuses only on the surface structure and translates each word or sentence from the source text" (p. 216).
- **Too free translation:** This happens when the translator tries "to rewrite or improve the original message in a too creative way". If this results in a change in meaning, it is considered an error. "This can (a) destroy the flow, (b) change the emphasis of the sentence, or (c) obscure the author's intent" (p. 217).
- **Wrong lexical choice:** This involves selecting incorrect words in the translation. Choosing the most appropriate word among similar options is a challenging issue for translators.

- **Wrong focus of attention:** “The emphasis and focus of attention from the original text should be preserved in the translation. If the translator changes the word order so much that it alters the author's intended meaning, this is considered a wrong use of attention” (p. 223).

The study focuses on analyzing hidden Qur’ānic proverbs, with a total of 21 cases identified in the Qur’ān according to Esmaeeli (1986). These verses are as follows: 2:68, 2:260, 4:100, 4:123, 17:7, 29:6, 99:7, 4:111, 7:163, 2:216, 9:47, 10:39, 12:64, 17:110, 19:75, 22:4, 25:67, 71:27, 2:156, 109:6, and 53:39.

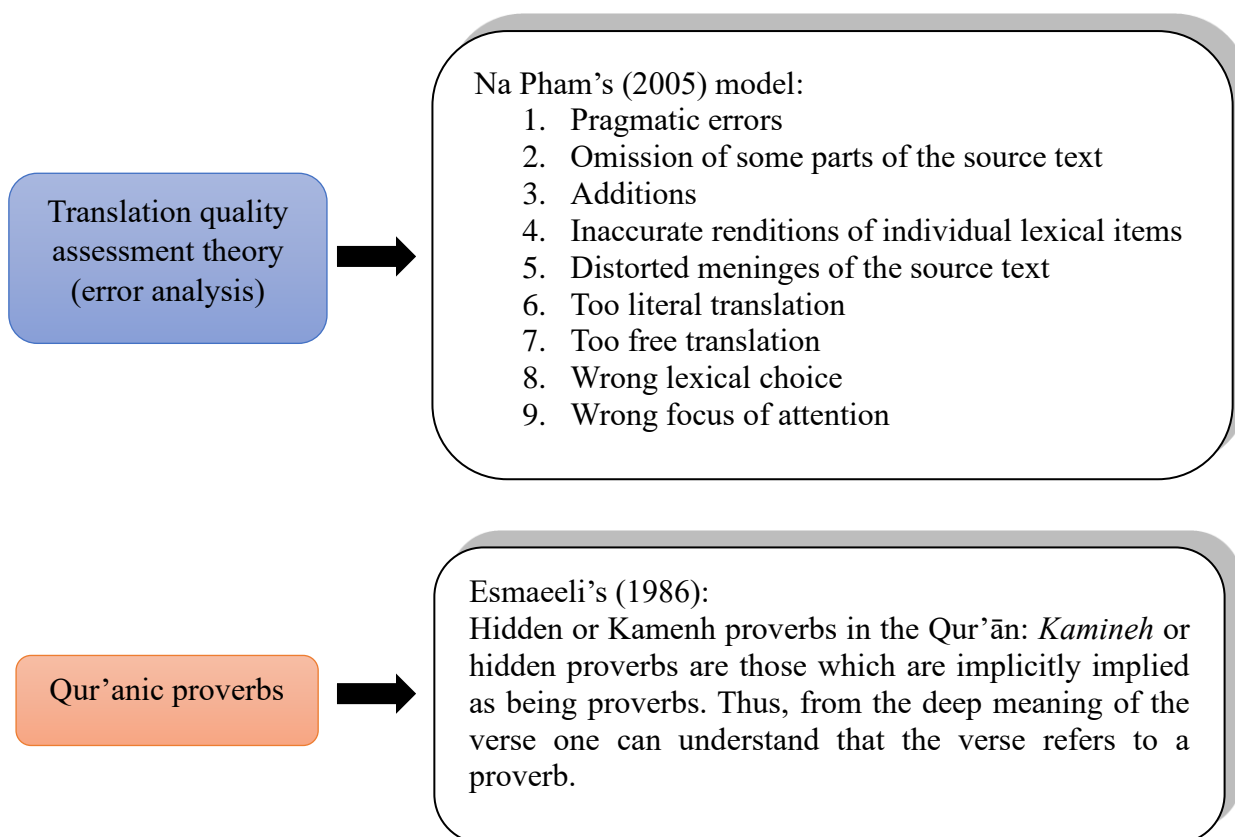


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study

3.5. Data analysis

The verses containing hidden proverbs were analyzed, with the original verses presented alongside their English transliterations and translations. The analysis of these hidden proverbs was based on a technical examination of Qur’ānic interpretations (Esmaeeli, 1986). Subsequently, the translations were analyzed and compared according to the theoretical framework of the study. In analyzing the hidden proverbs, the researcher first identified instances of proverbs and interpreted them based on the contextual meanings and supporting evidence from the verses, as well as authentic sources. The researcher also referred to reliable exegeses of the Holy Qur’ān to ensure a valid and accurate analysis (Esmaeeli, 1986). In the second phase, concerning the translations, the researcher examined the translations of the relevant verses to determine which ones most accurately reflected the original text. To do so, the translators were expected to explicate the meaning. It is important

to note that the verses were listed and analyzed according to Esmaeeli's (1986) exegesis. The English transliterations (from Qarai's translation) were sourced from <https://tanzil.net/>.

In this section, only a few verses, along with their analyses are provided as samples.

Example #1 (Surah Al-A'raf: 163):

وَسَأَلَهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرْعًا وَ يَوْمَ لَا يَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ بَلَّوْهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ

Qarai's translation: Ask them about the town that was situated on the seaside, when they violated the Sabbath, when their fish would come to them on the Sabbath day, visibly on the shore, but on days when they were not keeping Sabbath they would not come to them. Thus, did We test them because of the transgressions they used to commit. (163)

GPT-3.5: And ask them about the town that was by the sea - when they transgressed in [the matter of] the sabbath - when their fish came to them openly on their sabbath day, and the day they had no sabbath they did not come to them. Thus, did We give them trial because they were defiantly disobedient.

According to Esmaeeli (1986), the Sabbath in Judaism is a defined practice in the religion of Prophet Moses and corresponds to Saturday. The name "Sabbath" is derived from the Hebrew word meaning rest and comfort, reflecting the tradition in which the Jewish people cease all work and rest. In the Holy Book of Tamuz, it is explained that the Jews observe this day by refraining from labor, as it is a day dedicated to rest. The commandment to observe the Sabbath is emphasized in the fourth of the Ten Commandments. This commandment is based on the belief that God sanctified and made the Sabbath day holy. It is outlined in the Torah (Exodus 20:8). The observance of the Sabbath is considered obligatory, as it commemorates the creation of the heavens and the earth. God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, and as a result, Jews are prohibited from performing work on the Sabbath. Instead, they are encouraged to rest and honor this sacred day, reflecting the divine rest after creation.

It is clear that the Sabbath is a Jewish holiday, but the idea of God creating the heavens and the earth in six days and resting on the seventh is symbolic rather than literal. This concept is also mentioned in the Qur'an, which states: "He who created the heavens and the earth in six days". However, these 'days' are not meant to be understood as literal 24-hour days, since the concept of day and night did not exist before the creation of the sun and the moon. Instead, the reference is to six stages or periods, each of which could have lasted thousands or even tens of thousands of years, according to interpretations that view these days as symbolic rather than literal. This understanding highlights that while the Sabbath is a sacred day in Judaism, Friday is designated as a day of significance in Islam. Although Friday is a special day for Muslims, marked by the congregational prayer (Salat), work is still permitted on this day. Therefore, the meaning of the Sabbath, as it is understood in Judaism, does not directly apply in the same way in Islam.

It is said that the number six, which holds significance in Judaism, is important among the Jewish people, while the number seven holds cultural significance in Iranian traditions. The Sabbath-breakers were a group of Jews living in a city called Aylah, located near the Iranian border. If they were to return to you, they would surely repeat their actions. Islam

does not accept the established tradition of observing the Sabbath. According to the Qur'ān, the Jews who were compelled to work on the Sabbath violated God's command. In the interpretation of verses 163-164 of Surah al-A'raf, it is stated: "Ask them about the town by the sea, when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath; when fish appeared to them on the Sabbath, floating on the water, but on days other than the Sabbath, the fish did not appear to them. Thus, We tested them because they were transgressing".

God describes the scene of the city near the sea and refers to the story of the Jews who were tested by the Sabbath laws. While some people relied on fishing for their livelihood, God wanted to test them by making fish appear abundantly on the Sabbath and disappear on other days. This temptation led them to break the Sabbath rule by catching the fish. As a result, they were punished for their transgression, having violated God's command. The belief in the Sabbath and its associated restrictions are not accepted in Islam. Islam, however, emphasizes Friday as a special day for communal prayer and remembrance of God, but it does not require complete rest from work as the Sabbath does for Jews.

The number six, referring to the six days of creation, holds special significance in Jewish tradition. However, in Iranian culture, the number seven is considered sacred. "Indeed, those among you who transgressed concerning the Sabbath, We said to them, "Be apes, despised". Thus, We made it an example for the cities around it and a warning to those who fear Allah". The law of the Sabbath is an important part of Jewish tradition, forbidding Jews from working on this day. Some proverbs derived from this verse include: "Whatever God wants, that will happen" (هر چه دلم خواست نه آن شد / هر چه خدا خواست همان شد) and "The boat sails wherever God wants; if the clothes fit, it's the captain's will" (اگر جامه بر تن درد / برد کشتی آنجا که خواهد خدای / ناخدای). Regarding the translations of this hidden proverb, and based on the theoretical framework of the study and the errors identified by Na Pham (2005), it seems that both Qarai and GPT-3.5 ignored the contextual and paratextual factors involved in the transference of the source text proverbs to the target text. As a result, a pragmatic error occurred. However, one strength of GPT-3.5 is its ability to recognize some hidden proverbs in Qur'ānic verses and translate them into English based on the given prompt.

Example #2 (Surah Al-Baqarah: 216):

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Qarai's translation: Warfare has been prescribed for you, though it is repulsive to you. Yet it may be that you dislike something, which is good for you, and it may be that you love something, which is bad for you, and Allah knows and you do not know. (216)

GPT-3.5: Fighting has been prescribed upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not.

According to Esmaeeli (1986), what may seem harmful could actually be beneficial, and vice versa. Also, do not be jealous of others. The following poems are based on the proverb found in this verse.

- ✓ Perhaps what causes you pain is a remedy for you.

- ✓ What you think is an insult may be an honor.
- ✓ Because truth-seeking is a mercy:
 - O you in pain, the one causing your pain is actually your remedy (Rumi).
 - O you whose roar causes pain, it is you who are the remedy for the world (Sanai).

Regarding the translations of this hidden proverb, and based on the theoretical framework of the study and Na Pham's (2005) work, it seems that both Qarai and GPT-3.5 ignored the contextual and paratextual factors involved in the transference of source text (ST) proverbs to the target text. As a result, a pragmatic error occurred. However, one strength of GPT-3.5 is its ability to recognize some hidden proverbs in Qur'ānic verses and translate them into English based on the given prompt. The researcher believes that the English proverb "every cloud has a silver lining", meaning "you may not like something, but it has advantages for you", is a good equivalent for the hidden proverb in this verse.

Example #3 (Surah At-Tawbah: 47):

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَلَا أُضْعِفُوا خِلَالَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمْ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَاعُونَ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

Qarai's translation: Had they gone forth with you, they would have only added to your troubles, and they would have surely spread rumors in your midst, seeking to cause sedition among you. They have some spies among you, and Allah knows best the wrongdoers.

GPT-3.5: If they had gone out among you, they would not have increased you except in confusion. And they would have been active among you, seeking [to cause] you fitnah. And among you are avid listeners to them. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers

This verse contains a hidden proverb: "وَفِيكُمْ سَمَاعُونَ لَهُمْ", which translates to "among you, some spies". In Qur'ānic Arabic, the word "سمع" figuratively means "spy". According to Esmaceili (1986), this hidden proverb has served as the basis for other proverbs in both Arabic and Persian. The proverb "an ear on the wall" means that someone is eavesdropping. In Arabic, the proverb goes: "If you move at night, be cautious; if you stop, be silent. The ear on the wall hears slowly and answers every word it hears".

In Persian poetry and literature, there are many similar parables to this one:

1. The wall even has a mouse's ear. Saying secrets loudly is not good.
2. The parable of 'the ear on the wall' means that the wall listens.

Examples in Persian Literature:

- ✓ I said, everyone is as secretive as you / That the wall has an ear and hears our secrets. (Ferdowsi)
- ✓ They claim that her ear is like a wall, (Nizami Ganjavi)
- ✓ Although the lip is silent and the tongue is still / The ear on the wall listens to the desires and doubts.

Regarding the translations of this hidden proverb, and based on the theoretical framework of the study and the translation errors identified by Na Pham (2005), it seems that both Qarai and GPT-3.5 ignored the contextual and paratextual factors involved in transferring source text (ST) proverbs to the target text. As a result, a pragmatic error occurred. However, one strength of GPT-3.5 is its ability to recognize some hidden proverbs in Qur'ānic verses and, based on the given prompt, translate them into English. The researcher believes that the English proverb “the walls have ears”, meaning “be cautious about what one says because others may listen to you secretly” is a good equivalent for the hidden proverb in this verse.

Example #4 (Surah Maryam: 75):

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَ
أَضْعَفُ جُندًا

Qarai's translation: Say, 'Whoever abides in error, the All-beneficent shall prolong his respite until they sight what they have been promised: either punishment, or the Hour.' Then they will know whose position is worse, and whose host is weaker.

GPT-3.5: Say, 'Whoever is in error, let the Most Merciful extend for him a period [of time] until, when they see that which they were promised - either punishment [in this world] or the Hour [of resurrection] - they will come to know who is worse in position and weaker in soldiers.

As stated by Esmaeeli (1986), “Say to the listener: ‘Whoever is in error’” This refers to the narration from Imam Sadiq (A.S), where the intended meaning of ‘in error’ is the failure to believe in the Wilaya of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (A.S) and the Wilaya of our Imams. Therefore, they will say to him, ‘Then let the Most Merciful grant him an extension,’ so that he may live longer and God will grant him respite. This means extending his lifespan and granting him worldly desires. Here, if the word ‘فَلْيَمْدُدْ’ is understood as an imperative, the translation should reflect that.

The following idioms in the form of poems are taken from this verse both in Arabic and Persian:

- ✓ The ignorant person is not deprived, and the learned person is deprived.¹
- ✓ Because ignorance causes disbelief and reason leads to faith. Therefore, perhaps one of the other opinions is:

The world is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the disbeliever – the world is the prison of the believer and the paradise of the disbeliever.²

And similar sayings in Persian: O' Lord you bestowed upon ignorant people and the wise people wander around the world.³

¹ الجاهل مرزوق و العالم محروم

² الدنيا سجين المومن و جنت الكافر

³ نعمت به سگان دادی و دولت به خران / پس ما به تماشاى جهان آمده ایم

As for the translation provided by both Qarai and GPT-3.5, the source language (SL) proverb is untranslatable, and its non-figurative meaning should be conveyed by the translator, based on the translation strategy model of this research, along with the provided literal translation, according to the translation quality model of the study. Of course, hidden proverbs in some verses, such as this one, are often too challenging for both the translators and the researcher to find an equivalent local proverb in the target language. Therefore, the researcher has no suggestion for this verse

4. Results

Table 1. shows the frequency of quality assessment of Qarai's English translation.

Table 1. The list and frequency translation strategies and quality assessment of Qarai's English translation

Qarai's English translation		
	Verse/ chapter	Translation quality assessment (Na Pham, 2005)
1	2:68	Pragmatic errors
2	2:260	Wrong focus of attention
3	4:100	Pragmatic errors
4	4:123	(Too) literal translation
5	17:7	(Too) literal translation
6	29:6	(Too) literal translation
7	99:7	(Too) literal translation
8	4:111	Wrong focus of attention
9	7:163	(Too) literal translation
10	2:216	Pragmatic errors
11	9:47	(Too) literal translation
12	10:39	Pragmatic errors
13	12:64	Pragmatic errors
14	17:110	Pragmatic errors
15	19:75	(Too) literal translation
16	22:4	Pragmatic errors
17	25:67	Pragmatic errors
18	71:27	Pragmatic errors
19	2:156	Pragmatic errors
20	109:6	(Too) literal translation
21	53:39	Pragmatic errors

The qualities of translations, as directed by Na Pham's (2005) TQA model, reveal that in Qarai's translation, there are notable issues in rendering Qur'ānic hidden proverbs. He committed a pragmatic error 11 times out of 21 items (52.38%), focused attention incorrectly 2 times (9.5%), and provided literal or overly literal translations 8 times (38%). Therefore, based on Na Pham's models, Qarai's translation does not appear to be highly successful. To illustrate this more clearly, Figure 2 below presents Qarai's quality assessment.

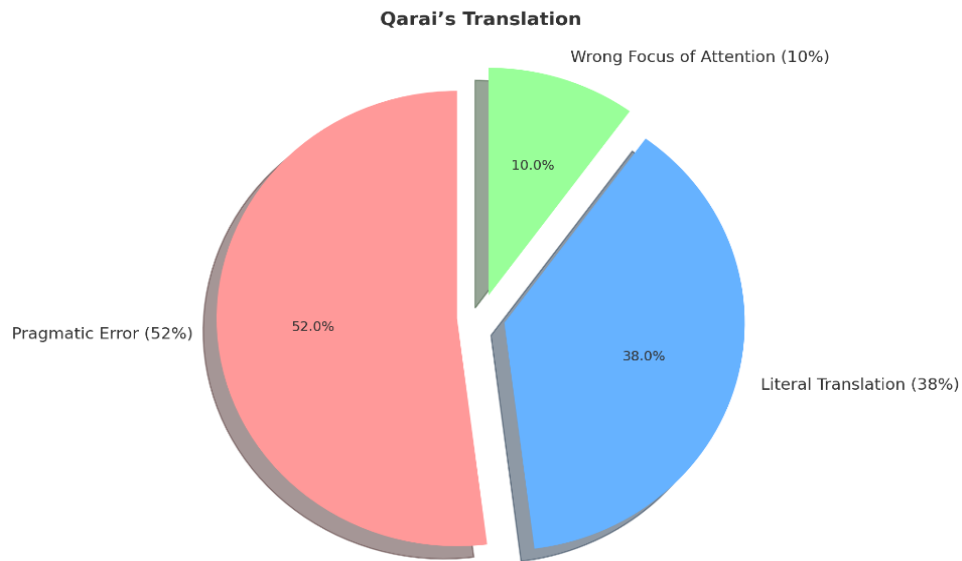


Figure 2. Qarai's Translation

Table 2 shows the list and frequency of quality assessment of GPT-3.5 English translation.

Table 2. The list and frequency translation strategies and quality assessment of GPT-3.5's English translation

GPT-3.5 English translation		
	Verse/ chapter	Translation quality assessment (Na Pham, 2005)
1	2:68	Pragmatic errors
2	2:260	No error
3	4:100	No error
4	4:123	No error
5	17:7	(Too) literal translation
6	29:6	(Too) literal translation
7	99:7	(Too) literal translation
8	4:111	No error
9	7:163	(Too) literal translation
10	2:216	Pragmatic errors
11	9:47	(Too) literal translation
12	10:39	Pragmatic errors
13	12:64	Pragmatic errors
14	17:110	Pragmatic errors
15	19:75	(Too) literal translation
16	22:4	No error
17	25:67	No error
18	71:27	Pragmatic errors
19	2:156	Pragmatic errors
20	109:6	(Too) literal translation
21	53:39	Pragmatic errors

The qualities of translations based on Na Pham's (2005) TQA theory are applied to evaluate GPT-3.5's translation performance. Specifically, when rendering Qur'ānic hidden proverbs, GPT-3.5 made pragmatic errors 8 times out of 21 items (38%), provided literal or overly literal translations 8 times (33%), and made no translation errors for 6 verses (28%). Based on Na Pham's model, GPT-3.5 demonstrates significant progress toward achieving high standards of quality translation. In fact, it outperforms human translators in this regard. However, there is still room for improvement to reach optimal standards in TQA, especially for translating Qur'ānic hidden proverbs. To provide a clearer overview, Figure 3 below presents the quality assessment of GPT-3.5.

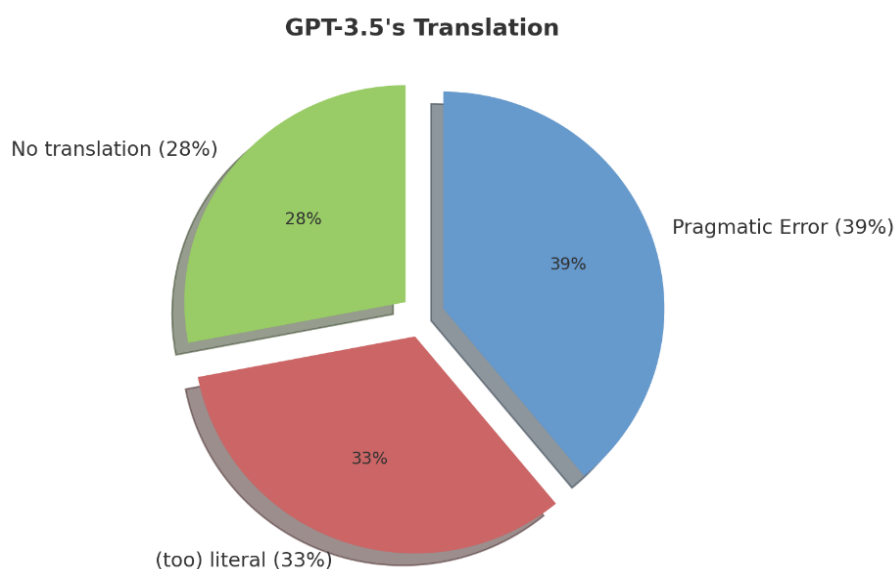


Figure 3. GPT-3.5's Translation

5. Conclusion

The translation of the Qur'ān holds great significance due to the sanctity of the text, and today, many people prefer to engage with these texts through new technologies like GPT bots. Studies such as the current one aim to draw attention to the complex linguistic issues in the Qur'ān, analyze existing translations, and highlight areas where translators need to address challenges like hidden proverbs. The goal is to present more accurate, natural, and authentic translations. In this context, a widely respected and readable translation of the Qur'ān by Ali Qoli Qaraee was compared with the latest technology, GPT-3.5. While comparisons between these translations should be conducted with careful consideration of the unique intricacies of each, the results of this study reveal how distinct and effective the two translations are, based on Na Pham's (2005) TQA framework. Among the parameters in Na Pham's model, pragmatic errors and (too) literal translations were common to both Qarai and GPT-3.5, while "wrong focus of attention" and "no translation error" differed between the two.

When comparing the frequency of errors, Qarai's translation had a pragmatic error rate of 52.38%, while GPT-3.5's rate was 38%. In other areas, (too) literal translation in Qarai's work was 38%, compared to 33% in GPT-3.5. Qarai's translation showed a "wrong focus of attention" error rate of 9.5%, while GPT-3.5 exhibited no such error and instead had a 28% rate of no translation errors.

The study concludes that, although there is still significant progress to be made in translating hidden proverbs and culture-specific items, GPT-3.5 has made substantial strides. The technology has been able to partially identify and translate hidden proverbs. Therefore, aside from refining the technical prompts given to GPT-3.5, greater emphasis should be placed on the research objectives so that ChatGPT can further improve its capabilities in producing higher-quality translations. Contrary to some scholars' predictions that culture-specific items and texts like the Qur'ān are challenging for GPT, the findings of this research suggest that, with continued investment and development, such technologies could overcome these boundaries in the near future.

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Translation Strategies for Rhetorical Questions in the Qur'ān: A Comparative Analysis of Arberry and Asad Using Molina and Albir's Model

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ABSTRACT

Rhetorical questions in the Holy Qur'ān serve as powerful devices in argumentation and persuasion. This study investigates the translation strategies employed by Arberry and Asad in translating rhetorical questions from the Holy Qur'ān into English, utilizing the techniques suggested by Molina and Albir. The research adopts a descriptive-analytical method and is based on library research. The sample includes thirteen rhetorical questions selected from different Surahs, analyzed for their rhetorical functions as identified by classical Arabic rhetoric, including refutation, reproach, explanation, negation, astonishment, encouragement, reconciliation, unlikelihood, and magnification. The analysis reveals that both translators employ a range of techniques, with Asad favoring adaptation (42%) and amplification (33%), and Arberry showing a higher frequency of literal translation (50%) and modulation (25%). While both translators effectively convey the rhetorical functions of the questions, Asad's translations often include additional explanatory phrases, making them more interpretive and accessible to readers unfamiliar with the original context. In contrast, Arberry's translations maintain closer adherence to the original structure and wording, which can require more interpretive effort from the reader. The study concludes that while both translators succeed in maintaining the rhetorical essence of the questions, their approaches differ significantly, highlighting the complexities and nuances involved in translating the rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān.

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1. Introduction

Translating the Holy Qur'ān poses one of the most profound challenges for translators. As noted by al-Abbas & Haider (2020), translation is not simply about substituting words from the source language (SL) with those from the target language (TL); the distinct cultural backgrounds of Arabic and English add complexity to this task (Catford, 1965, p. 32). The difficulty intensifies when dealing with sacred texts like the Holy Qur'ān. The rhetoric within the Holy Qur'ān, particularly performative utterances, demands careful handling to accurately convey their pragmatic significance and intended effects. Rhetorical questions, a type of performative utterance, present a notable challenge. Few studies have focused on these due to their sensitive nature. Unlike regular questions, rhetorical questions do not seek answers and serve more varied purposes in Arabic than in English. This disparity creates linguistic hurdles for translators of the Qur'ān. Classical Muslim exegetes have identified various functions of rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān, including refutation, astonishment, reproach, explanation, negation, encouragement, reconciliation, unlikelihood, and magnification (Husayni, 1388, p. 97; Hashemi, 1999, p. 84). This study aims to examine how effectively modern English translators, specifically Muhammad Asad and Arthur Arberry, have conveyed these rhetorical functions and the techniques they employed. This research aims to tackle the issue of the translation of rhetorical questions in the Holy Qur'ān and to uncover the techniques used in rendering these rhetorical questions, as well as the extent to which Qur'ān translators paid attention to the intended meaning in the source text.

To conduct this study and examine the translation of rhetorical questions in the selected Qur'ānic translations, the strategies proposed by Molina and Albir (2002, p. 499) will be employed. In their article, "Translation Techniques Revisited: A Dynamic and Functionalist Approach" they review the background of studies on translation strategies and techniques and propose eighteen strategies that form the theoretical basis for the present research. This research will examine the translation of rhetorical questions in the Holy Qur'ān in two English translations of the Qur'ān based on the model proposed by Molina and Albir. The selection of two prominent English translations of the Qur'ān - those by Muhammad Asad and Arthur Arberry - has been made based on several distinguishing criteria. One key factor is the translators' respective religious backgrounds - Asad was a Jewish convert to Islam, while Arberry was a Christian. This diversity in their theological orientations is reflected in their divergent approaches to the translation process (Elnemr, 2020, p. 34).

Asad's translation is characterized by an innovative, rationalistic style that endeavors to convey the intended meaning and broader conceptual essence of the divine scripture to the reader. His method relies less on strict, word-for-word literalism and instead seeks to communicate the underlying purpose and wisdom of the Qur'ānic verses (Awan, 2019, p. 45). In contrast, Arberry's translation exhibits a more literary, aesthetic focus, with a primary aim of capturing the outward beauty and eloquence of the original Arabic text. Arberry's approach is therefore more inclined toward a literal, verbatim rendering of the Qur'ānic lexicon and syntax (Haleem, & Mohadi, 2023, p. 138). These divergent translation philosophies, stemming from the translators' diverse religious and intellectual backgrounds, have resulted in two distinct English renditions of the Qur'ān - one that prioritizes conceptual elucidation, and another that emphasizes literary artistry. The comparative analysis of these translations provides valuable insight into the multifaceted nature of Qur'ānic hermeneutics and the complex challenges inherent in cross-cultural, inter-religious text transmission (Khaleel, 2005, p. 60).

The present study assesses how they translated selected Qur'ānic rhetorical questions into English, using strategies suggested by Molina and Albir (2002). This research is significant due to the vast linguistic and cultural gaps between English and Arabic. The rarity of studies addressing Qur'ānic rhetorical questions in English highlights the importance of this work, which compares the effectiveness of translations by the selected translators. By employing a qualitative rather than quantitative approach and analyzing the data from a linguistic perspective, this study addresses an overlooked area in translation studies.

2. Literature review

The translation of rhetorical questions, a common linguistic feature in the Holy Qur'ān, has long been a topic of interest for scholars in the fields of Qur'ānic studies, exegesis, and translation studies. Previous research has explored various approaches and strategies employed by translators when rendering these rhetorical devices across languages. Molina and Albir (2002) proposed a comprehensive taxonomy of translation techniques that provides a valuable framework for analyzing the translation of rhetorical questions. Building on this foundation, several studies have investigated the application of Molina and Albir's techniques in different texts, including the Qur'ān. Notable works in this area include Arberry's (1955) and Asad's (1980) widely recognized English translations of the Qur'ān, which have been the subject of scholarly examination to elucidate the specific strategies they employed in rendering the Qur'ānic text. The present study aims to contribute to this body of knowledge by exploring the translation strategies used by Arberry and Asad in rendering rhetorical questions in the Holy Qur'ān, drawing upon the techniques suggested by Molina and Albir. The following are similar works conducted in the field of Qur'ānic translations and Molina and Albir's proposed model:

- ✓ Al-Smadi (2022) examined the linguistic challenges faced by seven Qur'ān translators in rendering rhetorical questions into English.
- ✓ Al-Qur'ān and Al-Azzam (2009) focused on rhetorical devices in the Qur'ān, including rhetorical questions, providing a comparative analysis of different translation approaches.
- ✓ Hassan (2020) conducted a pragmatic analysis of lexical choices in five English translations of the Qur'ān, assessing the faithfulness of these translations, particularly in their handling of Qur'ānic phraseology that implies meaning without explicit statements.
- ✓ Hummadi et al. (2020) investigated the rhetorical loss in translating prepositional phrases from the Qur'ān, identifying the causes of this loss and suggesting strategies to address the difficulties in translating these phrases.
- ✓ Hashemi Minabad (2021) explored strategies for translating cultural elements, identifying the use of techniques such as borrowing, calque, literal translation, cultural equivalents, explanation, and omission in the translation of "War City Stories."
- ✓ Hurtado Albir and Molina (2002) provided foundational analysis of translation techniques, offering a comprehensive model that is widely cited in subsequent translation research.
- ✓ Niazi and Goudarzi (2017) studied divine questioning in Surah Yaseen, focusing on its significance within the Qur'ān.

✓ Rezaie Haftadar et al. (2016) examined the rhetorical purposes of interrogative sentences in the Qur'ān, identifying goals such as affirmation, motivation, admonition, guidance, and drawing attention.

✓ Jafarian, Yazdani, and Keramati Yazdi (2023) investigated strategies for achieving functional equivalence in the translation of informative, expressive, and operative aspects of the Qur'ān into English.

Based on this review of the literature, the studies collectively highlight the significant challenges and strategies involved in translating rhetorical questions and other rhetorical devices in the Qur'ān. These studies underscore the complexity of achieving pragmatic equivalence and the risks of rhetorical loss, particularly when translating culturally embedded elements and prepositional phrases. While existing research provides valuable insights into various translation approaches and emphasizes the importance of preserving the original rhetorical intent, there remains a gap in understanding how these strategies impact the overall communicative effectiveness of translated texts.

In light of these findings, this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. How effectively do current English translations of the Qur'ān convey the rhetorical force of questions as originally intended in the Arabic text?
2. What are the most common strategies employed by translators to achieve functional equivalence in the translation of rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān?
3. What are the implications of these strategies for the broader goal of maintaining the rhetorical and cultural integrity of the Qur'ānic message?

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This falls within the sphere of 'descriptive' translation studies. The descriptive nature of this study involves a detailed examination and comparison of English translations of the Holy Qur'ān, focusing on the strategies used by the translators to handle rhetorical questions. The theoretical framework guiding this analysis is based on the translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir (2002).

3.2. Corpus

The corpora analyzed in this study consist of selected verses from the Qur'ān and their English translations by Muhammad Asad and Arthur J. Arberry. The specific verses analyzed are those identified as containing rhetorical questions, including (Al-Isra: 40), (Al-Baqarah: 91), (Al-Baqarah:13), (Al-Baqarah: 44), (Al-Baqarah: 108), (Al-Baqarah: 170), (Al-Baqarah: 106), (An-Nisa: 87), (Maryam: 8), (Al-Baqarah: 245), (Al-Munafiqun: 5), (Ad-Dukhan: 13), (Al-Waqi'ah: 27). These verses were selected based on their recognition in renowned Qur'ānic literary commentaries, such as *Al-Kashāf* by Zamakhsharī, *Majma' al-Bayān* by Ṭabarsī, and *Al-Tahrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn 'Āshūr.

The 13 Qur'ānic verses selected for this study exemplify rhetorical questions, which serve as powerful linguistic and rhetorical devices within the Qur'ān. The criteria for choosing these specific verses included:

- ✓ **Variety of Rhetorical Functions:** The selected verses represent a diverse range of rhetorical functions identified in classical Arabic rhetoric, such as refutation, astonishment, reproach, and denial. This variety enables a comprehensive analysis of how different rhetorical purposes are conveyed through translation.

- ✓ **Frequency and Significance:** The chosen verses are among those frequently cited in classical exegeses for their rhetorical impact. Their frequent discussion in tafsirs (Qur'ānic commentaries) highlights their importance in understanding the Qur'ān's argumentative and persuasive techniques.

- ✓ **Translational Challenges:** These verses present significant challenges for translators, particularly in maintaining the rhetorical force of the original Arabic. By focusing on these challenging verses, the study aims to reveal how different translation strategies impact the preservation of rhetorical intent.

- ✓ **Theological and Contextual Importance:** The selected verses are theologically significant, addressing key themes such as belief and disbelief, divine authority, and moral exhortation. This makes their accurate translation crucial for conveying the intended message to readers of the English translation.

- ✓ **Representation Across Surahs:** The verses were chosen from various Surahs to ensure that the analysis covers a broad spectrum of the Qur'ān's content, providing a more holistic view of how rhetorical questions are handled in different contexts.

By selecting these 13 verses, the study aims to provide a detailed examination of how rhetorical questions are translated, highlighting the effectiveness of different strategies in conveying the Qur'ān's rhetorical power. The target texts include Muhammad Asad's translation, known for its rationalist and modernist approach, which offers a comprehensive and contextual interpretation of the Qur'ānic text (Elnemr, 2020, p. 34), and Arthur J. Arberry's translation, recognized for its literary elegance and attempt to preserve the rhetorical and stylistic elements of the Arabic original (Awan, 2019, p. 45). The selection of Muhammad Asad's and Arthur Arberry's translations of the Holy Qur'ān was driven by several key considerations:

- ✓ **Divergent Translation Philosophies:** Asad and Arberry represent two distinct approaches to Qur'ānic translation. Asad's translation is characterized by its rationalistic and interpretive style, emphasizing the conceptual meaning and broader essence of the Qur'ānic text. In contrast, Arberry's translation is more literal, focusing on maintaining the literary and aesthetic qualities of the original Arabic. This contrast allows for a rich comparative analysis of how each translator approaches the rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān.

- ✓ **Theological and Cultural Backgrounds:** The translators' religious and cultural backgrounds significantly influence their translation styles. Asad, a Jewish convert to Islam, brought a unique perspective to his translation, seeking to communicate the Qur'ān's teachings in a way that resonates with modern readers. Arberry, a Christian scholar of Islamic studies, approached the translation with an emphasis on preserving the original

language's literary qualities. These differing backgrounds provide valuable insights into how religious and cultural perspectives shape translation choices.

✓ **Historical and Scholarly Impact:** Both translations have significantly impacted the study of the Qur'ān in the English-speaking world. Arberry's translation is highly regarded for its scholarly rigor and fidelity to the Arabic text, while Asad's is praised for its accessibility and interpretive depth. Analyzing these well-known translations helps to understand the broader implications of different translation strategies.

✓ **Relevance to the Study:** The study focuses on the translation of rhetorical questions, a challenging aspect of Qur'ānic translation that requires careful handling to convey the intended meaning. The selected translations, with their distinct styles, provide an ideal corpus to explore how different strategies are employed to render these rhetorical devices in English.

This rationale supports the decision to focus on Asad and Arberry's translations, ensuring that the analysis addresses both the interpretive and literal dimensions of Qur'ānic translation. These translations were selected to facilitate a comparative analysis of different translation strategies and their effectiveness in conveying rhetorical questions from the Qur'ān.

3.3. Research instruments

This study employs the following instruments for analysis: first, Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques framework, which provides a systematic approach to identifying and categorizing the translation strategies used; and second, the English translations of the Qur'ān by Muhammad Asad and Arthur J. Arberry, which serve as the primary sources for comparative analysis.

3.4 Translation techniques model

Molina and Albir's (2002) model of translation techniques is pivotal to this study. It encompasses 18 techniques, each addressing various translation challenges. These techniques are categorized based on their focus on either the form or content of the source text and their impact on the target text. The techniques are as follows in Table 1 (Molina & Albir, 2002, p. 502).

Table 1. Molina and Albir's Suggested Strategies

No.	Techniques	Definition
1	Adaptation	Replacing a cultural element in the source language (SL) with one from the target language (TL) that serves a similar function or evokes a similar response.
2	Amplification	Adding details not present in the SL to explain or clarify the meaning in the TL.
3	Borrowing	Using a word or expression from the SL directly in the TL.
4	Calque	Translating an expression literally from SL to TL, creating a new expression in the TL.
5	Compensation	Introducing a stylistic or semantic element elsewhere in the text when it can't be directly translated

No.	Techniques	Definition
6	Description	Replacing a term or expression with a description of its form or function.
7	Discursive Creation	Creating a new expression in the TL that preserves the impact of the original
8	Established Equivalent	Using a term or phrase that is already recognized in the TL as the equivalent of the SL term
9	Generalization	Using a more general or less specific term in the TL.
10	Linguistic Amplification	Adding linguistic elements in the TL that are not present in the SL.
11	Linguistic Compression	Synthesizing linguistic elements in the TL that are separated in the SL.
12	Literal Translation	Translating a term or expression word-for-word from SL to TL
13	Modulation	Changing the form or perspective of the SL in the TL without altering the meaning
14	Particularization	Using a more precise or specific term in the TL.
15	Reduction	Omitting elements that are not necessary in the TL.
16	Substitution	Replacing linguistic or paralinguistic elements (intonation, gestures) from SL with other elements in TL
17	Transposition	Changing the grammatical structure from SL to TL
18	Variation	Changing linguistic or paralinguistic elements that affect tone, style, or dialect

3.5. Functions of rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān

Based on classical Arabic rhetoric, rhetorical questions serve multiple functions that enhance the communicative effectiveness and emotional impact of the text. As shown in Table 2, the functions typically discussed in classical Arabic rhetoric literature include (Khaṭīb Qazwīnī, n.d., p. 143; Taftāzānī, 1387, p. 421; Ibn Hishām, 1421, vol. 1, p. 15):

Table 2. Rhetorical Questions Functions

Functions	Definition
Refutation	Challenging or disproving an argument or claim
Reproach	Expressing disapproval or disappointment.
Explanation	Clarifying or elaborating on a point
Negation	Rejecting or negating a statement.
Astonishment	Expressing surprise or wonder.
Encouragement	Motivating or urging someone to take action
Reconciliation	Making a situation or argument appear equal or balanced
Unlikelihood	Indicating that something is unlikely or far-fetched.
Magnification	Emphasizing or exaggerating a point for effect

These functions are essential to the Qur'ānic discourse, adding layers of meaning and rhetorical strength to the text. This study aims to analyze whether the English translations by Asad and Arberry effectively convey these rhetorical functions and to identify the strategies they employ in doing so.

3.5. Data collection and analysis

The data collection and analysis process were conducted in several stages. First, the source text samples containing rhetorical questions were systematically selected based on their identification in renowned Qur'ānic literary commentaries, such as *Al-Kashāf* by Zamakhsharī, *Majma' al-Bayān* by Ṭabarsī, and *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn 'Āshūr, among others. Next, the target text samples were chosen according to the distinct translation strategies employed by Muhammad Asad and Arthur J. Arberry. The identification of translation strategies involved a meticulous analysis of each sentence in the target text, which was then compared to its corresponding sentence in the source text. This thorough examination aimed to uncover the specific translation strategies employed in the process. To facilitate this analysis, the strategies were categorized according to Molina and Albir's (2002) model. Notably, in cases where both explicitation and adaptation were utilized, a combined strategy was recorded to reflect the complexity of the translation approach.

4. Findings

This section analyzes 13 selected Qur'ānic verses, concentrating on how Muhammad Asad and Arthur Arberry translated rhetorical questions from the original Arabic into English. Each table presents the Arabic text of the verse, the rhetorical function it serves, and the translations by Asad and Arberry. Additionally, the tables outline the specific techniques employed by each translator based on Molina and Albir's model, assessing their effectiveness in conveying the rhetorical function. Through these detailed comparisons, we gain insights into the varying strategies and effectiveness of each translator in preserving the rhetorical essence of the Qur'ānic questions.

Table 3. Surah Al-Isra (17:40)

أَفَأَصْفَاكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنَاثًا إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Refutation
Asad's Translation	Has, then, your Sustainer distinguished you by (giving you) sons, and taken unto Himself daughters in the guise of angels? Verily, you are uttering a dreadful saying!
Technique Used by Asad	Modulation, Amplification
Arberry's Translation	What, has your Lord favoured you with sons and taken to Himself from the angels females? Surely it is a monstrous thing you are saying!
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of this verse is refutation, specifically addressed to the polytheists. Despite recognizing their own inherent weakness, they believed that God had granted them sons, the highest form of offspring. At the same time, they attributed daughters to the Almighty, claiming that angels were His daughters. Through this rhetorical question, God refutes and denies these false claims (Rāḍī, 1420, vol. 2, p. 345; Abū Ḥayyān, 1420, vol. 7, p. 53; Darwīsh, 1415, vol. 5, p. 447).

Both translations aim to convey the critical and refutational function of the rhetorical question in the original Arabic text. Below is an evaluation of how well the translators succeeded in conveying this function.

Asad's Translation

Technique Used: Asad employs modulation and amplification.

- Modulation: He slightly alters the structure to make the rhetorical question more explicit in English.
- Amplification: He adds phrases like “in the guise of angels” to clarify the reference to daughters and “Verily, you are uttering a dreadful saying!” to emphasize the gravity of the statement.

Effectiveness: Asad's translation successfully conveys the refutational function by clearly highlighting the challenge and criticism. The additional phrases provide helpful context, making the rhetorical nature more explicit for the reader.

Arberry's Translation

Technique Used: Arberry uses literal translation and established equivalents.

- Literal Translation: He adheres closely to the original Arabic structure.
- Established Equivalent: He employs standard equivalents for the Arabic terms.

Effectiveness: Arberry's translation also conveys the refutational function, though it is more direct and less explanatory than Asad's. The phrase “Surely it is a monstrous thing you are saying!” captures the severity of the criticism, but it lacks some of the contextual clarity provided by Asad's amplification.

Analysis

As shown in Table 3, both translators successfully convey the refutational function of the verse, but through different approaches. Asad's translation uses additional explanatory phrases, ensuring the reader fully grasps the refutation and the challenge embedded in the rhetorical question. This approach is more interpretive but clear in its rhetorical intent. On the other hand, Arberry's translation remains faithful to the original structure and wording, preserving the directness of the rhetorical question but requiring more interpretive effort from the reader to grasp the full context and intensity of the refutation. Overall, Asad's approach may be more accessible for readers unfamiliar with the context, while Arberry's direct translation may appeal to those who prefer a more literal rendition of the original text.

Table 4. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:91)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا تَنُومُونَ بِمَا أَنزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَكَفَرُونَ بِمَا وَزَّاهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِن قَبْلُ إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Refutation
Asad's Translation	And whenever they are told, 'Believe in what God has bestowed from on high,' they reply, 'We believe in only what has been bestowed on us' - and they deny the truth of everything else, although it is the truth confirming the revelation they already possess. Say: 'Why, then, did you slay God's prophets aforetime, if you were (truly) believers? Himself daughters in the guise of angels? Verily, you are uttering a dreadful saying!
Technique Used by Asad	Modulation, Amplification
Arberry's Translation	And when they are told, 'Believe in what God has sent down,' they say, 'We believe in what was sent down on us'; and they disbelieve in what is beyond that, yet it is the truth confirming what is with them. Say: 'Why then were you slaying the Prophets of God in former time, if you were believers?'
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of this verse is refutation, specifically aimed at the Jews. The verse addresses their refusal to accept Islam, as they believed that the Qur'ān was not sent to them and only acknowledged the Torah as divine revelation. They claimed to have faith in the Torah, yet God refutes this claim by pointing out that, despite their professed faith, they killed their prophets. Genuine faith would prevent such acts, but they not only murdered ordinary people, but also God's prophets. Thus, those who kill messengers cannot truly be considered faithful (Abū Ḥayyān, 1420, vol. 1, p. 492; Ibn 'Aṭīyyah, 1422, vol. 1, p. 179).

Techniques Used

Both translations attempt to convey the reproachful nature of the rhetorical question. Below is an evaluation of how effectively each translation captures this function.

Asad's Translation

- Technique Used: Modulation and amplification.
- Modulation: Asad modifies the structure slightly to make the rhetorical question more explicit in English.
- Amplification: He adds explanatory phrases to clarify the context, such as "Say: 'Why, then, did you slay God's prophets aforetime, if you were (truly) believers?'"

Effectiveness: Asad's translation successfully conveys the refutation by making the challenge and criticism clear. The added phrases provide important context, making the rhetorical nature more explicit.

Arberry's Translation

- Technique Used: Literal translation and established equivalent.
- Literal Translation: Arberry closely follows the structure of the original Arabic.
- Established Equivalent: He uses commonly accepted equivalents for the Arabic terms.

Effectiveness: Arberry's translation also conveys the refutational function, though it is more direct and less explanatory than Asad's. The phrase "Why then were you slaying the Prophets of God in former time, if you were believers?" effectively captures the severity of the criticism, but lacks the contextual clarity provided by Asad's amplification.

Analysis

As illustrated in Table 4, both translators effectively convey the refutation, but in different ways. Asad's translation uses additional explanatory phrases to ensure the reader fully understands the embedded criticism and challenge. This approach makes his translation more interpretive but clearer in its rhetorical intent. In contrast, Arberry stays closer to the original wording and structure, preserving the directness of the rhetorical question. However, this may require more interpretive effort from the reader to grasp the full context and intensity of the refutation.

Overall, Asad's approach may be more accessible to readers unfamiliar with the context, while Arberry's maintains the integrity of the original structure, appealing to those who prefer a more literal translation.

Table 5. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:13)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Refutation
Asad's Translation	And when they are told, 'Believe as other people have believed,' they say, 'Shall we believe as the weak-minded believe?' Oh, verily, it is they, they who are weak-minded - but they know it not!
Technique Used by Asad	Amplification
Arberry's Translation	And when it is said to them, 'Believe as the people believe,' they say, 'Shall we believe as fools believe?' Truly, they are the fools, but they do not know.
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of this question is refutation. The verse addresses the hypocrites and their strategy of undermining belief. Rather than rejecting faith outright, they claim that

the faith they are called to is that of “fools”, who, due to their lack of understanding, cannot distinguish truth from falsehood. By using the interrogative particle “hamza” the hypocrites mock and deny this faith (Zamakhsharī, 1407, vol. 1, p. 641; Ālūsī, 1415, vol. 1, p. 154; Ibn ‘Āshūr, n.d., vol. 1, p. 283).

Techniques Used

Both translations attempt to convey the refutation function of the rhetorical question in the original Arabic text. Below is an evaluation of how well each translator achieves this goal.

Asad’s Translation

The rhetorical question in the verse (“Shall we believe as the weak-minded/fools believe?”) refutes and criticizes the hypocrites’ mocking attitude towards the believers’ faith.

- Technique Used: Amplification.
- Asad employs amplification by adding explanatory phrases like “Oh, verily, it is they, they who are weak-minded” to ensure the reader comprehends the refutation within the rhetorical question. This clarifies the criticism and makes the rhetorical function more explicit. Asad’s amplification technique enhances the interpretive clarity, making the refutation easier to grasp, particularly for readers unfamiliar with the context.

Arberry’s Translation

Arberry follows a more literal translation, closely adhering to the structure and wording of the original Arabic text.

- Technique Used: Literal translation.
- Arberry’s technique is seen in his choice to retain the straightforwardness and directness of the rhetorical question, preserving the integrity of the original structure. While faithful to the source text, this approach may require more interpretive effort from the reader to fully grasp the implied criticism.

Analysis

Reflected in Table 5, the contrast between the two translations highlights different priorities in rendering the rhetorical force of the verse. Asad’s use of amplification makes the rhetorical function clearer and more accessible to a broader audience, especially those unfamiliar with the context. By providing additional explanations, he ensures the reader fully understands the severity of the refutation. Arberry’s translation, on the other hand, is commendable for its faithfulness to the original structure. However, this directness may be less immediately clear to some readers, requiring more effort to interpret the underlying criticism. Overall, Asad’s translation may be more effective for a general audience, while Arberry’s may appeal to those seeking a closer adherence to the original text.

Table 6. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:44)

اتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Reproach
Asad's Translation	Do you enjoin other people to be pious, the while you forget your own selves - and yet you recite the divine writ? Will you not, then, use your reason?
Technique Used by Asad	Modulation, Amplification
Arberry's Translation	Do you bid others to piety, and forget yourselves while you recite the Book? Do you not understand?
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of this question is reproach. The speaker uses this type of rhetorical question to criticize the listener for doing something deemed inappropriate or unworthy. Unlike a negation of fact, this form of denial acknowledges that the action has occurred, and the speaker reprimands the doer (Taftāzānī, 1387, p. 421; Ibn Hishām, 1421, vol. 1, p. 16). It is reported that one of the Jews in Medina invited his relatives to convert to Islam and follow the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) while not believing in him himself (Wāḥidī, 1411, p. 27). In response, the verse in question was revealed. Through a figurative question, God reproaches him and others like him for encouraging others to do good while neglecting it themselves. The verse concludes with another reproachful question (Abū Ḥayyān, 1420, vol. 1, p. 295; Ṣāfi, 1418, vol. 1, p. 118).

Techniques Used

Both translators recognize the figurative nature of the question and attempt to convey the reproach using different strategies:

Asad's Translation

- Technique Used: Asad employs modulation and amplification.
- Modulation: He alters the form slightly by adding the phrase "Will you not, then, use your reason?" to highlight the irrationality of the hypocritical behavior.
- Amplification: Asad further clarifies the meaning with phrases like "the while you forget your own selves" and "and yet you recite the divine writ."

Effectiveness: Asad's translation effectively conveys the reproach by making the criticism clear and ensuring the reader understands the challenge being posed.

Arberry's Translation

- Technique Used: Arberry opts for literal translation and established equivalents.

- **Literal Translation:** He closely follows the original Arabic structure and uses commonly accepted equivalents for key terms.

Effectiveness: Arberry's translation also conveys the reproach, capturing the intensity of the criticism. However, it remains closer to the original, relying more on the reader's interpretation to grasp the full weight of the reprimand.

Analysis

As outlined in Table 6, Arberry's translation preserves the original structure and directness, maintaining the rhetorical force of the question. However, it may require more effort from the reader to fully appreciate the reproach and reflect on its implications. Asad's approach, with its added clarity and context, may be more accessible to readers unfamiliar with the background or nuances of the text.

Table 7. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:108)

أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Reproach
Asad's Translation	Would you, perchance, ask of your Apostle the same as was asked of Moses in the past? But whoever changes faith for unbelief has indeed gone astray from a level path.
Technique Used by Asad	Modulation, Amplification
Arberry's Translation	Or do you desire to question your Messenger as Moses was questioned aforetime? Whoso exchanges belief for unbelief has surely gone astray from the right way.
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Modulation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of the question in the verse is reproach. Some Muslims had posed questions to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) similar to those the Jews had asked Moses (AS) (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1417, vol. 1, p. 257). As a result, God uses this verse to reprimand the Muslims and also to criticize the Jews' behavior toward Moses (AS). Narratives regarding the occasion of revelation suggest that certain individuals made unreasonable and inappropriate requests of the Prophet (PBUH), leading to the revelation of this verse (Wāḥidī, 1411, p. 37). The negation in this rhetorical question serves as a reproach, not a refutation, contrary to the interpretation of some commentators (Ibn 'Āshūr, n.d., vol. 1, p. 660).

Techniques Used

Below is an analysis of the techniques used by the translators based on Molina and Albir's Model:

Asad's Translation

- **Modulation:** Asad changes the perspective to make the sentence more natural in English. For instance, phrases like "perchance" and "in the past" are not literal translations but are added to enhance the context and make the text more idiomatic.

- **Linguistic Amplification:** He adds words such as “perchance” and “in the past”, which are not present in the original text, to provide clarity and facilitate understanding.

Effectiveness: Asad’s translation successfully conveys the function of reproach by clearly expressing the challenge and criticism embedded in the rhetorical question.

Arberry’s Translation

- **Literal Translation:** Arberry sticks closely to the original Arabic text, maintaining formal equivalence by preserving its structure and wording.
- **Modulation:** Despite the literal translation, Arberry uses modulation with terms like “aforetime” and “right way” to make the meaning more natural in English while maintaining a formal tone.

Effectiveness in Conveying Reproach: Arberry’s translation preserves the critical tone of the original text through direct language. The phrase “do you desire to question your Messenger” directly challenges the reader, maintaining the reproach. His use of the archaic term “aforetime” reinforces historical continuity, further emphasizing the reprimand.

Analysis

The critical tone of the original Arabic is well preserved in Arberry's translation through its direct language, particularly with the phrase “do you desire to question your Messenger,” which conveys the reproach effectively. The use of “aforetime” highlights the historical parallel between past and present, reinforcing the severity of the reprimand. Asad’s translation, while more idiomatic and explanatory, also effectively communicates the reproach, particularly for readers less familiar with the historical context. This contrast is evident in Table 7.

Table 8. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:170)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Reproach
Asad's Translation	But when they are told, 'Follow what God has bestowed from on high,' they answer, 'Nay, we shall follow that which we found our forefathers believing in and doing.' Why, even if their forefathers did not use their reason at all, and were devoid of all guidance?
Technique Used by Asad	Adaptation, Modulation
Arberry's Translation	And when it is said to them, 'Follow what God has sent down,' they say, 'No; but we will follow such things as we found our fathers doing.' What? And if their fathers had no understanding of anything, and if they were not guided?
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent, <i>Modulation</i>

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of the question in the verse is reproach. The verse suggests that the disbelievers blindly followed their forefathers, regardless of whether their actions were right or wrong. God reproaches this irrational imitation, viewing it as contrary to reason (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1417, vol. 1, p. 409; Ālūsī, 1415, vol. 2, p. 40). Interpreting this reproach as astonishment is reasonable, considering that despite their forefathers' ignorance of religion and lack of guidance, the disbelievers still chose to follow them (Zamakhsharī, 1407, vol. 1, p. 328; Ṭabarsī, 1372, vol. 1, p. 97).

Techniques Used

Both translators effectively convey the primary intent of the rhetorical question, but they employ different strategies and levels of precision to capture the exact meaning.

Asad's Translation

- **Adaptation and Modulation:** Asad uses adaptation by employing contemporary language and phrasing to clarify the meaning for modern readers. For instance, “bestowed from on high” is more interpretive than a literal translation.
- **Modulation:** He shifts perspective with phrases like “bestowed from on high” and “did not use their reason at all, and were devoid of all guidance”, which are not literal translations but convey the intended meaning.

Effectiveness: Asad's translation effectively communicates the reproach. The rhetorical question, “Why, even if their forefathers did not use their reason at all, and were devoid of all guidance?” conveys incredulity and criticism. His use of modern language makes the reproach clear and relatable to contemporary readers.

Arberry's Translation

- **Literal Translation:** Arberry stays true to the original Arabic structure and wording, retaining its formal tone.
- **Modulation and Established Equivalent:** He applies modulation by using the term “What?” followed by a rhetorical question, providing emphasis and a natural conveyance of the original intent. He also employs established equivalents by using commonly accepted translations for Arabic terms.

Effectiveness: Arberry's translation preserves the reproach through direct and formal language. The rhetorical question, “What? And if their fathers had no understanding of anything, and if they were not guided?” maintains the critical tone of the original. The use of “What?” adds an element of surprise and disapproval, reinforcing the reproach.

Analysis

Both translations successfully communicate the reproach inherent in the rhetorical question, albeit in different ways. Asad's translation makes the reproach explicit and accessible for modern readers through adaptation and modulation, emphasizing the irrationality of blindly following forefathers. Arberry's translation maintains the original

structure and formal tone, using literal translation and modulation to preserve the directness and critical nature of the reproach. This distinction is highlighted in Table 8.

Table 9. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:106)

مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Affirmatory
Asad's Translation	Any message which, We annul or consign to oblivion, We replace with a better or similar one. Do you not know that God has the power to will anything?
Technique Used by Asad	Adaptation, Modulation, Amplification
Arberry's Translation	And for whatever verse We abrogate or cast into oblivion, We bring a better or the like of it. Do you not know that God is powerful over everything?
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Modulation, Established Equivalent

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical question in the verse serves an affirmatory function. Such a question is used when both the speaker and the listener are already aware of the subject matter, and the speaker's goal is to prompt the listener to acknowledge it. In Arabic literature, this is known as an “affirmatory” or “confirmatory” rhetorical question (Taftāzānī, 1387, p. 418; Ibn Hishām, 1421, vol. 1, p. 16). The Prophet's opponents apparently saw contradictions in the Qur’ān’s commands and prohibitions, casting doubt on its divine origin (Wāhidī, 1411, p. 37). In response, God revealed this verse (Zamakhsharī, 1405, 1/303), which legitimizes the concept of abrogation in divine commands and uses an affirmatory rhetorical question to compel the audience to acknowledge His omnipotence. Although the rhetorical question is framed negatively, its intent is affirmatory (Ibn ‘Āshūr, no date, vol. 1, p. 647). Although directed at the Prophet (PBUH), the question also extends to the entire community (Ālūsī, 1415, vol. 1, p. 353).

Techniques Used

Both translations effectively convey the affirmatory nature of the rhetorical question.

Asad's Translation

1. Adaptation: Asad uses modern, accessible language. For instance, the phrase “consign to oblivion” replaces a more literal translation to resonate better with contemporary readers.

2. Modulation: Asad modifies the phrasing for clarity and emphasis. The phrase “a better or similar one” simplifies the concept of abrogation, making it more comprehensible for modern readers.

3. Amplification: Asad adds “Do you not know” to underscore the rhetorical nature of the question, making God's omnipotence even more explicit.

Arberry's Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry follows the original Arabic closely, maintaining a formal and traditional tone. Phrases like “abrogate” and “cast into oblivion” are direct translations from the Arabic.

2. Modulation: Arberry adjusts the question slightly— “Do you not know that God is powerful over everything?”—to sound more natural in English while retaining the original meaning.

3. Established Equivalent: The term “abrogate” is a recognized equivalent for the Arabic term, preserving the technical accuracy of the translation.

Analysis

Asad's translation effectively highlights the affirmatory aspect of the rhetorical question. His use of modern, accessible language and the explicit rhetorical phrase, “Do you not know that God has the power to will anything?” clearly emphasizes God's omnipotence, making the message more apparent to modern readers.

Similarly, Arberry's translation conveys the affirmatory nature of the rhetorical question. His formal tone and literal approach retain the original emphasis on God's omnipotence. By preserving a traditional style, Arberry ensures that the affirmatory message remains clear and respectful. The differences in their approaches are reflected in Table 9.

Table 10. Surah An-Nisa (4:87)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Negation
Asad's Translation	God - there is no deity save Him. He will surely gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, which is beyond all doubt; and whose word could be truer than God's?
Technique Used by Asad	---
Arberry's Translation	God, there is no god but He. He will surely gather you on the Day of Resurrection, wherein is no doubt. And who is there more truthful in tidings than God?
Technique Used by Arberry	---

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of the question in the verse mentioned above is to express denial or negation. In this context, the question indicates that the event or statement has not or will not occur. Essentially, it shares a connection with refutation. However, unlike simple negation, this refutation addresses the listener's false assumption or claim, correcting it (Maṭ'anī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 98). In this verse, God demonstrates His power and greatness by speaking of gathering all creatures on the Day of Resurrection, and emphasizes His truthfulness through a rhetorical question. Commentators consider this question a form of refutation (Ālūsī, 1415, vol. 5, p. 105). However, since no one doubts God's truthfulness, the rhetorical question seems to convey negation instead (Maṭ'anī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 221).

The Techniques Used

Both translations successfully capture the negation implied in the rhetorical question of the verse.

Asad's Translation

1. Adaptation: Asad modernizes the phrasing to make the text more accessible, such as translating "there is no god but He" as "there is no deity save Him".
2. Modulation: The phrase "He will surely gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, which is beyond all doubt" shifts the original to a more explanatory form, emphasizing the certainty of the event.
3. Linguistic Amplification: Asad adds "which is beyond all doubt" to clarify and reinforce the certainty of the Day of Resurrection.
4. Compensation: He retains the impact of the rhetorical question, "and whose word could be truer than God's?" emphasizing God's ultimate truthfulness.

Arberry's Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry remains close to the original Arabic structure, with a direct translation like "there is no god but He".
2. Calque: The phrase "wherein is no doubt" is a literal translation that maintains the structure of the original Arabic.
3. Established Equivalent: Arberry uses recognized equivalents such as "Day of Resurrection" and "more truthful in tidings" for accuracy and clarity.
4. Modulation: The rhetorical question "And who is there more truthful in tidings than God?" is slightly adjusted for idiomatic correctness while preserving the original meaning.

Analysis

Asad's translation effectively conveys the negation in the rhetorical question. "Whose word could be truer than God's?" implies that no one's word can be truer, reinforcing the negation. As illustrated in Table 10, the added phrase "which is beyond all doubt" further underscores the certainty and negation of any doubt regarding the Day of Resurrection. Arberry's translation similarly conveys the negation through the question, "And who is there more truthful in tidings than God?" This implies that no one is more truthful, emphasizing the denial of any other being's truthfulness compared to God. His phrase "wherein is no doubt" preserves the directness of the original negation about the Day of Resurrection.

Table 11. Surah Maryam (19:8)

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Astonishment
Asad's Translation	He answered: 'O my Sustainer! How can I have a son when my wife has always been barren and I have become utterly infirm through old age?'
Technique Used by Asad	Adaptation, Linguistic, Modulation, Compensation
Arberry's Translation	He said, 'Lord, how shall I have a son, seeing my wife is barren, and I have reached the end of my life?'
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent, Calque, Modulation

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical function of the question in the verse mentioned above is to express astonishment. Speakers sometimes use rhetorical questions to convey their surprise or wonder to the listener, and this style is also found in the Qur'ān (Ibn 'Āshūr, n.d., vol. 1, p. 368). In Qur'ān 19:8, the rhetorical question uses the term “أَنَّى”, which can have various meanings. In this verse, it is interpreted as “how” or “from where” (Abū Ḥayyān, 1420, vol. 7, p. 243). The secondary function of this rhetorical question is to express astonishment, as the situation—having a child despite the woman being barren and the man being old and weak—is unusual and extraordinary (Qurashi, 1377, vol. 6, p. 299).

However, this astonishment does not undermine Zechariah's faith in God's power. Feeling wonder in such a situation is natural and does not affect one's belief or certainty. Even when the conditions for an event seem impossible and obstacles are present, receiving unexpected glad tidings can stir emotions and raise questions, even if one is certain of the truth from the start. Certainty does not prevent emotional responses (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1417, vol. 14, p. 16).

The Techniques Used

Both translations effectively convey the astonishment embedded in the rhetorical question in this verse.

Asad's Translation

1. Adaptation: Asad uses modern and accessible language, such as translating “Lord” to “O my Sustainer” to make the text relatable.

2. Linguistic Amplification: He adds details like “always been barren” and “utterly infirm through old age” to emphasize the improbability of the situation, enhancing the sense of astonishment that isn't as explicit in the original text.

3. Modulation: The phrase “How can I have a son” simplifies the expression of incredulity, making it more straightforward than the original question.

4. Compensation: Asad adds context and emphasis to compensate for any loss of nuance from the original Arabic, ensuring the emotional depth is retained.

Arberry's Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry stays close to the original Arabic, using direct translations like “how shall I have a son” and “seeing my wife is barren”.

2. Established Equivalent: He uses established equivalents like “Lord” and “barren” to ensure accuracy and clarity.

3. Calque: The phrase “seeing my wife is barren” is a word-for-word translation, preserving the structure and meaning of the original.

4. Modulation: The phrase “I have reached the end of my life” is slightly modified to fit idiomatic English, while still conveying the sense of advanced age and improbability.

Analysis

Asad's translation effectively conveys the astonishment in the rhetorical question. By detailing the conditions (“always been barren” and “utterly infirm through old age”), he emphasizes the impossibility of having a son, highlighting the incredulity in the verse. Arberry's translation also captures the astonishment through the rhetorical question “how shall I have a son”, followed by the factual conditions. As demonstrated in Table 11, his formal and direct language maintains the gravity and incredulity of the situation, and the phrase “I have reached the end of my life” conveys the improbability of having children at an advanced age.

Table 12. Surah al-Baqarah (2:245)

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Encouragement
Asad's Translation	Who is it that will offer up unto God a goodly loan, which He will amply repay, multiplying it many times? For it is God alone who grants abundance or gives in scant measure; and unto Him you shall be brought back.
Technique Used by Asad	Adaptation, Amplification, Modulation, Compensation
Arberry's Translation	Who is he that will lend to God a good loan, and He will multiply it for him manifold? God straitens and enlarges; and unto Him you shall be returned.
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent, Calque, Modulation

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

A rhetorical question is sometimes used to encourage and motivate the audience to take action or adopt a specific behavior (Ibn ‘Āshūr, n.d., vol. 2, p. 452). In the verse mentioned above, God encourages believers to give charity by likening it to lending to Him. The purpose of this rhetorical question is to inspire and motivate the audience (Ibn ‘Āshūr, n.d., vol. 2, p. 452).

The Techniques Used

Both translations effectively convey the encouraging nature of the rhetorical question in this verse.

Asad’s Translation

1. Adaptation: Asad uses modern, accessible language. For example, “offer up unto God a goodly loan” is a contemporary and relatable expression that makes the meaning clearer than a strictly literal translation would.

2. Amplification: Asad adds explanatory details like “multiplying it many times” to emphasize the concept of divine reward, ensuring clarity.

3. Compensation: The phrase “God alone who grants abundance or gives in scant measure” adds context about God’s control over provision, which may be less explicit in the original but is vital for understanding.

4. Modulation: Asad adjusts the phrasing slightly to make the rhetorical question’s purpose of encouragement more understandable to modern readers.

Arberry’s Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry stays close to the original structure and phrasing, using a formal, traditional tone. For instance, “lend to God a good loan” is a direct translation.

2. Established Equivalent: Arberry uses familiar equivalents like “God straitens and enlarges” to convey God’s control over provision with accuracy.

3. Calque: Phrases like “lend to God a good loan” and “He will multiply it for him manifold” are calques, preserving the original structure directly.

4. Modulation: While mostly literal, Arberry slightly modulates the phrasing to make it fit more naturally into idiomatic English, without losing the original meaning.

Analysis

Asad’s translation effectively conveys the encouragement embedded in the rhetorical question. The phrasing “Who is it that will offer up unto God a goodly loan” directly invites the reader to take action, while the promise that God will “amply repay, multiplying it many times” serves as strong encouragement. As reflected in Table 12, the added context about God’s control over provision reinforces the reliability of this divine promise.

Arberry’s translation also conveys the encouragement through the rhetorical question “Who is he that will lend to God a good loan?” The promise that God “will multiply it for him manifold” provides strong motivation for the reader. The phrase “God straitens and

enlarges” emphasizes God’s power over provision, reinforcing the reliability of the divine promise and encouraging trust in God’s ability to reward.

Overall Analysis

Both translations successfully convey the encouragement inherent in the rhetorical question. Asad’s translation makes this encouragement explicit and relatable through modern, amplified phrasing, emphasizing the promise of multiplied rewards. Arberry’s translation maintains a formal, traditional tone with a more literal approach, preserving the original structure while still effectively conveying the message of encouragement.

Table 13. Surah al-Munafiqun (63:5-6)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَوَّا رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ. سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ لَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Reconciliation
Asad's Translation	And when they are told, 'Come, the Messenger of God will pray for your forgiveness,' they turn their heads away, and you see them drawing back in arrogance. It is all the same for them whether you pray for their forgiveness or do not pray for their forgiveness; God will not forgive them. Verily, God does not bestow His guidance upon such iniquitous folk.
Technique Used by Asad	Adaptation, Amplification, Compensation, Modulation
Arberry's Translation	And when it is said to them, 'Come now, the Messenger of God will ask forgiveness for you,' they twist their heads, and thou seest them turning away, waxing proud. Equal it is to them, whether thou askest forgiveness for them or thou askest not forgiveness for them; God will never forgive them. God guides not the people of the ungodly.
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Established Equivalent, Calque, Modulation

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

In rhetorical analysis, the function of reconciliation (تسويه) in rhetorical questions involves using a question to establish equality or balance between two elements. This is often achieved through the use of the interrogative particle “همزة استفهام”, (hamzah of interrogation), which indicates that the elements before and after the question are considered equal in significance from the speaker’s perspective (Ibn Hishām, 1422, 1/15). In the specified verse, the rhetorical question serves to equalize (تسويه) the two conditions mentioned: whether someone prays for forgiveness for them or not, it makes no difference (Abū Ḥayyān, 1420, vol. 10, p. 184). The question highlights that their condition remains unchanged, regardless of any intercession (Ibn ‘Āshūr, n.d., vol. 28, p. 219).

The Techniques Used

Since reconciliation (تسوية) in Arabic has a specific structure, understanding this function goes beyond just interrogative words and includes various elements that help convey the concept (Ibn Hishām, 1422, 1/15). Both translations reflect this idea but use different methods to express it.

Asad's Translation

1. Adaptation: Asad uses contemporary and accessible language, such as “the Messenger of God will pray for your forgiveness”, ensuring clarity for modern readers.
2. Amplification: He adds details like “drawing back in arrogance” to emphasize the futility of their request for forgiveness, enriching the meaning of the rhetorical question.
3. Compensation: Asad reinforces the concept of equality by explicitly stating “It is all the same for them,” clarifying the rhetorical question’s role in highlighting their indifference and stubbornness.
4. Modulation: He slightly adjusts the tone to make the rhetorical question’s function—clarifying the futility and equality of their state—more apparent.

Arberry's Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry maintains a formal and traditional tone, staying close to the original with phrasing like “Come now, the Messenger of God will ask forgiveness for you”.
2. Established Equivalent: He uses well-established terms like “waxing proud” to accurately capture the original meaning.
3. Calque: The phrase “Equal it is to them” is a calque, translating the original structure directly and emphasizing the equality of their situation.
4. Modulation: While generally literal, Arberry modulates the phrasing slightly to ensure clarity, while keeping the formal tone intact. This effectively conveys the rhetorical question’s role in equalizing their unchanging state.

Analysis

Asad’s translation effectively captures the function of the rhetorical question, emphasizing the futility of seeking forgiveness for those who remain arrogant. By highlighting their unchanged condition—whether or not the Prophet prays for them—Asad clarifies that the rhetorical question serves to equalize their situation, revealing the ineffectiveness of any prayer on their behalf.

Arberry’s translation similarly conveys the function of reconciliation, with the rhetorical question “Equal it is to them” emphasizing the futility of seeking forgiveness. The formal tone and direct phrasing reinforce the idea that their state remains unchanged, underlining their obstinacy and the ineffectiveness of any intercession.

Overall Analysis

Both translations successfully convey the function of reconciliation in the rhetorical question. Asad's modern and explanatory approach makes the equalizing function explicit, emphasizing the futility and unchanged condition of the individuals. This distinction is evident in Table 13, where Arberry's more literal and formal approach retains the original structure, highlighting the equalization of their condition and the ineffectiveness of seeking forgiveness for them.

Table 14. Surah Al-Dukhan (44:13)

أَنَّى لَهُمُ الذِّكْرَى وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مُبِينٌ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Unlikelihood
Asad's Translation	[But] how shall this remembrance avail them [at the Last Hour], seeing that an apostle had previously come unto them, clearly expounding the truth,
Technique Used by Asad	Modulation, Expansion, Transposition
Arberry's Translation	How should they have the Reminder, seeing a clear Messenger already came to them,
Technique Used by Arberry	Literal Translation, Calque, Transposition, Reduction

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

Sometimes a speaker uses a rhetorical question to indicate that performing a certain action is improbable or unlikely. One such function of rhetorical questions is to convey unlikelihood. In this verse, the term “أَنَّى” (*annā*) is interpreted to mean “how” (Ibn ‘Āshūr, n.d., vol. 25, p. 315), or “why”, as in “why should I care” (Ālūsī, 1415, vol. 25, p. 1318). The verse suggests that it is highly improbable that those who rejected clear evidence of the truth in this world will change their stance in the afterlife (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1417, vol. 18, p. 137).

The Techniques Used

Asad's Translation

1. Modulation: Asad uses modulation to rephrase the rhetorical question, emphasizing the futility of the remembrance. For example, by rephrasing “how shall this remembrance avail them” and adding context like “at the Last Hour”, Asad helps highlight the unlikelihood of their change.

2. Expansion: Asad expands the original text by adding additional context, such as “at the Last Hour” and “clearly expounding the truth”. These additions clarify why the remembrance is ineffective, reinforcing the unlikelihood implied by the rhetorical question.

3. Transposition: Asad rearranges the sentence structure to better suit English syntax, making the concept of unlikelihood more accessible and effectively conveying the intended meaning.

Arberry's Translation

1. Literal Translation: Arberry stays close to the literal meaning, maintaining much of the original phrasing.

2. Calque: Terms like "Reminder" and "clear Messenger" reflect a calque, directly translating the Arabic terms. However, this may not fully capture the rhetorical nuance of unlikelihood.

3. Transposition: Arberry makes minimal adjustments to the sentence structure, keeping it close to the original, which could affect the clarity of the rhetorical question's implication of unlikelihood.

4. Reduction: His translation is concise and omits additional context, which may make the unlikelihood implied by the rhetorical question less explicit compared to Asad's expanded version.

Overall Analysis

Asad's translation clearly emphasizes the unlikelihood of the situation by rephrasing and expanding on the original text, making the rhetorical question more understandable to modern readers. As shown in Table 14, Arberry's translation, while accurate, retains a more literal approach, which may not fully convey the sense of improbability without additional context.

Table 15. Surah Al-Waqi'ah (56:27)

وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ	
Function of Rhetorical Question	Magnification
Asad's Translation	NOW AS FOR those who have attained to righteous-ness - what of those who have attained to righteous-ness?
Technique Used by Asad	Literal Translation, Expansion, Modulation, Established Equivalence
Arberry's Translation	The Companions of the Right (O Companions of the Right!)
Technique Used by Arberry	. Literal Translation, Calque

Explanation

Function of the Rhetorical Question

One of the less commonly noted functions of rhetorical questions is magnification—emphasizing the grandeur or significance of something, which is present in this verse. This figurative use of interrogation highlights the greatness and dignity of the subject (Ṭabarsī,

1372, vol. 10, p. 516). This Qur'ānic verse is similar to expressions used in everyday conversation, like "What a person he is!" In this context, the rhetorical question underscores the high status of the "Companions of the Right" (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 23, p. 219).

The Techniques Used

Asad's Translation

1. **Literal Translation:** Asad closely follows the original wording, retaining the phrase "those who have attained to righteousness." This preserves the emphasis and magnification present in the original.

2. **Expansion:** By repeating the phrase "those who have attained to righteousness," Asad amplifies the rhetorical effect, heightening the sense of grandeur surrounding the "Companions of the Right".

3. **Modulation:** Asad modulates the text by adding the phrase "NOW AS FOR" to introduce the rhetorical question. This draws attention to the magnification of the righteous, making the intended effect more pronounced.

4. **Established Equivalence:** Asad aims for dynamic equivalence, ensuring that the rhetorical impact of the repetition is clear to modern readers. His approach reflects the magnification intended in the original verse.

Arberry's Translation

1. **Literal Translation:** Arberry adopts a literal approach, translating "أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ" as "The Companions of the Right". While accurate, this does not fully replicate the magnifying effect present in the original.

2. **Calque:** Arberry uses a calque, directly translating the term "Companions of the Right" without additional modification or emphasis.

Analysis

Asad's translation effectively conveys the magnification through the repetition of the phrase and the expanded introduction, which emphasize the importance of the "Companions of the Right" and align with the rhetorical grandeur of the original verse. This contrast is highlighted in Table 15, where Arberry's translation, while accurate, only partially conveys the magnification. The exclamatory phrase offers some emphasis, but the literal translation and calque do not capture the full rhetorical effect of repetition and magnification present in the original.

Comparison of Strategies Used

The analysis of rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān, using Molina and Albir's model, reveals distinct translation strategies employed by Muhammad Asad and Arthur Arberry. The following section will provide a detailed comparison, statistical analysis, and discussion of the effectiveness of these strategies in conveying the rhetorical functions inherent in the original Arabic text.

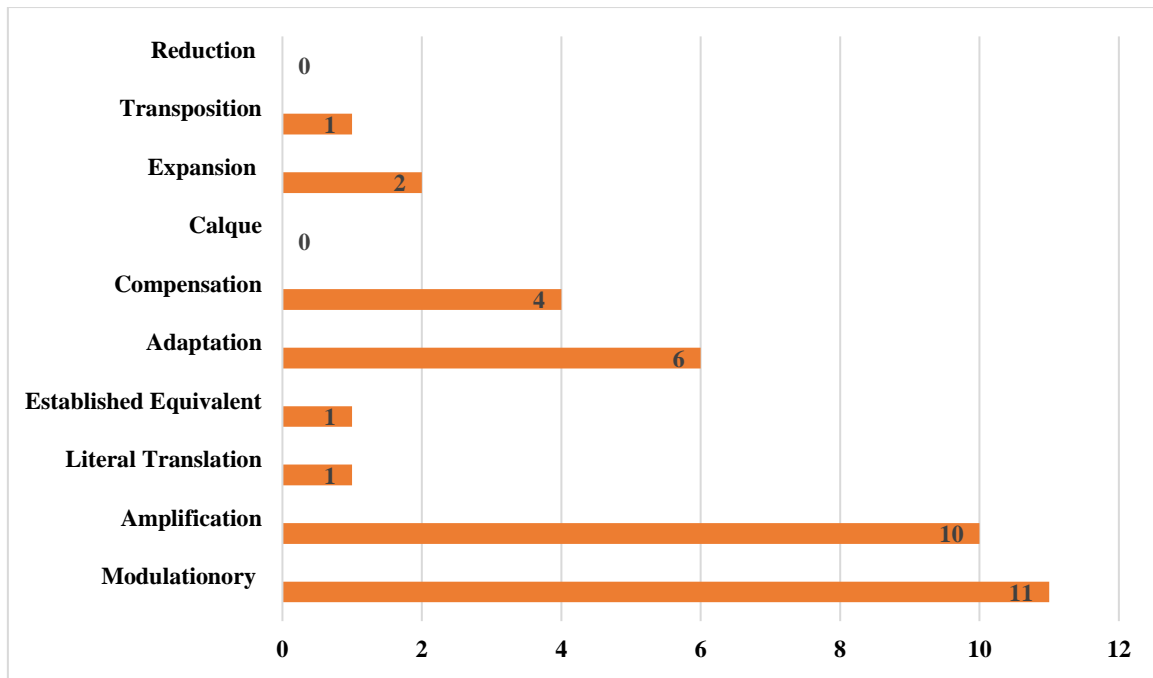


Figure 1. Asad's translation strategies

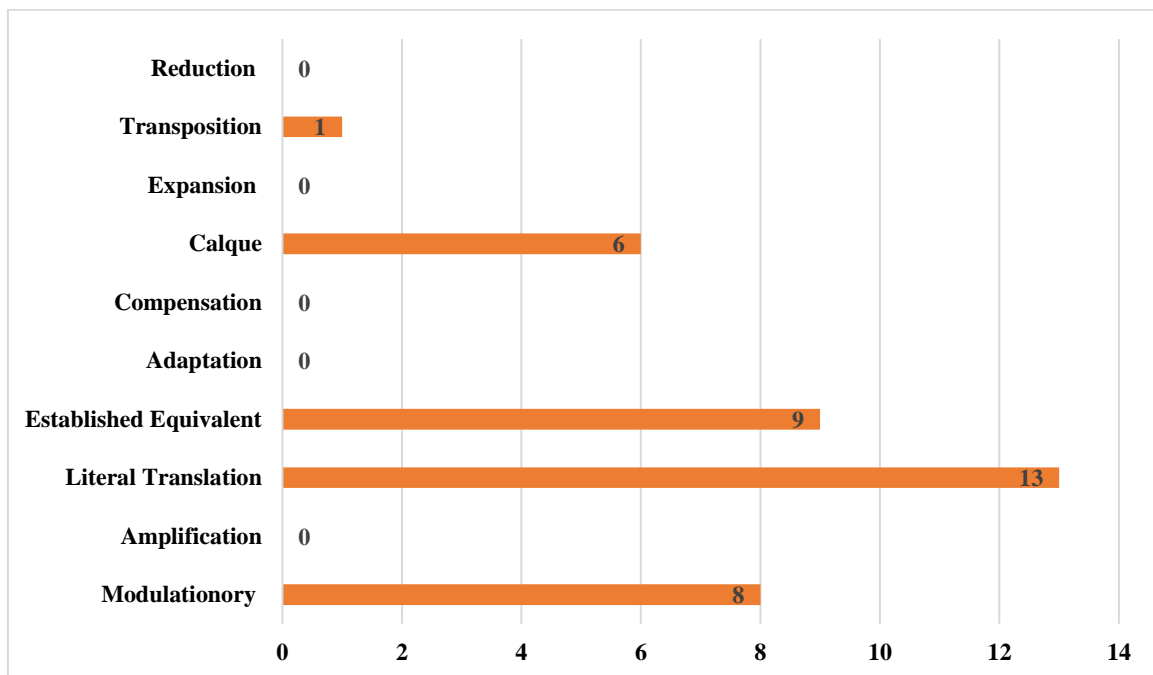


Figure 2. Arberry's strategies

5. Discussion

The data reveals a clear divergence in the translation strategies employed by Asad and Arberry. As illustrated in Figure 1, Asad utilizes modulation more frequently, with 11 instances compared to Arberry's 8. This strategy involves altering the point of view or cognitive category to effectively convey meaning, suggesting Asad's effort to adapt the translation contextually. Additionally, Asad employs amplification 10 times, while Arberry

does not use this strategy at all. Amplification adds detailed information not explicitly present in the original text to enhance clarity and comprehension, reflecting Asad's interpretive approach. In contrast, Arberry favors literal translation, employing it 13 times compared to Asad's single instance. This indicates Arberry's preference for a direct translation that closely follows the structure and wording of the original Arabic, maintaining textual fidelity but potentially demanding more interpretative effort from readers.

Furthermore, as seen in Figure 2, Arberry uses established equivalents 9 times, significantly more than Asad's single instance. This approach aids readability and consistency for the target audience. On the other hand, Asad exclusively employs adaptation and compensation, using these strategies 6 and 4 times, respectively, which demonstrates his inclination to adjust content for cultural relevance and to compensate for potential meaning loss in translation. Arberry applies calque 6 times, a technique that involves direct translation of elements, retaining the foreign structure but sometimes resulting in unnatural expressions in the target language. Asad, however, does not use this strategy, indicating his preference for more natural English expressions. Moreover, Asad uses expansion twice to add explanatory material, a method absent in Arberry's work, highlighting Asad's tendency to ensure thorough understanding. Both translators employ transposition and reduction minimally, with each using transposition once to alter grammatical structure, while Arberry uses reduction once to omit unnecessary elements.

Asad's translations are characterized by rich explanatory content, incorporating amplification and expansion, which make them more accessible to readers unfamiliar with the cultural and historical context of the Qur'ān. His frequent use of modulation and adaptation ensures that the translated text resonates with the target audience's perspective. However, this heavy reliance on interpretative strategies may sometimes lead to a departure from the original text's simplicity and directness. In contrast, Arberry's preference for literal translation and established equivalents maintains a high level of fidelity to the original text, preserving the Qur'ān's linguistic structure. His use of calque reflects an effort to retain the foreign essence of the source language. Nevertheless, this literal approach may result in translations that are harder to understand without prior knowledge of the context, potentially obscuring the rhetorical impact of the original verses.

6. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of translation strategies used by Muhammad Asad and Arthur J. Arberry reveals distinct approaches to translating rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān. Asad frequently employs amplification and literal translation, resulting in translations that are both explanatory and closely aligned with the original text's wording. In contrast, Arberry leans towards using compensation and established equivalents, focusing on balancing the text while incorporating well-recognized translations. Although both translators aim to preserve the rhetorical features of the Qur'ān, their differing strategies highlight their unique translation philosophies.

Asad's translations are more interpretive and explanatory, which may aid readers unfamiliar with the Qur'ānic context. Conversely, Arberry's translations maintain the directness and integrity of the original text, appealing to those who prefer a closer adherence to the source language. Overall, both translators successfully convey the refutation function embedded in the rhetorical questions, albeit through different strategies. The choice of strategy reflects their respective translation philosophies and the intended audience.

The comparison between Muhammad Asad and Arthur Arberry's translations of rhetorical questions in the Qur'ān highlights distinct approaches:

✓ **Literal vs. Interpretive:** Arberry's literal approach ensures textual fidelity but may require additional interpretive effort from readers. In contrast, Asad's interpretive method, through amplification and modulation, makes the text more comprehensible but may introduce subjective elements.

✓ **Cultural Relevance:** Asad's use of adaptation and compensation enhances cultural relevance, while Arberry's translation retains foreign elements through calque, emphasizing the original linguistic structure.

✓ **Rhetorical Effectiveness:** Both translators effectively convey the rhetorical functions, but their methods differ significantly. Asad's approach may be more suitable for readers seeking clarity and context, while Arberry's method appeals to those interested in a more literal and direct translation.

This study underscores the importance of selecting appropriate translation strategies to balance fidelity to the original text with readability and comprehension for the target audience. The findings suggest that a combination of strategies might be necessary to fully capture the rhetorical nuances of the Qur'ānic text. This study is limited by its focus on only two translators, which may not fully represent the diverse range of translation strategies employed by different translators. Additionally, the analysis is based on English translations, which might not capture all the nuances present in the original Arabic text. The subjective nature of translating rhetorical questions and the potential biases of the selected translators also limit the generalizability of the findings. The findings suggest that a combination of translation strategies might be necessary to fully capture the rhetorical nuances of the Qur'ānic text. Future research could explore a broader range of translators to provide a more comprehensive understanding of translation strategies. Additionally, investigating how different strategies impact reader comprehension and reception could offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of various translation approaches. This study emphasizes the importance of selecting appropriate translation strategies to balance fidelity to the original text with readability and comprehension for the target audience.

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Persian and English Renderings of Cultural-Specific Terms in the Holy Qur'ān: An Adequate Translation Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Translation of the Holy Qur'ān has always been a challenging and contentious issue due to the presence of cultural terms. While some translators advocate for a literal word-for-word translation, there have been numerous interpretational versions of the Holy Qur'ān in various languages. This study examines the Persian and English translations of cultural-specific terms in the Holy Qur'ān from the perspective of accurate translation to compare them with the original Arabic version. Additionally, two interpretational books and a Qur'ānic dictionary were consulted to support the research. Seventy cultural terms were randomly selected from different parts of the Holy Qur'ān for analysis and comparison. The findings suggest that when translating such significant texts into a target language, the dominant language (Arabic) does not significantly influence translators' strategies; rather, it is the cultural context that plays a crucial role in determining translation strategies. Furthermore, the study revealed that both Persian and English translators tended to prioritize accurate translation over non-adequate translation, indicating their commitment to remaining faithful to the original text.

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1. Introduction

Muslims hold the Holy Qur'ān in the highest regard as a miraculous and unparalleled source, making its translation a complex and challenging task in Islamic theology. The presence of a cultural gap between the source and target texts further complicates the translation process. This study aims to explore the Persian and English translations of cultural-specific terms in the Holy Qur'ān from the perspective of accurate translation. Additionally, the study seeks to investigate the potential influence of state hegemony on translation strategies within weaker states. Even-Zohar (1990) introduced the polysystem model, which refers to interconnected fields that collectively impact the translation process. Shuttleworth (as cited in Baker & Malmkjaer, 2001) expands on this concept by highlighting the presence of phenomena across various levels within polysystems. The national literature polysystem is considered a component of the broader socio-cultural polysystem, which encompasses literary, artistic, religious, and political elements. Literature is not viewed merely as a collection of texts but as a complex set of factors that govern their production, promotion, and reception.

This study emphasizes the significance of the polysystem model, as it recognizes translation as a system that interacts with other systems such as literature, economy, politics, and culture. Moreover, it acknowledges the potential impact of state hegemony on the translation process in weaker states. Furthermore, to ensure the reliability of the results, this study incorporates two primary types of translation proposed within the model: adequate translation and non-adequate translation.

According to Toury (1995), adequate translation encompasses two key aspects: the general or ideal approximation to source-text norms, and the tertium comparationis represented by a source-text-oriented translation, demonstrating how the original can be effectively translated (as cited in Crisafulli, 2001). Koller (2003) further elaborates on the concept of adequacy, highlighting two senses: (1) the reproduction of the unity of content and form of a source-language text through another language, and (2) conveying identical information using similar or identical means in a different language. Adequate translation involves retaining information from the source text and may require breaking conventions of the target language to preserve meaning (Wang, 2014). It can also be likened to foreignization, as proposed by Venuti (1995), which aims to maintain an exotic atmosphere for target-language readers, introducing new terms and structures to enrich the target language gradually. Translators employing this strategy strive to maintain loyalty to the source text. Conversely, non-adequate translation corresponds to the domestication strategy suggested by Venuti (1995). Venuti (1995) defines domestication as aligning the text closely with the culture of the target language, potentially resulting in the loss of information from the source text. While this strategy does not introduce new terms to the target text, it aims to create a more understandable and comprehensible translation. Even-Zohar (2000) notes that the translator's primary focus is on finding suitable secondary models for the foreign text, which may lead to a non-adequate translation or a greater discrepancy between the achieved equivalence and postulated adequacy.

Given the Holy Qur'ān's unique and profound message, along with the cultural gap between the source and target texts, translating the Holy Qur'ān has always posed challenges in Islamic theology. This study seeks to identify the most commonly used translation strategies for cultural-specific terms in the Holy Qur'ān and determine the most comprehensible approach to translating these terms. To address these objectives, the study formulates the following research questions to provide reliable insights:

- What are the most and least frequently used strategies in translating cultural-specific items of the Holy Qur'ān in English and Persian translations, as per the polysystem model?
- To what extent are adequate and non-adequate translations utilized in the English translation of cultural terms in the Holy Qur'ān, and how do these compare to their usage in Persian translations?
- Is there a significant disparity in the frequency of adequate and non-adequate translations employed by Persian and English translators?
- Does the perceived dominance of Arabic as a language influence translator of the Holy Qur'ān to unconsciously favor adequate translation when rendering cultural terms into Persian and English?

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical background

Culture is commonly understood as a complex amalgamation of knowledge, beliefs, arts, rules, moral principles, habits, and other essential components that individuals must learn and adhere to in order to thrive within their society. According to Anari & Sanjarani (2016), culture encompasses shared beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles, and values prevalent among speakers of a specific language residing in the same historical period and geographical region. Culture is deeply intertwined with social behaviors within a particular society, leading to variations not only between different countries but also within the same country across different eras. Cultural terms can pose challenges in the translation process as they are closely linked to the comprehension and potential misinterpretation of the source text. Translators who lack sufficient background knowledge and understanding of the cultural context may struggle to accurately convey the text in a culturally appropriate manner. Vermeer (1989) emphasizes the inseparable connection between language and culture, stating that language is an integral part of culture. Anari & Sanjarani (2016) further highlight that culture serves as the cohesive force that unites groups of people, facilitating harmonious coexistence. Culture plays a defining role in shaping human communities, individual identities, social structures, and encompasses practices that have proven effective in the past. In the realm of translation, James (2002) underscores the significant cultural implications that influence the translation process, encompassing lexical content, syntax, ideologies, and ways of life within a given culture. Translators must make decisions regarding the importance of cultural elements and the extent to which they should be translated into the target language, considering the goals of the source text and the intended readership of both the source and target texts. The concept of polysystem, along with its adequate and non-adequate translation strategies, has been extensively utilized in various scholarly works. Initially proposed in 1969 and 1970, the polysystem theory has undergone refinement and development in subsequent studies, drawing on the foundations laid by Russian Formalism in the 1920s (Even-Zohar, 1990 as cited in Firdaus, 2012).

2.2. Empirical background

Numerous studies have delved into the polysystem theory, translation, cultural understanding, and culture-specific items (CSIs) in translation. Abdul-Raof (2001) emphasized the significance of translating the Noble Qur'ān as a valuable contribution to humanity and a means of fostering cross-cultural understanding. He stressed the delicate and

challenging nature of this task, advocating for an interpretation of the underlying meanings of the Holy Qur'ān rather than a mere substitution for the original text (as cited in Anari & Sanjarani, 2016). In a different study, Ebrahimi (2009) explored the polysystem theory through the lens of children's literature, examining the positions that translated works can occupy within this system compared to original writings, particularly in Iran. The study also investigated the factors influencing whether translated literature holds a central or peripheral position within a country's literary system, highlighting the significance of children's literature in shaping young minds, thoughts, and futures within a polysystem model. Salehi (2012) delved into the intricate relationship between culture, language, and translation, offering insights into various perspectives on culture within translation studies. The analysis explored researchers' viewpoints on the dynamic interaction between culture and language, as well as the impact of culture on the translational discourse. The study revealed the profound influence of culture and translation as pivotal variables in human communication, showcasing how culture shapes translational practices in diverse ways.

Furthermore, Salehi (2013) investigated the strategies employed by both native and non-native translators in transferring Persian CSIs within novels. The study aimed to shed light on the nuanced approaches taken by translators to convey cultural nuances effectively, emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity and accuracy in the translation of CSIs.

In Nowshadi's study (2012), two Persian religious texts were compared with their English translations to analyze the translation of CSIs. Drawing on Newmark's (1988) definition and categorization of CSIs and their translation strategies, the study identified 232 culture-specific items in the corpus. The analysis revealed that the naturalization strategy was the most frequently employed in translating CSIs, indicating translators' inclination towards naturalization in rendering these cultural elements. Morin (2014) explored the relationship between the polysystem theory and translation, focusing on the competition between Bahasa Indonesia Baku (BIB) - the Standardized Indonesian language, translated literature, and regional vernaculars for dominance within Indonesia's national literary polysystem. Morin argued that translated literature plays a crucial role in enriching domestic literature, promoting BIB as the national language, and elevating the status of regional vernaculars to national and regional levels. While BIB typically occupies a central position politically, translated literature and regional vernaculars are often relegated to peripheral positions. However, the dynamic nature of the polysystem theory suggests that these positions are not fixed, allowing for interchangeability among the three systems. In their research, Anari and Sanjarani (2016) highlighted the challenges posed by translating items specific to the unique culture of the Qur'ān and Islam. Utilizing Baker's (1992) theoretical model for translating culture-specific items, the researchers examined the strategies employed by Qur'ān translators, such as Pickthall, Shakir, and Yusuf Ali, in handling these cultural elements. The study found that the most commonly used strategy for translating Qur'ān-specific items across all three translators was the use of more general terms, indicating a preference for translating cultural items with broader, generic language.

Despite the cultural gap between the source and target texts, there is a limited number of studies addressing the translation of the Holy Qur'ān as a challenging issue in Islamic theology. This study aims to investigate Persian and English translations of cultural-specific terms in the Holy Qur'ān from the perspective of adequate translation. The research seeks to compare and analyze Persian and English renditions of the Holy Qur'ān in relation to the original Arabic version, considering the nuances of cultural translation within the context of the polysystem theory.

3. Methodology

3.1. Materials

In this descriptive-comparative study, 70 cultural terms from the original Arabic text of the Holy Qur'ān were selected using convenient sampling and compared with their counterparts in five English versions and five Persian versions. The primary objective was to identify culture-bound terms and examine the translation strategies employed by the translators in handling these terms in detail.

3.2. Data collection and analysis

In alignment with the objectives of this study, 70 cultural terms from the Holy Qur'ān in Arabic and their corresponding translations in English and Persian were randomly selected. Five English translations by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Arthur Arberry, Muhammad Asad, Muhammad Habib Shakir, and Laleh Bakhtiar, as well as five Persian translations by Mohammad Reza Safavi, Hossein Ansarian, Abolfazl Bahrampour, Mehdi Hojati, and Bahaedin Khoramshahi, were chosen at random. The unit of analysis comprised words and phrases. Translators were categorized into two groups based on their first language: Persian and English speakers. These groups were further classified according to the primary and secondary positions of each target text, as modified by Zohar. A tabulated list of 70 cultural terms and their diverse translations was created to facilitate analysis and decision-making processes, aiming to identify the prevalence of adequate and non-adequate translation strategies. When necessary, relevant commentaries on the Holy Qur'ān by Mostafa Asrar (1955), Mobin interpretation by Abolfazl Bahrampour (2011), and Al-Mizan by Allamah Tabatabai (1903-1981) were consulted. The collected data on cultural terms from the Holy Qur'ān were analyzed following classification within the established framework. Given the focus on culture-bound elements, after identifying the strategies employed in each translation, frequency tables were generated for each strategy by individual translators and for the Persian and English translator groups. Additionally, a comprehensive frequency table was compiled to illustrate the total frequency and percentage of each strategy's application, enabling the researcher to derive pertinent findings. Finally, a chi-square test was conducted to assess the significance of differences in strategy usage between Persian and English translators.

4. Findings

The primary focus of this research was to examine if the dominance of Arabic as a language affects the translation strategies of English and Persian translators. The study also aimed to determine the prevalence of adequate versus non-adequate translation strategies employed by these translators. Tables 1-10 display the frequency and percentage of adequate and non-adequate translations in ten renditions of cultural references from the Holy Qur'ān, translated by five English and five Persian translators.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Yusuf Ali's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	43	61.4	61.4
	Non-Adequate	27	38.6	38.6
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 1, in 43 out of 70 cases, Yusuf Ali used adequate translation which is 61.4%. In other words, non-adequate translation occurred only in 27 cases (38.6%) in Yusuf Ali's rendition.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Arberry's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	58	82.9	82.9
	Non-Adequate	12	17.1	17.1
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 2, Arberry used adequate translation 58 out of 70. In other words, non-adequate translation occurred only in 12 cases in Arberry's rendition.

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Asad's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	30	42.9	42.9
	Non-Adequate	40	57.1	57.1
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 3, in 30 out of 70 cases, Asad used adequate translation which is 42.9%. In other words, non-adequate translation occurred in 40 cases (57.1%) in Asad's rendition.

Table 4. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Shakir's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	55	78.6	78.6
	Non-Adequate	15	21.4	21.4
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 4, in 55 out of 70 cases, Shakir used adequate translation which is 78.6%. In other words, non-adequate translation occurred in only 15 cases (21.4%) in Shakir's rendition which seems so low.

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Bakhtiar's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	54	77.1	77.1
	Non-Adequate	16	22.9	22.9
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 5, in 54 out of 70 cases, Bakhtiar used adequate translation which is 77.1%. In other words, non-adequate translation occurred in only 16 cases (21.4%) in Bakhtiar's rendition which seems to be so low. In this way, the results obtained by Bakhtiar's rendition are so close to the results in Shakir's rendition in Table 4.

Table 6. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Safavi's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	50	71.4	71.4
	Non-Adequate	20	28.6	28.6
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 6, in 50 out of 70 cases, Safavi used adequate translation which is 71.4%. On the other hand, non-adequate translation occurred in 20 cases (28.6%) which appears to be not remarkable.

Table 7. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Ansarian's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	35	50.0	50.0
	Non-Adequate	35	50.0	50.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

According to Table 7, in 35 out of 70 cases, Ansarian used adequate translation which is 50%. On the other hand, non-adequate translation occurred in 35 cases (50%) as well, which shows the equal use of both strategies by this translator.

Table 8. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Bahrampour's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	50	71.4	71.4
	Non-Adequate	20	28.6	28.6
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As illustrated in Table 8, in 50 out of 70 cases, Bahrapour used adequate translation which is 71.4%. On the other hand, non-adequate translation occurred in 20 cases (28.6%) which appears to be not remarkable.

Table 9. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Khoramshahi's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	52	74.3	74.3
	Non-Adequate	18	25.7	25.7
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As illustrated in Table 9, in 52 out of 70 cases, Khoramshahi employed adequate translation which is 74.3%. On the other hand, non-adequate translation occurred only in 18 cases (25.7%) which appears a low quantity.

Table 10. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Hojati's rendition

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Valid	Adequate	42	60.0	60.0
	Non-Adequate	28	40.0	40.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0

As illustrated in Table 10, in 42 out of 70 cases, Hojati employed adequate translation which is 60%. On the other hand, non-adequate translation occurred in 28 cases (40%) which appears to be lower than the former strategy.

Overall, the data from Tables 1 to 10 indicate a strong preference for adequate translations among the translators analyzed. Among the translators, Asad stands out as the only one using non-adequate translations more frequently than adequate translations (Table 3). Of note, Ansarian employed both strategies equally (Table 7), while Arberry favored adequate translations with a count of 58 out of 70 terms (Table 2). Following Arberry, Shakir showed a notable inclination towards adequate translations, with 55 out of 70 terms (Table 4). Similarly, Bakhtiar utilized adequate translations 54 times (Table 5). Khoramshahi's rendition had 52 instances of adequate translations (Table 9), while Safavi and Bahrapour tied at 50 occurrences each (Tables 6 & 8). Yusuf Ali opted for adequate translations 43 times (Table 1), and Hojati employed this strategy 42 times (Table 10). Notably, Ansarian used both strategies an equal number of times, at 35 instances each (Table 7). Furthermore, Tables 11 and 12 provide the frequency and percentage of adequate and non-adequate translations in the English and Persian renditions.

Table 11. Frequency and Percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in English renditions

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
English (Adequate Translation)	240	68.58	68.58
English (Non-Adequate Translation)	110	31.42	31.42
Valid (list wise)	350	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 11, from the total frequency of 350 in English translation, 240 cases occurred using adequate translation (68.58%), and there were just 110 cases in which English translators used non-adequate translation (31.42%).

Table 12. Frequency and Percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in Persian renditions

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Persian (Adequate Translation)	229	65.42	65.42
Persian (Non-Adequate Translation)	121	34.58	34.58
Valid (list wise)	350	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 12, the total frequency of using adequate strategy was 229 (65.42%) out of 350 and the frequency of using non-adequate translation was up to 121 times (34.58%).

Tables 11 and 12 display the respective tendencies of English and Persian translators towards each translation strategy. The total number of renditions in English and Persian combined is 700, divided equally between the two languages. In Table 11, out of a total frequency of 350 in English translations, 240 instances utilized adequate translation (68.58%), while non-adequate translations occurred 110 times (31.42%). This suggests a clear preference among English translators for adequate translation over non-adequate translation. Conversely, according to Table 12, out of the same 700 renditions, Persian translators employed adequate translation 229 times (65.42%) and non-adequate translation 121 times (34.58%), indicating a strong preference for adequate translation among Persian translators. Therefore, it seems that both English and Persian translators predominantly favored adequate translations over non-adequate translations. Table 13 presents the frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in all renditions.

Table 13. Frequency and percentage of using adequate and non-adequate translations in all renditions

	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate Translation	469	67.0
Non-Adequate Translation	231	33.0
Valid (list wise)	700	100.0

The findings from Table 13 reveal that out of the total 700 translations in both Persian and English, adequate translation was utilized 469 times (67%), significantly more often than non-adequate translation, which occurred 231 times (33%). This indicates a clear preference for adequate translations across both languages, with a substantial majority of translations falling under this category. To analyze the differences in the usage of adequate

and non-adequate translations by Persian and English translators statistically, a chi-square test was conducted. The results of this test are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Chi-Square test to show differences in the adequate and non-adequate translations by Persian and English translators

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Chi-Square	59.159a	25	.000
Likelihood Ratio	59.907	25	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13.971	1	.000
Valid Cases	70		

In Table 14, the frequencies of each translation strategy were included, ranging from zero up to 5 for each group of translators. The chi-square test results in Table 14 show a p-value of 0, indicating a significant relationship between English and Persian translators in their choice of translation strategies at a 5% level of significance. This relationship is characterized as a linear-by-linear association, implying that both groups of translators exhibit a similar pattern in selecting their translation strategies. Essentially, there is no notable difference in the frequency of strategies used between the two groups of translators.

5. Discussion

Due to the predominant influence of Arabic language and culture on Persian society, it was initially assumed that Persian translators, especially with their background knowledge, would employ adequate translation more effectively than their English counterparts. Surprisingly, the statistics revealed that English translators utilized adequate translation at a similar or even superior rate compared to Persian translators. This unexpected outcome may have stemmed from the assumption that all Persian translators, being Muslims, would have a better understanding of Arabic culture compared to English translators. However, the data indicated that it was the English translators who exhibited a higher frequency of using adequate translation. Translation involves more than just finding equivalent terms in the target language; it also encompasses considerations of the target audience, context, and cultural nuances present in the text. It requires a careful balance between comprehending the original text and effectively transposing it into the target language. Any misinterpretation during these processes can impede effective communication and the accurate transmission of the text's message. Therefore, translators must be well-versed in the cultural intricacies embedded within various texts. The study's findings shed light on the strategies employed by translators when dealing with cultural terms, particularly in Qur'ānic renditions. While most translators favored adequate translation, there were instances of divergence among two translators. Asad displayed a preference for non-adequate translation over adequate translation, in contrast to the general trend. On the other hand, Ansarian employed both strategies with equal frequency, showcasing a balanced approach between adequate and non-adequate translations.

In accordance with the study's findings, adequate translation was favored over non-adequate translation, representing 67% (469 out of 700) of both Persian and English translations. A significant majority of 67% relied on adequate translation, while merely 33% opted for non-adequate translation. Specifically, adequate translation was utilized 469 times out of the total 700 translations, whereas non-adequate translation was employed only 231 times. The research results indicated that even the most dedicated translators occasionally

found it necessary to provide detailed explanations of terms to enhance the clarity and richness of their renderings. This refinement is particularly crucial when handling cultural terms that hold profound significance for readers' faith and beliefs. An exemplar of this adaptation can be observed in Arberry's translation, which demonstrated the highest frequency of adequate translation usage according to the study data, contrasting with Asad's translation, which ranked lowest in this aspect.

Furthermore, despite some translators offering interpretational versions of the Qur'ān, not all translators resorted to non-adequate translation for all 70 cultural terms. This is evident in Hojati's translation, where adequate translation prevailed over non-adequate translation. With the exception of Asad, the other English translators seemingly deemed detailed explanations unnecessary for their readers. Consequently, the question regarding Arabic's purported dominance as a language impacting translators of the Holy Qur'ān to unconsciously favor adequate translation in rendering cultural terms into both Persian and English does not have a straightforward answer. The response is contingent upon various factors, including the target audience, the nature of the text, and the underlying purpose of the translation. These multifaceted considerations are essential for informed decision-making. While it might be expected that all English translators of the Holy Qur'ān would provide explanations for cultural terms to enhance reader comprehension, only Asad notably opted for non-adequate translations over adequate ones.

6. Conclusion

One of the primary challenges in translating sacred scriptures lies in the fact that readers may not be familiar with the original language of the text, making translation a crucial aspect to explore in the context of various religions. Another critical consideration is the handling of cultural terms in texts like sacred scriptures, where inaccuracies in translation can significantly impact readers' faith and beliefs. It is the translator's skill to adeptly convey cultural or religious expressions from the source text to the target text. Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge the difficulty in providing an accurate interpretation for individuals who lack familiarity with the cultural nuances of the original language. Translators, regardless of their proficiency level, often encounter challenges when translating cultural terms within sacred texts. Therefore, it is vital to identify and delineate different strategies for translating the Qur'ān based on various factors and categorize them into distinct methodologies. These strategies can serve as valuable resources for scholars conducting research, aid translation students in their studies, and enhance their translation capabilities.

Moreover, most translators of sacred scriptures typically aim to preserve the integrity of the source language content and remain faithful to the original context. It is advisable for researchers, especially those grappling with such challenges, to delve deeper into exploring additional cultural terms within the Holy Qur'ān to yield comprehensive findings. Studies like the one discussed here can offer valuable insights for individuals interested in delving further into the translation of holy texts, particularly the Holy Qur'ān, enabling them to select appropriate strategies for handling cultural elements from the source text. This approach can empower individuals to leverage existing research and produce enhanced translations of religious content in the future.

However, a notable constraint of this study was the limited selection of data. Expanding the scope to include more cultural terms would enhance the study's reliability. Yet, increasing the number of items would necessitate additional time. Additionally, working with religious texts, which often touch upon individuals' faith and beliefs, demands meticulous attention,

a deep understanding of cultural nuances, and a high level of critical thinking that may surpass the capabilities of unfamiliar scholars. In conclusion, working with religious texts that intersect with people's faith and beliefs requires meticulous care and attention. Essentially, the researcher must thoroughly grasp all cultural terms and concepts in the source text before analyzing and interpreting them in the target language(s) to optimize the outcomes of their study effectively.

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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Sermons from Nahj al-Balagha: A Translation Quality Assessment of Seyyed Ali Reza's English Translation

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ABSTRACT

Discourse analysis, a linguistic approach within the social sciences, investigates the relationship between writers' works and their social environments, as well as the impact of these environments on their methods and styles. This research reviews the translation of Imam Ali's discourse, specifically examining the sermons addressed to the Kufis, through the lens of Fairclough's (1980) critical discourse analysis model. The study assesses the effectiveness of a selected English translation in conveying the original discourse. The importance of accurately translating the discourse in these sermons cannot be overstated; when translating significant texts, particularly holy texts, a translator's inability to convey the discourse effectively can result in a loss of the original message, meaning, and spirit. The translation analyzed in this research is Seyyed Ali Reza's (1980) version of Nahj al-Balagha, recognized as the most accessible and comprehensive translation. By applying Fairclough's (1980) discourse analysis, the study found that Imam Ali's discourse features the highest frequency in the description stage at 65%, while the explanation stage has the lowest frequency at 9%. Using Berman's (2010) translation model, the researchers found that clarification was the most frequently employed strategy in the analyzed translations, occurring 33% of the time. In contrast, the rationalization and qualitative impoverishment strategies were the least used, each at 8%.

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1. Introduction

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach within the social sciences that transcends mere linguistic forms to examine the literary ideologies that reflect social conditions and cultural contexts. This approach is particularly relevant in understanding how power dynamics shape societal discourse, as power influences every society and organizes its discourse. CDA analyzes literary works in relation to dominant societal power through three layers: description, interpretation, and contextual analysis (Mohseni, 2016). Undoubtedly, the sermons of *Nahj al-Balagha* encompass a wealth of subjects through which Imam Ali (PBUH) provides guidance aimed at steering society toward prosperity. His rhetoric carefully addresses the prevailing political and social conditions of his time (Parvin, 2016). This research employs a descriptive-analytical method alongside Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1996) to examine the strategies used by the translator in rendering the discourse of *Nahj al-Balagha*, based on Berman's (2010) model. The researcher aims to achieve the following objectives in this study:

- To compare the English translation of *Nahj al-Balagha* with the original discourse.
- To identify the translation strategies applied by the translator in conveying the discourse of *Nahj al-Balagha*.

This study analyzes the discourse of Imam Ali (PBUH) to elucidate the psychological and artistic dimensions of his sermons, demonstrating their impact on the political environment and the behavior of the Kufis, as well as Imam Ali's interactions with them, through the application of Fairclough's theory. The researcher hopes that the results of this research will be valuable to scholars, lecturers, professors, and translation students. While these students are trained in translation techniques, they may not fully grasp the specific requirements for translating specialized texts or the distinctive features of their language and writing. Additionally, students of theology can benefit from the findings of this study. Furthermore, this research aims to advance the field of translation studies within religious and specialized contexts. It could serve as a catalyst for increased attention to *Nahj al-Balagha*, a rich and valuable text. Unfortunately, there has been limited focus on the various aspects of translating *Nahj al-Balagha* in recent times.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Fairclough's model of CDA

The third main approach in critical discourse analysis (CDA) is that of Norman Fairclough, whose theory has been central to the field for over a decade. In his earlier work, Fairclough referred to his approach as Critical Language Study (1989, p. 5). He described the objective of this approach as "a contribution to the general raising of consciousness of exploitative social relations through a focus on language" (1989, p. 4). This aim continues to be prominent in his later work, which has further developed his framework into one of the most comprehensive in CDA (Fairclough, 1992, 1993, 1995a, 1995b; Chuliaraki and Fairclough, 1999).

According to Chuliaraki and Fairclough (1999), CDA "brings social science and linguistics together within a single theoretical and analytical framework, setting up a dialogue between them" (p. 6). The linguistic theory underpinning this approach is Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which serves as the foundation for Fairclough's

analytical framework and that of other CDA practitioners (Fowler et al., 1979; Fowler, 1991; Hodge & Kress, 1979). Fairclough's approach also draws on several critical social theorists, including Foucault (particularly his concept of orders of discourse), Gramsci (his concept of hegemony), and Habermas (his concept of the colonization of discourses), among others (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b).

Chuliaraki and Fairclough (1999) assert that critical discourse analysis (CDA) has a unique contribution to make. They argue that "the past two decades or so have been a period of profound economic and social transformation on a global scale" (p. 30). Although these changes stem from specific actions by individuals, they have often been perceived as "part of nature" (p. 4)—that is, as natural phenomena rather than the result of human agency. According to Chuliaraki and Fairclough (1999), these recent economic and social changes "are to a significant degree...transformations in language and discourse" (p. 4). Thus, CDA can play a vital role in theorizing these transformations and fostering awareness "of what is, how it has come to be, and what it might become, allowing people to make and remake their lives" (p. 4).

With this objective in mind, Chuliaraki and Fairclough (1999) claim that CDA of communicative interactions aims to demonstrate how the semiotic and linguistic features of the interaction are systematically linked to social dynamics. They argue that what occurs socially is, in part or wholly, expressed through semiotic or linguistic means. In other words, CDA systematically examines the relationships between the symbolic and non-symbolic, between discourse and the non-discursive (p. 113).

In this approach to CDA, there are three analytical focuses for analyzing any communicative event (interaction): text (e.g., a news report), discourse practice (e.g., the processes of production and consumption), and sociocultural practice (e.g., the social and cultural structures that give rise to the communicative event) (Fairclough, 1995b, p. 57; Chuliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 113). These closely align with van Dijk's three dimensions of ideology analysis: discourse, socio-cognition, and social analysis (the analysis of social structures). The primary difference between Fairclough's and van Dijk's approaches lies in the second dimension, which mediates between the other two. While van Dijk views social cognition and mental models as the mediators between discourse and the social context, Fairclough attributes this role to discourse practices—specifically, text production and consumption (Fairclough, 1995b, p. 59). In this respect, the two approaches to CDA are "similar in conception" (Fairclough, 1995b, p. 59).

This implies that the study of texts is not merely an exercise in abstract lexico-grammatical description but rather an analysis of a crucial tool in the reproduction or reformation of the broader social world. This is especially true for texts produced in political contexts—such as speeches, policy papers, and reports—since they often aim to achieve the hegemony of a particular perspective with the explicit goal of instigating change in other (i.e., non-discursive) aspects of social practice. By revealing the processes through which such hegemonic practices are manifested in texts, critical discourse researchers, as producers of texts themselves, can contribute to the dismantling of those same hegemonic practices.

2.2. Related studies

Many factors influence translators when translating a text, one of which is the transmission of ideology through translated works. The translator's decisions are, to some extent, shaped by the constraints of the target culture. Kang (2007) notes that any translation

process is influenced by historically constituted discursive resources, which guide the translator in reformulating the text according to the norms and conventions of the target culture. To produce an acceptable translation for the target audience, the translator must consider the cultural context of the target readers.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Translation Studies share the understanding that textual features must be connected to the social and ideological contexts of both text production and reception. Translators operate within specific socio-political contexts, producing texts for particular purposes and audiences. Thus, translations reflect the influence of discursive, social, and ideological constraints, norms, and conventions. In the target language, a translation may fulfill a communicative purpose that differs significantly from the original function of the source text. The added value of a translation is closely related to its new context, the objectives pursued by translators and other stakeholders (those who use the translation or for whom it is created), and their overall political goals. Therefore, specific textual features of translated texts must be linked to the broader social, political, and cultural contexts of their production and reception. The choices made by the translator can be interpreted, at least tentatively, in terms of the wider goals and strategies pursued by agents in the cultural and political sphere, as well as the norms and constraints operating within those fields (Ahmadi, 2017).

In a related study, Ebrahimi (2010) analyzed the discourse of news articles from The New York Times (NYT) and The Tehran Times (TT) to uncover any underlying meanings in each newspaper's political coverage of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan. The aim was to determine whether the writers exhibited biased stances in their reporting on this shared issue. To achieve this, 20 articles (10 from each newspaper) were randomly selected from a pool of 100 articles (50 from each source). The framework employed was Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), which emphasizes the importance of social context in the historical development of language and in individual discourse events.

The analysis focused on the linguistic choices—specifically, the meaning potential of language found in lexis, grammar, and the sound system—within Halliday's three functions of language. The linguistic features analyzed in the articles from The NYT and The TT included: active and passive voice, nominalization in ideational meaning, modality and lexical choices in interpersonal meaning, and thematization in textual meaning. The researcher concluded that traces of ideological and biased political stances were present in the articles from both newspapers. However, The New York Times employed these linguistic features more frequently, which allowed it to convey its ideologies more ambiguously and to present the situations and circumstances as commonsensical.

This study aimed to investigate whether the receptor language and culture entail obligatory features that shape possible interpretations of translations and extend their meanings in directions not inherent in the source text. As a result, translators must make choices about which aspects or parts of the text to transpose and emphasize. This decision-making process inherently makes translation a partisan act, whether engaged and committed implicitly or explicitly. By adopting Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly the framework established by Fairclough (1989), this investigation sought to illuminate the relationship between language and ideology in translation. More specifically, it aimed to uncover the underlying ideological assumptions present in both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT), ultimately assessing whether translators' ideologies are imposed in their translations. The corpus consisted of the complete text of the source material and two different Persian translations of the book. According to the authors, the present study

examines CDA based on Fairclough's theory, which addresses three levels: description, interpretation, and explanation, particularly in relation to Nahj al-Balagha. This approach represents a novel contribution to the field.

3. Methodology

3.1. Overview

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the methodology employed in this study. This section provides an overview of the corpus type and the rationale behind its selection, as well as an explanation of the research procedure. Subsequently, it details the approach taken to analyze the sources used by the researcher and examines the data. Finally, it describes the model upon which the research is based.

3.2. Corpus

Nahj al-Balagha, following the Holy Quran, serves as a vibrant source of thought and knowledge, offering a comprehensive framework for the social, economic, and cultural guidance of society. In this research, the researcher aims to analyze the discourse of sermons pertaining to the description of the Kufis as presented in Nahj al-Balagha, which contains the insightful and thought-provoking words of Imam Ali (PBUH). The analysis also involves a review of the strategies employed in the translation by the translator. For this purpose, the researcher utilized the English translation of Nahj al-Balagha by Sayyid Ali Reza Seyyed Alireza, the former Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, translated Nahj al-Balagha into English and published it in 1973 in Karachi, released in three volumes by Pir Mohammad Ibrahim. It was subsequently republished by the World Institute of Islamic Services in Tehran in 1980 as an 816-page volume, and later reprinted in 1987 by the Qom Center for Islamic Studies. Among the various translations of Nahj al-Balagha into English, Seyyed Alireza's translation is noted as the most popular. In addition to the printed version, this translation is widely accessible through many software programs.

3.3. Procedures

To achieve the objectives of this study, the book Nahj al-Balaghah—one of the revered texts in Islam—was selected. From its various sections, twenty sermons were chosen, specifically those in which Imam Ali (PBUH) describes the people of Kufa. Among the available translations, the prominent work of Seyed Ali Reza was selected for analysis. The study compared this translation of Nahj al-Balaghah with the original text, using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. Additionally, it examined the translation strategies employed by the translator according to Berman's (2010) model. The researcher focused on five key translation strategies outlined by Berman: Rationalization, Clarification, Expansion, Qualitative Impoverishment, and Quantitative Impoverishment.

3.4. Data analysis

Employing Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, the researcher examines twenty critical sermons from Nahj al-Balagha. The imam (PBUH) is revealed to explicitly blame the people of Kufa on three levels: descriptive, interpretive, and explanatory.

3.5. Theoretical model

The model used in this study is based on Fairclough's Critical Discourse Model (1996), which views discourse as comprising three dimensions: text, discourse practice, and social action. Fairclough presents this theoretical model in his book *Language and Power*, illustrating it through the Figure 1.:

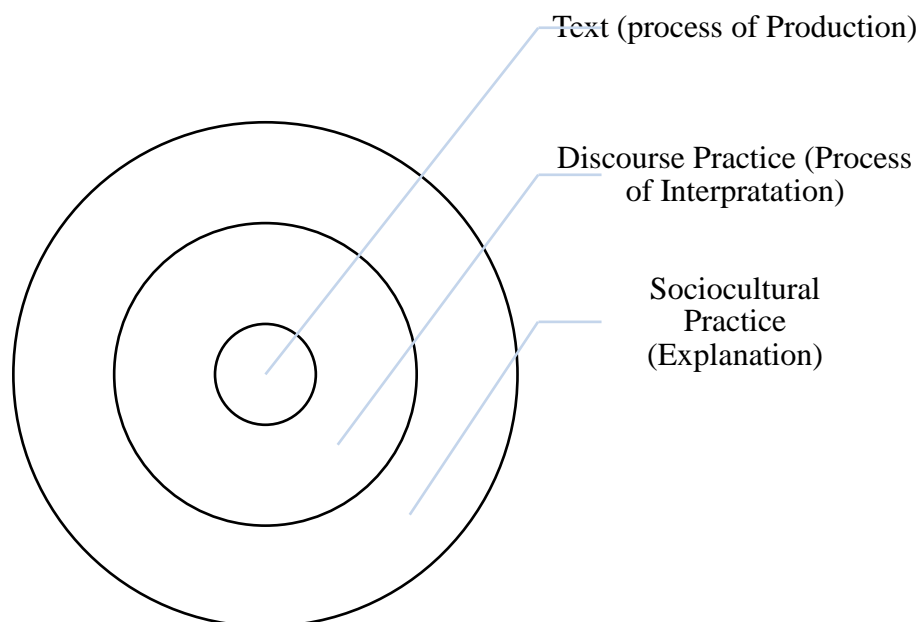


Figure 1. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Model (1996)

Fairclough (1989, 1995) model for CDA consists of three interrelated process of analysis which are tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse. The three dimensions are:

- ✓ The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual text)
- ✓ The process by which the object is produced and revised (writing, speaking, designing and reading, listening, viewing) by human subjects;
- ✓ The socio-historical conditions that govern these processes.

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis:

- ✓ Text analysis (description);
- ✓ Process analysis (interpretation);
- ✓ Social analysis (explanation).

4. Results and discussions

Due to the constraints of academic publications, providing a comprehensive discussion of all the data would render this paper excessively lengthy. Therefore, a representative

sample has been presented below. However, the full statistical analysis for all data is provided in the corresponding tables.

4.1. A study of the words used to describe the people of Kufa

As previously discussed, the sermons referenced provide a comprehensive and accurate reflection of the societal conditions, with the people of Kufa playing a pivotal role in shaping them. In other words, the majority of the statements within these sermons, in various forms, encapsulate the real conditions of the people of Kufa. The most significant examples are outlined below:

4.1.1. Comparing the people of Kufa to camels

أَفِ لَكُمْ لَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ عِتَابَكُمْ، أَرْضَيْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ عَوْضًا وَبِالدَّلَالِ مِنَ الْعِزِّ خَلْفًا. إِذَا دَعَوْتُمْ إِلَى جِهَادٍ عَدُوَّكُمْ دَارَتْ أَعْيُنُكُمْ كَأَنَّكُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ فِي عَمْرَةٍ وَمِنَ الدُّهُولِ فِي سَكْرَةٍ. يَزِيحُ عَلَيْكُمْ جَوَارِي فَتَعْمَهُونَ وَكَأَنَّ قُلُوبَكُمْ مَأْلُوسَةٌ فَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْقِلُونَ. مَا أَنْتُمْ لِي بِثِقَةٍ سَخِيسَ اللَّيَالِي وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِرُكْنٍ يُمَالُ بِكُمْ وَلَا زَوَافِرٍ عِزٍّ يُفْتَقَرُ إِلَيْكُمْ. مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا كَالْبِلِّ صُلَّ رِعَاتُهَا فَكَلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ. خ ٣٤

Woe to you. I am tired of rebuking you. Do you accept this worldly life in place of the next life? Or disgrace in place of dignity? When I invite you to fight your enemy your eyes revolve as though you are in the clutches of death, and the senselessness of the last moment. My pleadings are not understood by you and you remain stunned. It is thought your hearts are affected with madness so that you do not understand. I have lost my confidence in you for good. Neither are you a support for me to lean upon, nor a means to honor and victory. Your example is that of camels whose protector has disappeared, so when they are collected from one side, they disperse from the other. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401)

The reference to having a weak will, scattered thoughts, and a lack of recognition of one's own interests highlights a failure to achieve consensus or unity. This inability to act with discipline and strength when confronting the enemy is a central critique. The simile of camels illustrates their short-sightedness, while the term 'misguidance' is interpreted as a reflection of their disobedience toward their leader and Imam (PBUH).

4.1.2. Checking the contradiction between the words

The Imams, by employing opposing terms such as right and wrong, unity and division, effectively highlight the societal duality present in their sermons. In the following section, the researcher will analyze select sermons where these contradictory terms have been deliberately used to serve a specific rhetorical purpose.

ثُمَّ قَالَ (عليه السلام):

أُبَيِّنُ بَسْرًا قَدْ أَطْلَعَ الْيَمَنَ وَإِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَأَظُنُّ أَنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمَ سَيَدَالُونَ مِنْكُمْ بِاجْتِمَاعِهِمْ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ وَتَفَرُّقِهِمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ، وَبِمَعْصِيَتِكُمْ إِمَامَكُمْ فِي الْحَقِّ وَطَاعَتِهِمْ إِمَامَهُمْ فِي الْبَاطِلِ، وَبِأَدَائِهِمُ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَى صَاحِبِهِمْ وَخِيَانَتِهِمْ، وَبِصَلَاحِهِمْ فِي بِلَادِهِمْ وَفَسَادِهِمْ، فَلَوْ انْتَمَنْتُمْ أَحَدَكُمْ عَلَى قَعْبٍ لَخَشِيتُ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِعِلَاقَتِهِ. خ ٢٥

Then he continued: I have been informed that Busr has overpowered Yemen. By Allah, I have begun thinking about these people that they would shortly snatch away the whole country through their unity on their wrong and your disunity (from your right), and

separation. Your disobedience of your Imam in matters of right and their obedience to their leader in matters of wrong, your fulfillment of the trust in favor of their master and your betrayal, your good work in their cities, and your mischief. Even if I give you charge of a wooden bow I fear you would run away with its handle. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401)

In the second part of the sermon, the Imam (PBUH) recounts the story of Busr ibn Artā, a notorious criminal from the Levant, and his conquest of Yemen. He then draws a parallel to the fate of the Iraqi people, foretelling their grim future and outlining its exact causes and contributing factors.

Some commentators on Nahj al-Balaghah mention that Mu'awiyah dispatched Busr ibn Artā, a ruthless and corrupt man known for his bloodshed and looting, to Medina with a large force. Mu'awiyah instructed him: "Wherever you go, oppress the followers of Ali and instill terror in their hearts. When you enter Medina, strike fear into its people, so they may face death with their own eyes, for they sought refuge with the Prophet, supported him, and defeated my father, Abu Sufyan".

The Imam (PBUH) also references Taha Hussein, the renowned Egyptian writer, who notes that Busr strictly carried out Mu'awiyah's orders, intensifying the violence. In his campaign of bloodshed, looting, and violation of rights, he spared nothing. When he arrived in Medina, he inflicted immense suffering, forcing the people to pledge allegiance to Mu'awiyah. Afterward, Busr proceeded to Yemen, where he continued his reign of terror, shedding blood and eventually beheading the two young sons of Ubaydullah ibn Abbas, the ruler of Yemen.

Ibn Athir adds: These two children were in the presence of a man from the nomads of Bani Kanana. When Bouser wanted to kill them, the Kenani man said, "Why do you kill those who are not guilty? If you want to kill them, then kill me too (so that I do not witness the disgrace that I have failed to keep the trust.)

In any case, this distressing news reached the Commander of the Faithful (A.S), and he was deeply saddened. At the end of his sermon, he declared: "I swear to God, I am certain that this group of oppressors and bloodthirsty tyrants will soon dominate you and seize the government from you."

The Imam (PBUH) then examines the reasons behind this impending downfall, highlighting four critical factors that always contribute to victory:

First, he says, "They are united in their falsehood, while you are divided in your truth". Unity is a key to victory in any situation, especially when supporters of the truth are united. However, it is painful when those who uphold the truth are divided, while those who uphold falsehood stand united. Falsehood inherently leads to division, whereas truth is a natural center of unity. Success in any social endeavor requires unity above all, as division and discord act as deadly poisons.

Second, the Imam (PBUH) says, "You do not obey your leader in the pursuit of truth, while they obey their leader in the pursuit of falsehood". Disciplined obedience is a fundamental condition for victory. No army, organization, or nation can achieve success without adherence to leadership. Modern management also emphasizes the importance of discipline and following a leader's command to ensure success.

Third, he says, “They are loyal to their leader, while you betray yours”. Their loyalty enables them to mobilize their resources, forces, and capital effectively against their opponents, while your betrayal undermines everything. A group lacking the necessary resources and unity is doomed to failure. Some commentators on Nahj al-Balaghah interpret ‘trust’ here as ‘allegiance’ but the broader interpretation of loyalty, as evidenced by the Imam’s following statements, seems more accurate.

Fourth, “They strive to improve their cities and lands, while you engage in corruption”. The oppressors have unity, discipline, trust, and reform in their lands, while you are divided, disobedient, treacherous, and corrupt. It is only natural that such disciplined and united people will triumph over a disorganized and corrupt group. No matter how capable a leader or ruler may be, they cannot succeed with a people who are divided and corrupt. The strength of a cause depends on the integrity and competence of its followers, while falsehood is fortified by the strength, unity, and loyalty of its adherents.

To conclude, the Imam (PBUH) asks: “How can I trust you when, if I entrust even a cup to one of you, I fear you would either break the handle or lose its strap? How can those who fail in such minor responsibilities be trusted with the most important positions in the Islamic government, including matters of war, peace, and the treasury?” (Makarem Shirazi, 2008).

4.1.3. The Kufis are compared to those who appear to be men but possess the intelligence of children, and are like women kept secluded from the outside world

يَا أَشْبَاهَ الرِّجَالِ وَلَا رِجَالَ، حُلُومُ الْأَطْفَالِ وَ عُقُولُ رَبَّاتِ الْحِجَالِ، لَوَدِدْتُ أَنِّي لَمْ أَرَكُمُ وَ لَمْ أَعْرِفْكُمْ مَعْرِفَةً وَ اللَّهُ جَزَتْ نَدْمًا وَ
 أَعْقَبَتْ سَدَمًا. قَاتَلَكُمُ اللَّهُ لَقَدْ مَلَأْتُمْ قَلْبِي قَيْحًا وَ شَحَنْتُمْ صَدْرِي غَيْظًا وَ جَرَعْتُمُونِي نَعَبَ التَّهْمَامِ أَنْفَاسًا وَ أَفْسَدْتُمْ عَلَيَّ رَأْيِي بِالْعِصْيَانِ
 وَ الْخِذْلَانِ، حَتَّى لَقَدْ قَالَتْ فَرِيشٌ إِنَّ ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَجُلٌ شَجَاعٌ وَ لَكِنْ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ بِالْحَرْبِ. لِلَّهِ أَبُوهُمْ! وَ هَلْ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ أَشَدُّ لَهَا مِرَاسًا
 وَ أَقْدَمُ فِيهَا مَقَامًا مِنِّي؟ لَقَدْ نَهَضْتُ فِيهَا وَ مَا بَلَغْتُ الْعِشْرِينَ وَ هَا أَنَا ذَا قَدْ دَرَفْتُ عَلَى السِّتِينَ؛ وَ لَكِنْ لَا رَأْيَ لِمَنْ لَا يُطَاع. خ

٢٧

O’ you a semblance of men, not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world). I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allah, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allah fight you! You have filled my heart with pus and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthfuls of grief one after the other. You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me so much so that Quraysh started saying that the son of Abi Talib is brave but does not know (the tactics of) war. Allah bless them! Is there anyone among them who is fiercer in the war and more experienced in it than I am? I rose for it although yet within the twenties, and here I am, have crossed over sixty, but one who is not obeyed can have no opinion (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

In the first description, the Imam (PBUH) rebukes the Kufis for lacking the courage, protection, and zeal of true manhood. Although they appeared as men, they lacked the essential qualities of manliness. History attests that the friendship of the people of Kufa and Iraq toward the Imam (PBUH) during his caliphate brought nothing but grief and sorrow, caused by their weaknesses, infidelity, breaches of covenant, and hypocrisy. This group created significant challenges for the Imam (PBUH), despite his resourcefulness and leadership. It is no wonder the Imam (PBUH) wished he had never encountered them or that they had not gathered around him.

The Imam's discourse in this sermon reveals deep despair over the people of Kufa. The prevailing power dynamics and societal conditions played a fundamental role in shaping this sentiment. After the death of the Holy Prophet (May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family), the most significant political deviation in Islamic leadership occurred, which became the foundation for subsequent moral and social corruption.

Thus, while the Imam (PBUH) criticizes the Kufis, he also condemns the oppression of the Umayyads, whose tyranny had rendered the people of Kufa timid, unstable, and unreliable. Although many were aware of the injustices and corruption, the stifling oppression of the time left them afraid to speak out, leading them to feign ignorance.

4.1.4. Describing the people of Kufa to people of non-lineage

مُنِيْتُ بِمَنْ لَا يُطِيعُ إِذَا أَمَرْتُ وَلَا يُجِيبُ إِذَا دَعَوْتُ. لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ، مَا تَنْتَظِرُونَ بِنَصْرِكُمْ رَعَكُمْ، أَمَا دِينٌ يَجْمَعُكُمْ وَلَا حِمِيَّةٌ تُحِشُّكُمْ؟ أَقَوْمٌ فِيكُمْ مُسْتَصْرَحًا وَأُنَادِيكُمْ مُتَعَوِّثًا فَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ لِي قَوْلًا وَلَا تُطِيعُونَ لِي أَمْرًا حَتَّى [تَكْشِفَ] تَكْشِفَ الْأُمُورَ عَنْ عَوَاقِبِ الْمَسَاءَةِ، فَمَا يَذْرُؤُكُمْ بِكُمْ تَارًا وَلَا يُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَرَامًا. خ ٩٧

I am faced with men who do not obey when I order and do not respond when I call them. May you have no father! (Woe to you!) What are you waiting for to rise for the cause of Allah? Does not faith join you together, or sense of shame motivate you? I stand among you shouting and I am calling you for help, but you do not listen to my word and do not obey my orders, till circumstances show out their bad consequences. No blood can be avenged through you and no purpose can be achieved with you (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

The Imam (PBUH) expressed his deep hatred and dissatisfaction with the Kufis by using the phrase, "O people without lineage!" Here, the choice of words and the careful pairing of expressions play a significant role in conveying the Imam's (PBUH) intent and amplifying its impact on the audience.

4.1.5. Description of the Companions of the Prophet (May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family)

One of the most notable features of these selected sermons is the contrast the Imam (PBUH) draws between the deviations of the Kufis and the faithfulness of the Prophet's loyal companions. With deep regret and sorrow, he describes the true believers, highlighting their virtues. This verbal and descriptive contrast adds psychological and anthropological depth to the sermons, while also enhancing their aesthetic appeal. Moreover, it strengthens the ideological and motivational impact of the messages. Some examples of this contrast are as follows:

لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَمَا أَرَى أَحَدًا يُشَبِّهُهُمْ مِنْكُمْ، لَقَدْ كَانُوا يُصْبِحُونَ شُعْثًا غُبْرًا وَ قَدْ بَاتُوا سُجْدًا وَ قِيَامًا، يَرَاوَحُونَ بَيْنَ جَبَاهِهِمْ وَ خُدُودِهِمْ وَ يَقِفُونَ عَلَى مِثْلِ الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ ذِكْرِ مَعَادِهِمْ، كَأَنَّ بَيْنَ أَعْيُنِهِمْ رُكْبَ الْمِعْزَى مِنْ طُولِ سُجُودِهِمْ. إِذَا ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ هَمَلَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ حَتَّى تَبْلُ جُيُوبُهُمْ، وَ مَادُوا كَمَا يَمِيدُ الشَّجَرُ يَوْمَ الرِّيحِ الْعَاصِفِ خَوْفًا مِنَ الْعِقَابِ وَ رَجَاءً لِلثَّوَابِ. خ ٩٧

I have seen the companions of the Prophet but I do not find anyone resembling them. They began the day with dust on their hair and face (in the hardship of life) and passed the night in prostration and standing in prayers. Sometimes they put down their foreheads and sometimes their cheeks. Remembering their resurrection, they seemed as though they stood on live burning coals. It seemed that in between their eyes, there were signs like knees of

goats, resulting from long prostrations. When Allah was mentioned their eyes flowed freely till their shirt collars were drenched. They trembled as the tree trembled on the day of stormy wind for fear of punishment and hope of reward. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401)

In the final part of this sermon, the Imam (PBUH) describes a special group of the Holy Prophet's (AS) companions, presenting them as a model for his own followers. He highlights seven key characteristics: First, he says: "I have seen the companions of Muhammad (peace be upon him), but I do not see any of you like them!" He explains that "they had disheveled hair and dusty faces," living as ascetics in poverty and hardship, without expressing grief.

In the second description, he says: "They prostrated and stood all night in worship, never tiring". They alternated between placing their foreheads and the sides of their faces on the ground before God. Whenever their foreheads grew weary, they rested the right side of their face on the ground, and when the right side tired, they turned to the left.

In the third description, he adds: "They seemed to stand on flames, restless with fear of the Day of Judgment and the reckoning of deeds". They were deeply conscious of divine torment and, for this reason, were never at peace.

In the fourth description, he notes: "Their foreheads, from long prostrations, were calloused like the knees of a sheep". Their joy in worship and love of servitude led them to prostrate before God for long periods, leaving marks on their foreheads.

In the fifth description, the Imam (PBUH) says: "When the name of God was mentioned, tears flowed from their eyes, wetting their wrists". They wept for the love of God, the pain of separation, and the fear of divine punishment.

In the sixth and final description, he uses an evocative simile, comparing them to a tree shaking in a hurricane. The Imam (PBUH) explains that their trembling came from both fear of punishment and hope for reward. From one eye, tears of longing to meet God flowed, while from the other, tears of fear for divine judgment.

This profound balance between fear and hope is the way of pure and sincere servants. In previous sermons, the Imam (PBUH) explicitly contrasted the Kufis and the social situation in Kufa. However, in this and the following sermon, the comparison between two groups is made indirectly: those who embraced Islam with their whole being and those who were merely Muslims in appearance.

4.1.6. Using metaphor in the words of sermons

Among various linguistic phenomena such as reference and metonymy, metaphor is a particularly significant form of expression that prompts the construction of multiple mental spaces. In the case of metaphor, these mental spaces undergo a specific conceptual blending operation during discourse, where they are integrated into a network that produces an inferential structure. Metaphor is both a linguistic and conceptual tool of particular importance in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Hodge and Kress (1993:15) argue that ideology involves "a systematically organized presentation of reality", and metaphors play an ideological role by "defining, in significant part, what one takes as reality" (Chilton and Lakoff, 1995). As Chilton (1996) notes, metaphors "can contribute to a situation where they privilege one understanding of reality over others". In line with this, Charteris-Black (2004)

states that “metaphor is central to critical discourse analysis, as it helps form a coherent view of reality”.

One of the key questions in Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis is the metaphorical nature of language. By using metaphors, the Imam (PBUH) gave his sermons a powerful ideological identity, helping to explain the political and social conditions of the time. Some examples include:

من خطبة له (عليه السلام) بعد غارة الضحاك بن قيس صاحب معاوية على الحاج بعد قصة الحكيم و فيها يستنهض أصحابه لما حدث في الأطراف:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ الْمُجْتَمِعَةُ أَيْدَانُهُمُ الْمُخْتَلِفَةُ أَهْوَاؤُهُمْ، كَلَامُهُمْ يُوهِي الصَّمَّ الصَّلَابَ وَ فِعْلُهُمْ يُطْلِعُ فِيكُمْ الْأَعْدَاءَ؛ تَقُولُونَ فِي الْمَجَالِسِ كَيْتٌ وَ كَيْتٌ، فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْقِتَالُ قُلْتُمْ حَيَادٍ. مَا عَزَّتْ دَعْوَةُ مَنْ دَعَاكُمْ وَ لَا اسْتَرَاخَ قَلْبُ مَنْ قَاسَاكُمْ، أَعَالِيلُ بِأَصَالِيلٍ وَ سَأَلْتُمُونِي الطُّوْلَ دِفَاعَ ذِي الدِّينِ الْمُطُولِ. لَا يَمْنَعُ الصِّمَّ اللَّيْلُ وَ لَا يُدْرِكُ الْحَقُّ إِلَّا بِالْجِدِّ. أَيُّ دَارٍ بَعْدَ دَارِكُمْ تَمْتَعُونَ وَ مَعَ أَيِّ إِمَامٍ بَعْدِي تَقَاتِلُونَ. خ ٢٩

From a sermon that the Commander of the Faithful delivered following a raid by al-Dahhak ibn Qays, a governor of **Mu’awiyah**, on pilgrims after the story of two arbitrators. In it, he mobilizes his companions in response to what happened in the outskirts of the domains under his control O’ people, your bodies are together but your desires are divergent. Your talk softens the hard stones and your action attracts your enemy towards you. You claim in your settings that you would do this and that, but when fighting approaches, you say (to war), "Turn thou away" (i.e. flee away). If one calls you (for help) the call receives no heed. And he who deals hardly with you his heart has no solace. The excuses are amiss like that of a debtor unwilling to pay. The ignoble cannot ward off oppression. Right cannot be achieved without effort. Which is the house beside this one to protect? And with which leader (Imam) would you go for fighting after me? By Allah! **Deceived** is one whom you have deceived while by Allah! **He** who is successful with you receives only useless arrows. You are like broken arrows thrown over the enemy. By Allah! I am now in the position that I neither confirm your views nor hope for your support, nor challenge the enemy through you. What is the matter with you? What is your ailment? What is your cure? The other party is also men of your shape (but they are so different in character). Will there be talk without action, carelessness without piety, and greed in things not right? (Seyed Ali Reza. 1980.1401).

The Imam (PBUH) delivered this sermon in extremely difficult and critical circumstances. At a time when a bold and looting enemy was carrying out persecution and surprise attacks across various regions to weaken the morale of the Iraqi people, the Imam (PBUH) saw the solution in a strong, united movement and aggressive retaliation. He worked tirelessly to prepare the people for this, but the widespread weakness and inability that had overtaken the group, due to various reasons, prevented the formation of such a force.

Faced with no other option, the Imam (PBUH) resorted to a final tactic: using harsh reproach to mobilize this weak and pretentious group, hoping to awaken them to the dangers surrounding them. This sermon highlights the deep hypocrisy and inconsistency of the Kufis in both word and deed, as well as their extreme weakness in action. By employing powerful metaphors, the Imam (PBUH) intensified the impact of his words.

4.2. Examining the grammatical level of sermons based on critical discourse analysis

Another important question in Fairclough's analysis of critical discourse is the examination of grammatical aspects in texts. He notes that various grammatical features have relational values and emphasizes the different aspects of sentences. For instance, he explores which aspects are employed, identifying three main types: declarative statements, interrogative sentences, and commands. Among these, interrogative sentences are relatively more complex (Fairclough, 1996).

4.2.1. Interrogation

One of the key aspects of grammar in Fairclough's (1996) theory is the study of how interrogative meanings are utilized. Interrogation is a crucial type of discourse used to seek information about the unknown. However, in many cases, it diverges from its original purpose for rhetorical reasons and is employed with virtual meanings. This deviation plays a significant role in stimulating the audience's curiosity and engagement with the content of the question. We will now examine some examples of the rhetorical use of interrogation in the words of the Imam (PBUH):

وَلَقَدْ أَصْبَحْتَ الْأُمَمَ تَخَافُ ظُلْمَ رُعَاتِهَا وَ أَصْبَحْتَ أَخَافُ ظُلْمَ رَعِيَّتِي. اسْتَنْفَرْتُكُمْ لِلْجِهَادِ فَلَمْ تَنْفِرُوا وَ أَسْمَعْتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تَسْمَعُوا وَ دَعَوْتُكُمْ سِرًّا وَ جَهْرًا فَلَمْ تَسْتَجِيبُوا وَ نَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَلَمْ تَقْبَلُوا! أَتَأْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ الْحِكْمَ فَتَنْفِرُونَ مِنْهَا وَ أَعْطَكُمْ بِالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْبَالِغَةِ فَتَنْتَفِرُونَ عَنْهَا وَ أَخَذْتُكُمْ عَلَى جِهَادِ أَهْلِ الْبَغْيِ فَمَا آتَى عَلَى آخِرِ قَوْلِي حَتَّى أَرَاكُمْ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ أَيَادِي سَبَا، تَرْجِعُونَ إِلَى مَجَالِسِكُمْ وَ تَتَخَادَعُونَ عَنْ مَوَاعِظِكُمْ. أَقْوَمُكُمْ غُدُوَّةً وَ تَرْجِعُونَ إِلَيَّ عَشِيَّةً كَظَهَرِ الْحَنِيَّةِ، عَجَزَ الْمُقْوَمُ وَ أَعْضَلَ الْمُقْوَمُ.

Amir al-Mu'minin talking about his companions and those of the Holy Prophet: People are afraid of the oppression of their rulers while I fear the oppression of my subjects. I called you for war but you did not come. I warned you but you did not listen. I called you secretly as well as openly, but you did not respond. I gave you sincere counsel, but you did not accept it. Are you present like the absent, and slaves like masters? I recite before you points of wisdom but you turn away from them, and I advise you with far-reaching advice but you disperse away from it. I rouse you for jihad against the people of revolt but before I come to the end of my speech, I see you disperse like the sons of Saba. You return to your places and deceive one another by your counsel. I straighten you in the morning but you are back to me in the evening as curved as the back of a bow. The straightener has become weary while those to be straightened have become incorrigible (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

4.2.2. Interpretation stage

Fairclough argues that the priority of inter-discourse and intertextual relations in any discourse is defined by its relationship to other discourses, relying on them in a complex manner. Intertextual references are presented within a social context, highlighting their role as mechanisms that facilitate change in discourses.

In light of this, the Imam (PBUH) uses verses from the Holy Quran as the central axis of his sermons. This practice imparts a prominent, dynamic, and motivating quality to his discourse. The following is an example of this approach:

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِخَاصَّةِ أَوْلِيَائِهِ وَهُوَ لِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى وَدِرْعُ اللَّهِ الْحَصِينَةُ وَجُنَّةُ الْوَثِيقَةِ. فَمَنْ تَرَكَهُ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ ثَوْبَ الدَّلِّ وَشِمْلَةَ الْبَلَاءِ وَدَيَّتْ بِالْصَّغَارِ وَالْقَمَاءَةِ وَضُرِبَ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ بِالْإِسْهَابِ وَ أُدِيلَ الْحَقُّ مِنْهُ بِتَضْيِيعِ الْجِهَادِ وَ سِيَمِ الْحَسَفِ وَ مُنِعَ النَّصَفُ.

From a sermon that the Commander of the Faithful delivered in which he urged people to perform jihad. He did so when a report reached him about the Anbar being invaded by an army of Mu' awiyah, but the Anbar people did not resist. He mentions the merits of jihad, calling on people to rise, stating his knowledge of wars, and holding people responsible for disobeying him. Now then, surely jihad is one of the doors of Paradise, which Allah has opened for His chief friends. It is the dress of piety and the protective armor of Allah and His trustworthy shield. Whoever abandons it Allah covers him with the dress of disgrace and the clothes of distress. He is kicked with contempt and scorn, and his heart is veiled with screens (of neglect). Truth is taken away from him because of missing jihad. He has to suffer ignominy and justice is denied to him (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

The first part of this sermon is an adaptation of verse 26 of Surah Al-A'raf, which mentions the attire of piety.

4.2.3. Explanation

The primary purpose of the explanation stage in critical discourse analysis is to highlight the roles of the description and interpretation stages in producing and reproducing unequal power dynamics, as well as to utilize the findings of critical studies for the liberation of the oppressed. Critical discourse analysis is politically committed to effecting change in this regard, and the analyst must maintain clarity regarding their political and social stance (Mohseni, 2016).

As noted, the political and religious changes following the demise of the Prophet (May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him and his family) caused the discourse in the words of the Imam (PBUH) to reflect the political oppression that plagued society, alongside the spread of social corruption—an atmosphere that the Kufis themselves, through their ignorance and misbehavior, had helped to create. Here is an example:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ أَمْرِي مَعَكُمْ عَلَى مَا أُحِبُّ حَتَّى نَهَكْتُمْ الْحَرْبَ، وَقَدْ وَ اللَّهِ أَخَذْتُ مِنْكُمْ وَ تَرَكَتُ وَ هِيَ لِعَدُوِّكُمْ أَنَّهُكَ. لَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَمِيرًا، فَأَصْبَحْتُ الْيَوْمَ مَأْمُورًا؛ وَ كُنْتُ أَمِيرًا نَاهِيًا، فَأَصْبَحْتُ الْيَوْمَ مَنِيئًا؛ وَ قَدْ أَحْبَبْتُ الْبَقَاءَ، وَ لَيْسَ لِي أَنْ أَجْلِسَ عَلَى مَا تَكْرَهُونَ.

When Amir al-Mu'minin's companions disputed with him about the issue of arbitration, he said: O' people, matters between me and you went as I wished till war exhausted you. By Allah, it has overtaken some of you and left others, and has completely weakened your enemy. Till yesterday I was giving orders but today I am being given orders, and till yesterday I was dissuading people (from wrong acts) but today I am being dissuaded. You have now shown a liking to live in this world, and it is not for me to bring you to what you dislike. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

Thus, the Kufis, driven by a tendency toward worldly life, materialism, and fear, laid the groundwork for the rule of corruption and oppression. In every era, it is the behavior of the people that shapes the dominant social characteristics of society and defines the atmosphere of the time (Mohseni, 2016).

4.3. Translation strategies

In the second part, the researchers examine five of Berman's translation strategies. While Berman's model includes eleven strategies in total, the researchers focus specifically on the five that are applicable to translation.

4.3.1. Rationalization

This method involves the syntactic structures and punctuation of the original text, with the translator altering the text according to the word order. These changes can include restructuring sentences or modifying punctuation marks, all in accordance with the author's goals and intentions (Ahmadi, 2013).

It is evident that words in any language follow specific logical and rational rules. However, these rules may not hold in translation; thus, one of the translator's key functions is to rationalize the words and align them with the rules of the target language (Delshad, 2015).

Rationalizing speech is essential for a translator aiming to translate Arabic text into English, as the two languages differ significantly in their syntactic structures. Nevertheless, some translators may impose their preferences on these structural changes without justification. Berman considers both types of changes to be distortions of the text.

If the translator maintains the compositional and syntactic features of the source text—elements that are integral to the author's style—and successfully conveys the text's message, then the translator is not at fault. Now, let us examine the following sermons.

فَيَا عَجَباً عَجَباً، وَاللَّهِ يُبِيتُ الْقُلُوبَ وَيَجْلِبُ الْهَمَّ مِنْ اجْتِمَاعِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ وَتَفَرُّقِكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ، فَقُبْحاً لَكُمْ وَتَرَحُّاً حِينَ صِرْتُمْ غَرَضاً يُرْمَى يُغَارُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا تُغِيرُونَ وَلَا تُغَرِّوْنَ وَلَا تَغُزُونَ وَبُعِصَى اللَّهِ وَتَرَصُّونَ؛ فَإِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي أَيَّامِ الْحَرِّ قُلْتُمْ هَذِهِ سَمَارَةٌ الْقَيْظِ أَمْهَلْنَا يُسَبِّحُ عَنَّا الْحَرُّ وَإِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الشِّتَاءِ قُلْتُمْ هَذِهِ صَبَارَةٌ الْقَرِّ أَمْهَلْنَا يُسَلِّخُ عَنَّا الْبَرْدُ؛ كُلُّ هَذَا فِرَاراً مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقَرِّ، فَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقَرِّ تَفَرُّونَ فَأَنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ مِنَ السَّيْفِ أَقَرُّ. خ ٢٧

How strange! How strange! By Allah, my heart sinks to see the unity of these people on their wrongs and your dispersion from your right. Woe and grief befall you. You have become the target at which arrows are shot. You are being killed and you do not kill. You are being attacked but you do not attack. Allah is being disobeyed and you remain agreeable to it. When I ask you to move against them in summer you say that it is too hot to spare us till heat subsides from us. When I order you to march in winter, you say it is severely cold, give us time till the cold clears from us. These are just excuses for evading heat and cold because if you run away from heat and cold, you would be, by Allah, running away (in a greater degree) from sword (war) (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

In this translator's work, the order of words in the target language is carefully preserved, ensuring that the intensity and significance of each word are effectively conveyed. For example, in the aforementioned sermon, the word order was correctly maintained from the beginning of the sentence. By closely following the original text, the translator successfully transmitted the power of the words without distorting their meaning.

However, upon closer examination, we find that although the translator could have rendered the text more expressively while adhering to the original, there are instances where personal preference led to overly brief translations. For instance, the phrase “*وَاللّٰهُ يُمِيتُ الْقُلُوبَ وَ يَحْلِبُ الْهَمَّ*” was translated as “my heart sinks”. A more faithful translation could be: “This fact kills the human heart and causes sorrow”. This approach would have better captured the essence of the original text while remaining true to its meaning in the target language.

In another example, the phrase “*فَقُبْحًا لَّكُمْ وَ تَرَحًّا*” was translated as “woe and grief befall you”, while the term “*قُبْحًا*” explicitly refers to ugliness. A more accurate translation would be: “Ugliness and sorrow be upon you”. Berman argues that such alterations in translation, even if intended for aesthetic reasons, lead to distortion of the original text. A translator must remain faithful to the original text and refrain from altering its words unnecessarily. Now, let us turn our attention to another sermon.

4.3.2. Clarification

Berman considers transparency to be a factor that distorts the original text. Clarification refers to issues in the source text that are unclear or hidden, which the author did not intend to reveal. Enlightenment transparency operates at the level of meaning, while Enlightenment rationalization functions at the level of syntactic structure (Parvar, 2010).

Consequently, translators often instinctively seek to clarify and uncover these hidden layers of meaning. However, the question arises: is transparency beneficial or detrimental? Berman argues that it is preferable to preserve the originality of the source text. He rejects any additional explanations or clarifications, asserting that creativity in translation should serve the purpose of faithfully rewriting the original text in another language rather than providing a clear and transparent translation (Karimian, 2011).

يا أشباه الرجال و لا رجال، خلوم الأطفال و عقول ربات الجبال، لوددت أني لم أركم و لم أعرفكم مغرفة و الله جرث ندما و أعقبت سدا. فأتلكم الله لقد ملأتم قلبي قبحاً و شعثم صدري غيظاً و جرعثوني نعب التهمام أنفاساً و أفسدتم علي رأيي بالعصيان و الخذلان، حتى لقد قالت قريش إن ابن أبي طالب رجل شجاع و لكن لا علم له بالحرب. لله أبوه! و هل أحد منهم أشد لها مراساً و أقدم فيها مقاماً مني؟ لقد نهضت فيها و ما بلغت العشرين و ها أنا ذا قد دزفت على الستين؛ و لكن لا رأي لمن لا يطاع. خ ٢٧

O' you a semblance of men, not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world). I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allah, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allah fight you! You have filled my heart with pus and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthfuls of grief one after the other. You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me so much so that Quraysh started saying that the son of Abi Talib is brave but does not know (the tactics of) war. Allah bless them! Is there anyone among them who is fiercer in the war and more experienced in it than I am? I rose for it although yet within the twenties, and here I am, have crossed over sixty, but one who is not obeyed can have no opinion (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

In translating this sermon, the translator made significant efforts to convey the meaning of the original text in the target language. By providing additional explanations in parentheses, the translator clarified the intended meaning. However, the cultural gap between the two languages presents challenges for the target audience, particularly because the concept of a bridal chamber does not exist in the target language's culture. To address

this, the additional explanation describes a woman who is set apart from others and does not associate with anyone. This approach allows the translator to convey the meaning of the original text more effectively. We observe similar instances in sermon 25 as well.

4.3.3. Expansion

The purpose of transparency is to define meaning, while expansion refers to the elaboration of words. The translator's goal is to add content in a way that does not alter the original text but merely increases its volume without adding to its semantic or verbal complexity (Ahmadi, 2013).

Seyyed Alireza, like many translators, employs the expansion method in his translations. However, due to his style, which emphasizes fidelity to the source text, he tends to expand more in terms of word choice rather than overall content. By examining the translations of the following sermons, researchers can explore this issue more clearly.

أَلَا وَإِنِّي قَدْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى قِتَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا وَسِرًّا وَإِعْلَانًا وَ قُلْتُ لَكُمْ اغْزُوهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْزَوْكُمْ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا غُزِيَ قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي غَيْرِ دَارِهِمْ إِلَّا دُلُّوا؛ فَتَوَاكَلْتُمْ وَتَخَادَلْتُمْ حَتَّى شُنْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْغَارَاثَ وَ مُلِكَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَوْطَانُ. [فَهَذَا] وَ هَذَا أَخُو غَامِدٍ [و] قَدْ وَرَدَتْ خَيْلُهُ الْأَنْبَارَ وَ قَدْ قَتَلَ حَسَنَ بْنِ حَسَّانَ الْبَكْرِيَّ وَ أَزَالَ خَيْلَكُمْ عَنْ مَسَالِحِهَا وَ لَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ الْمُسْلِمَةِ وَ الْأُخْرَى الْمَعَاهِدَةَ فَيَنْتَزِعُ جَلْبَها وَ قَلْبَها وَ قَلَائِدَها وَ رُعْبَها مَا تَمْتَنِعُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِالْإِسْتِزْجَاعِ وَ الْإِسْتِزْحَامِ، ثُمَّ انْصَرَفُوا وَافِرِينَ مَا نَالَ رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ كَلْمٌ وَ لَا أَرِيقَ لَهُمْ دَمٌ. فَلَوْ أَنَّ أَمْرًا مُسْلِمًا مَاتَ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا أَسْفًا مَا كَانَ بِهِ مَلُومًا بَلْ كَانَ بِهِ عِنْدِي جَدِيرًا.

خ ٢٧

Beware! I called you (*insistently*) to fight these people night and day, secretly and openly, and exhorted you to attack them before they attacked you because by Allah, no people have been attacked in the hearts of their houses but they suffered disgrace. But you put it off to others and forsook it till destruction befell you and your cities were occupied. The horsemen of Banu Ghamid have reached al-Anbar and killed Hassan ibn Hassan al-Bakri. They have removed your horsemen from the garrison. I have come to know that every one of them entered upon Muslim women and other women under the protection of Islam and took away their ornaments from legs, arms, necks, and ears and no woman could resist it except by pronouncing the verse, “We are for Allah and to Him we shall return” (Qur’an, 2: 156) Then they got back laden with wealth without any wound or loss of life. If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather there is justification for him before me. (Seyyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

In translating the twenty-seventh sermon of Nahj al-Balaghah, the translator added the word “insistence” in parentheses, even though it does not have a direct equivalent in the original text. This addition aimed to help readers better understand the context of that day and grasp the subject more effectively. However, Berman considers such expansions to be a form of distortion, arguing that any additions to the translation, even if they do not alter the content, still constitute a distortion of the original meaning.

Despite this critique, Seyyed Ali Reza’s addition enhanced the beauty of the text and more effectively conveyed the meaning of the Imam (PBUH). Importantly, this action did not detract from the content; rather, Seyyed Alireza sought to clarify and elaborate on aspects that the Imam (PBUH) did not explicitly state.

4.4. Qualitative impoverishment

Qualitative attenuation refers to the process of equating words, phrases, and structures from the source text with those that fail to convey their phonetic, semantic, and symbolic richness (Berman, 2010). Achieving semantic equivalence between the words and phrases of a translation and those of the original text has always been a primary concern for literary translators. However, this ideal has never been fully realized, particularly in the translation of religious texts (Rahimi Khoigani, 1982).

For instance, the repetition of phrases such as (SA) in a sermon can create puns, and if these are not conveyed in the target text, the phonetic richness is diminished. In this section, the researchers focus exclusively on instances where puns exist in the original sermon but are absent in the translator's version. In reviewing sermon 192 of Nahj al-Balaghah, we examine the following example.

أَقْوَمُكُمْ غُدُوَّةً وَ تَرْجِعُونَ إِلَيَّ عَشِيَّةً كَظَهَرِ الْحَيَّةِ، عَجَزَ الْمُقَوِّمُ وَ أَعْصَلَ الْمُقَوِّمُ. خ ٩٧

The straightener has become weary while those to be straightened have become incorrigible. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401)

In this part of the sermon, the use of similar homogeneous words facilitates a better understanding of the overall content, which in turn evokes a sense of pleasure. Although the translator has struggled to convey the beauty of the language, such as its phonetic richness, he has made every effort to express its intended meaning. Undoubtedly, this shortcoming is not the translator's fault, as the specific structure of speech is unique to the Arabic language. The significant differences between Arabic and the target language make it challenging for the translator to capture this aspect of the word's beauty. Regardless, Berman views this disparity between the original text and its translation as a form of distortion that reflects the translator's unfaithfulness to the original work.

4.5. Quantitative impoverishment

Quantitative weakening refers to the reduction of words and phrases from the original text in the translation (Berman, 2010). In this case, the translator eliminates words without adequate justification. A single word can have multiple meanings, and a phrase may contain several words with different interpretations. If the author includes all meanings, the translation may become problematic; therefore, the translator must choose the most appropriate meaning. According to Berman, this process results in slight weakening of the translation.

Given the extensive vocabulary in Nahj al-Balaghah, studying the semantic fields of words presents a new area for research. One notable example is the word 'camel' and its related terms. The Bedouin people's deep affection for this animal has led the Arabs to develop specific words for its various states and characteristics.

In Nahj al-Balaghah, Imam Ali (PBUH) employs the word 'camel' and its derivatives with varied interpretations. The significance and prevalence of camels in people's lives necessitated the Imam's use of these terms in appropriate contexts, such as to discuss topics like caliphate and sedition. In this section, researchers utilize Berman's Quantitative Impoverishment strategy to analyze the different names for camels in the sermons. However, the translator failed to find suitable equivalents in the target language and resorted to using

a single term to refer to all variations of the word 'camel'. Next, we will examine five sermons in which the Imam (PBUH) directly rebukes the Kufis using the term 'camel' analyzing them through the lens of Berman's quantitative impoverishment model.

مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا كَالْبِلِّ صَلَّ رُعَاتُهَا فُكِّمَتْ جُمُعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ. خ ٣٤

Your example is that of camels whose protector has disappeared, so when they are collected from one side, they disperse from the other (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى نَصْرِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ فَجَرَجَرْتُمْ جَرْجَرَةَ الْجَمَلِ الْأَسَرِّ وَتَنَاقَلْتُمْ تَنَاقُلَ التَّصَوِّ الْأَذْبَرِ. خ ٣٩

I called you for the help of your brethren but made noises like the camel having pain in the stomach, and became loose like the camel of thin back (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

كَمْ أَدَارِيكُمْ كَمَا تُدَارَى الْبَكَارُ الْعَمِدَةُ وَالتِّيَابُ الْمَتَدَاعِيَةُ، كُلَّمَا حِيصَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ تَهْتَكَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ. خ ٦٩

How long shall I accord you consideration that is accorded to camels with hollow hump, or to Worn clothes which when stitched on one side give way on the other (Seyed Ali Reza, 1980.1401).

وَ اللَّهُ مَا بَصَّرْتُمْ بَعْدَهُمْ شَيْئًا يَجْهَلُوهُ وَ لَا أَصْفَيْتُمْ بِهِ وَ حُرْمُوهُ وَ لَقَدْ نَزَلَتْ بِكُمْ الْبَلِيَّةُ جَائِلًا خَطَامُهَا رِخْوًا بَطَانُهَا فَلَا يَعْرِتُكُمْ مَا أَصْبَحَ فِيهِ أَهْلُ الْغُرُورِ فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ ظِلٌّ مَمْدُودٌ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مَعْدُودٍ. خ ٨٩

By Allah, you have not been told anything that they did not know and you have not been given anything which they were deprived of. Certainly, you have been afflicted by a calamity (which is like a she-camel) whose nose-string is moving about and whose strap is loose. So in whatever condition these deceitful people are should not deceive you, because it is just a long shadow whose term is fixed. (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401)

وَ أَيْمُ اللَّهِ لَتَجِدَنَّ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ لَكُمْ أَرْبَابَ سُوءٍ بَعْدِي كَاللَّنَّابِ الصَّرُوسِ تَعْدُمُ بَيْنَهَا وَ تَخْطُ بِيَدِهَا وَ تَرْتِنُ بِرِجْلِهَا وَ تَمْنَعُ ذَرْهَاهَا، لَا يَزَالُونَ بِكُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَتْرَكُوا مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا نَافِعًا لَهُمْ أَوْ غَيْرَ ضَائِرٍ بِهِمْ وَ لَا يَزَالُ بَلَاؤُهُمْ عَنْكُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَكُونَ انْتِصَارُ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا كَانْتِصَارِ الْعَبْدِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَ الصَّاحِبِ مِنْ مُسْتَضْجِبِهِ. خ ٩٣

By Allah. you will find Banu Umayyah after me worst people for yourselves, like the old unruly she-camel who bites with its mouth, beats with its forelegs, kicks with its hind legs, and refuses to be milked (Seyed Ali Reza.1980.1401).

As can be seen in the translation of the sermons, the translator used the term she-camel or camel for all words related to camels, while in Arabic each word describes a specific species of camel. And that in English we do not have the categories of females and males as in Arabic for animals and we rarely see such cases. In any case, due to cultural differences between the two languages and the lack of a suitable equivalent, the translator cannot be criticized. Such a translation is unacceptable by Berman.

5. Findings

The results of the present study, based on the Fairclough model, are examined in three separate sections, described below.

Table 1. Percentages of critical discourse analysis types based on the Fairclough model

Different kind of discourse analysis	Number	Percentage
Description	15	65 %
Interpretation	6	26%
Explanation	2	9%
Whole	23	100%

Table 1 presents the frequencies of different types of critical discourse analysis based on Fairclough's model. The data indicates that the description stage is the most prevalent, with a frequency of 65%, followed by the interpretation stage at 26%. Additionally, the explanation stage has the lowest frequency, accounting for only 9% of the discourse analysis types used in the translation of Nahj al-Balaghah sermons by Seyyed Ali Reza.

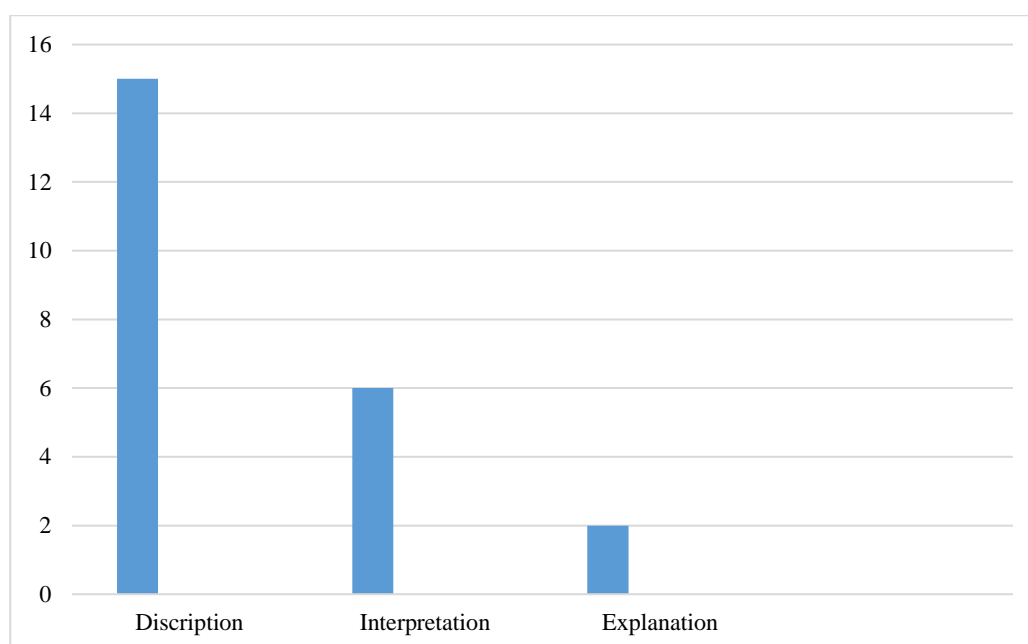


Figure 1. Number of types of discourse analysis

Figure 1. illustrates the frequency of each type of discourse analysis. The description stage is the most common, while the explanation stage is the least frequent type of discourse analysis found in the Nahj al-Balaghah sermons.

Table 2. Percentages of critical discourse analysis types based on the Fairclough model

Different kind of translation strategies	Number	Percentage
Rationalization	2	8%
Clarification	8	33%
Expansion	7	29%
Qualitative impoverishment	2	8%
Quantitative impoverishment	5	21%
Total	24	100%

Table 2. presents the frequencies of different translation strategies based on the Berman model. The data indicates that clarification is the most common strategy, with a frequency of 33%, followed by expansion at 29%. Additionally, rationalization and qualitative impoverishment are the least frequent strategies, each accounting for only 8% of the total.

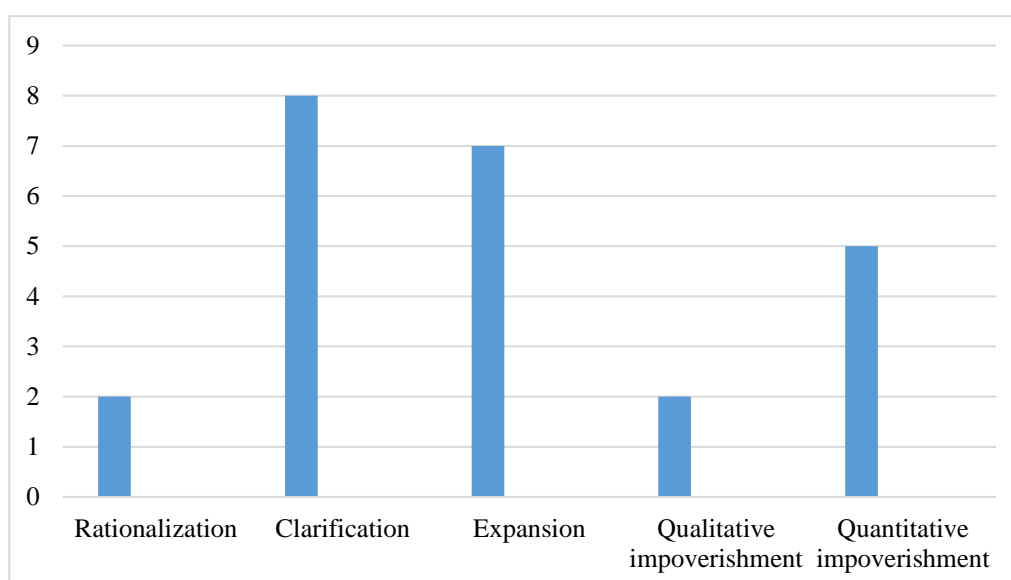


Figure 2. Percentages of types of translation strategies

Figure 2. illustrates the percentages of different translation strategies. It shows that the most frequent strategy is clarification, with a frequency of 34%, while rationalization and qualitative impoverishment are the least frequent, each accounting for only 8%.

5.1 Rationalization

In this study, an example of translation strategies was extracted, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Translation strategies for Rationalization

Sermon	Translation
فَيَا عَجَبًا عَجَبًا، وَاللَّهِ يُمِيتُ الْقُلُوبَ وَ يَجْلِبُ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ اجْتِمَاعِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ وَ تَفَرُّقُكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ، فَشُبْحًا لَكُمْ وَ تَرَحًّا خ٢٧.	How strange! How strange! By Allah, <u>my heart sinks</u> to see the unity of these people on their wrong and your dispersion from your right. <u>Woe and grief</u> befall you.

5.2 Clarification

In this study, two examples of translation strategies were identified, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Translation strategies for Clarification

Sermon	Translation
يَا أَشْبَاهَ الرِّجَالِ وَلَا رِجَالًا، جُلُومُ الْأَطْفَالِ وَ عُقُولُ رِبَاتِ الْحِجَالِ، لَوِدِدْتُ أَتَى لَمْ أَرُكُمْ وَلَمْ أَعْرِفْكُمْ مَعْرِفَةً وَاللَّهِ جَرَّتْ نَدْمًا وَأَعْقَبَتْ سَدَمًا. خ ٢٧	O' you a semblance of men, not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world).
وَتَمَثَّلَ بِقَوْلِ الشَّاعِرِ: لَعَمْرُ أَبِيكَ الْخَيْرِ يَا عَمْرُو إِنِّي عَلَى وَصَرٍ مِنْ ذَا الْإِنَاءِ قَلِيلِ خ ٢٥	Omar. By your good father's life. I have received only a small bit of fat from this pot (fat that remains sticking to it after it has been emptied).

5.3 Expansion

In this study, two examples were extracted under translation strategies which will be shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Translation strategies for Expansion

Sermon	Translation
أَلَا وَ إِنِّي قَدْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى قِتَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَيْلًا وَ نَهَارًا وَ سِرًّا وَ إِعْلَانًا وَ قُلْتُ لَكُمْ اغْزَوْهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْزَوْكُمْ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا غَزِي قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي غَيْرِ دَارِهِمْ إِلَّا ذُلُّوا؛ فَتَوَاكَلْتُمْ وَ تَخَادَلْتُمْ حَتَّى شَتَّتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْغَارَاثُ وَ مُلِكَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَوْطَانُ. خ ٢٧	Beware! I called you (<u>insistently</u>) to fight these people night and day, secretly and openly, and exhorted you to attack them before they attacked you because by Allah, no people have been attacked in the hearts of their houses but they suffered disgrace.
مَا أَنتُمْ لِي بِثِقَةٍ سَحِيسَ اللَّيَالِي وَ مَا أَنتُمْ بِرُكْنٍ يُمَالُ بِكُمْ وَ لَا زَوَافِرٍ عَرٍّ يُقْتَرُ إِلَيْكُمْ. مَا أَنتُمْ إِلَّا كَيْلٌ ضَلَّ رِعَاتُهَا فَكَلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ. لَيْسَ لَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ سُعْرُ نَارِ الْحَرْبِ أَنتُمْ، تَكَادُونَ وَ لَا تَكِيدُونَ وَ تُلْتَقِصُ أَطْرَافَكُمْ فَلَا تَمْتَعُصُونَ. لَا يَنَامُ عَنْكُمْ وَ أَنتُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ سَاهُونَ. خ ٣٤	I have lost my confidence in you for good. Neither are you a support for me to lean upon, nor a means to honor and victory. Your example is that of the camels whose protector has disappeared, so when they are collected from one side they disperse from the other. By Allah, how bad are you for igniting the flames of war You are intrigued against but you are not intrigue (<u>against the enemy</u>). Your boundaries are decreasing but you do not get enraged over it. Those who are against you do not sleep while you remain unmindful.

5.4 Qualitative impoverishment

In this study, 2 examples for this type of were found translation strategies in the following Table 6.

Table 6. Translation strategies for Qualitative impoverishment

Sermon	Translation
فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَا كَانَ مِنْ فِعْلِ اللَّهِ بِإِبْلِيسَ إِذْ أَحْبَطَ عَمَلَهُ الطَّوِيلَ وَجَهْدَهُ الْجَهِيدَ وَكَانَ قَدْ عَبَدَ اللَّهَ سِتَّةَ آلَافِ سَنَةٍ. خ ١٩٢	You should take a lesson from what Allah did with Satan; when he nullified his great acts and extensive efforts, although Satan had worshipped Allah for six thousand years – whether by the reckoning of this world or of the next world is not known, on account of the vanity of one hour.
أَقْوَمُكُمْ عُذُوَّةً وَ تَرْجِعُونَ إِلَيَّ عَشِيَّةً كَطَلْرِ الْحَنِيَّةِ، عَجَزَ الْمُقْوَمُ وَ أَعْضَلَ الْمُقْوَمُ. خ ٩٧	The straightener has become weary while those to be straightened have become incorrigible.

5.5 Quantitative impoverishment

In this study, two instances of the Quantitative Impoverishment strategy were identified, as presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Translation strategies for Quantitative impoverishment

Sermons	Translation
مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا كَالِإِبِلِ صَلَّ رُعَاتُهَا فَكَلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ. خ ٣٤	Your example is that of camels whose protectors have disappeared, so when they are collected from one side, they disperse from the other.
دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى نَصْرِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ فَجَزَجَرْتُمْ جَزَجَرَةَ الْجَمَلِ الْأَسْرِ وَ تَشَاقَلْتُمْ تَشَاقُلَ النَّصْرِ الْأَذْبَرِ. خ ٣٩	I called you for the help of your brethren but you made noises like the camel having pain in its stomach and became loose like the camel of thin back.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to evaluate the compatibility of the translated text of a section of Nahj al-Balaghah that explicitly critiques the people of Kufa. After analyzing the translation of these sermons alongside reputable interpretations, the researchers concluded that the translator effectively conveyed the Imam's message through discourse, demonstrating considerable success in this regard. The use of established interpretations was necessary due to the researchers' inability to engage in an in-depth interpretation of the sermons, as they were not in a position to provide such analysis. To verify the compatibility of the translated discourse with the original text, it was essential to rely on a credible source.

A lack of fidelity in translation can result in the introduction of inaccuracies, which may distort the sanctity of these texts. According to Berman's (2010) model, Seyed Ali Reza's translation stands out as one of the most faithful and least problematic translations. By

comparing five factors of text distortion in Reza's translation, the researchers observed minimal distortions, making it one of the most faithful renderings of Nahj al-Balaghah, successfully preserving the language, style, and meaning of the Imam's words.

Further research could explore additional strategies used in translating Nahj al-Balaghah. This study focused on only five of the eleven strategies outlined in Berman's model, leaving the remaining six open for investigation by future researchers. Additionally, other sermons, letters, and the wisdom of the Imam (PBUH) in Nahj al-Balaghah could be analyzed through a discourse analysis approach.

The findings of this study may be valuable for English language teachers and students interested in translation studies, particularly in the translation of sacred and historically significant texts. Postgraduate students in translation studies can also benefit from the strategies outlined by Fairclough (1998) and Berman (2010), applying them to their own research. Moreover, translators seeking to work in the field of religious texts can gain insights from this study, which may enhance their understanding and improve their success in translating such works.

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The Contribution of Argumentation to Learning Approach, Inference, and Interpretation: The Case of Seminary Education at the Islamic Propagation Office (IPO)

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of argumentation on learning approach and critical thinking (inference and interpretation) in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes among Islamic studies or seminary students in Mashhad. It was conducted in two classes: an experimental group and a control group, each with 12 female students. Data for the study were collected using pretest and posttest assessments of the Critical Thinking Appraisal (CTA) and a learning approach questionnaire. The Farsi version of Watson-Glaser's Critical Thinking Appraisal (CTA) was used to measure participants' inference-making and deduction. Bigg's Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) was employed to assess participants' learning approaches, measuring two broad approaches: deep approach and surface approach, with four subscales: surface strategy (SS), surface motive (SM), deep strategy (DS), and deep motive (DM). The experimental group received instruction based on logical argumentation as the treatment. The results demonstrated the effectiveness of the argumentation method in improving participants' learning approach and critical thinking (inference and interpretation). Specifically, the results of the independent samples t-test indicated a statistically significant difference between the two groups in the degree of their Inference ($t = 2.33$, $p = .03$), Interpretation ($t = 2.25$, $p = .03$), Deep Approach ($t = 2.88$, $p = .01$), and Surface Approach ($t = -2.16$, $p = .04$) after the treatment. The findings of this study can be beneficial for teachers of Islamic propagators in enhancing their students' learning approach and critical thinking through the use of argumentative instruction.

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1. Introduction

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an increasingly important approach to teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), starting in the late 1960s (Richards, 1984, as cited in Wang, 2015). Although ESP has had a generally long time to develop, there is still not a clear definition of it (Anthony, 1997). It is mostly used as an umbrella term to denote the teaching of English for all specific purposes, including academic, occupational, and professional purposes (Basturkmen, 2019).

According to Strevens (1988, as cited in Agustina, 2014), ESP courses have four absolute characteristics: “First, they are designed to meet specific needs of the learners; second, they are related to content (i.e. in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities; third, they are centered on the language appropriate to those activities, including syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc. and analysis of this discourse; and fourth, they are differentiated from General English.” Later, Dudley-Evans et al. (1998) improved the above-mentioned definition of ESP by removing the last stated absolute characteristic. Moreover, they believe one of the five variable characteristics of ESP is, in specific teaching conditions, it may employ an altered approach from that of General English (Anthony, 1997).

Traditional approaches mostly focus on language form, thus educators have shifted their consideration to a more communicative view in which students’ abilities to communicate in English in professional contexts are highlighted, and eventually, it will better suit students’ interests and needs (Stryker & Leaver, 1997, as cited in Wang, 2014). Unlike in the past, teachers today are well aware of the importance of needs analysis in producing the course materials (Anthony, 1997) and choosing the method based on the goals of learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, as cited in Agustina, 2014).

The target needs of learners are the situations they are supposed to apply their language skills (Sujana, 2005). For instance, English-learner students of the seminary, religious people, or new Muslims need to improve their argumentation power to be able to clarify, defend, and prove their beliefs and Islamic knowledge in international environments. Argumentation, as a part of critical thinking, is an attempt to persuade somebody else by presenting fine reasons (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020).

Although the practice of argumentation is basically a natural human competence, it is truly possible to improve and increase human capacity for reasonableness (Jackson, 2015). A claim needs to be framed within an argumentation structure in order to be cogent and responsive to aware questioning. This questioning awareness is an evident indicator of critical thinking (CT) ability (Ghanizadeh, 2011).

CT is an attempt to ensure that we have sound reasons to believe or do what others try to persuade us about (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020) and has an increasing mutual effect with argumentation power. To achieve CT, one needs the mastery of a group of skills like knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and applying the best when an individual faces a novel situation; furthermore, the three higher levels, i.e. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, are often reported to reflect critical thinking (Bloom, 1956, as cited in Bagheri & Ghanizadeh, 2016a).

Critical thinking, as a cognitive skill, is based on six main cores: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation (Facione et al., 1996). Facione et al. (1996) in his article, *Critical Thinking: What It Is and Why It Counts*, defines interpretation

as “to comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments, conventions, beliefs, rules, procedures, or criteria”. He also describes the inference as “to identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to reduce the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgments, beliefs, opinions, concepts, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation.”

The approach that a learner adopts during learning is one of the many factors which can influence good learning (Ghanizadeh & Allahdadi, 2015). According to Marton and Säljö (1976, as cited in Allahdadi & Ghanizadeh, 2015), learning approach is divided into two categories of deep and surface. Usually, students choose an approach for their learning according to the understood goals of the lesson they are studying and the quality and quantity of their learning can be determined through them (Ghanizadeh & Allahdadi, 2015).

According to Shelly (2009), in deep approach, students attempt broad reading and try to integrate new material into previous knowledge because their motivation is meaning-oriented and innate. While in surface approach the emphasis is on remembering the important component of content through rote learning due to the instrumental nature of its motivation. Furthermore, the main purpose of students is to meet the minimum requirements for evaluation. In other words, deep learners mostly keep searching for meaning while, surface learners usually focus on memorizing the parts that might be questioned (Ghanizadeh & Allahdadi, 2015).

The major purpose of the present study is to experimentally inspect the impact of the argumentation method on learning approach and two components of critical thinking (inference making and interpretation). It should be noted that ESP classes of seminary education at the Islamic Propagation Office (IPO) are the context of this work. To fulfill the objectives of the present research, the following research questions were examined in this study:

1. Does argumentation influence seminary students' learning approach in ESP classes?
2. Does argumentation influence seminary students' inference making in ESP classes?
3. Does argumentation influence seminary students' interpretation in ESP classes?

In this paper, the key concepts and components of the study are presented. The definitions, historical background, and implications of ESP, argumentation, CT, and learning approach are elaborated on. Moreover, the effect and interaction of argumentation on CT and learning approach were explained.

2. Review of the related literature

2.1 Critical thinking (CT)

Critical thinking (CT), analysis, and synthesis are certain types of thinking skills that need more cognitive or deeper processing, though for others recognition and remembrance might suffice. Bloom (1956) proposed one of the most commonly used taxonomies to hypothesize and foster higher forms of thinking in learning, including analyzing and assessing, in addition to memorizing and recalling facts (rote learning).

The applicability of Bloom's Taxonomy in the development and evaluation of textbooks has also been investigated. HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) need to be consciously developed, which requires planning and experimentation. To cultivate HOTS, textbooks are one of the primary tools available to both students and teachers. Research has confirmed the effect of textbooks on the development of thinking skills. As the volume of HOTS-inspired content and methodology increase, students' thinking skills and effective learning will eventually develop. Hence, the foundation of studies related to Bloom's Taxonomy lies in the analysis of tasks and activities in textbooks to determine the level of cognitive abilities represented (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020).

Argumentation and CT have an increasing mutual effect on each other. The latter is defined as an attempt to ensure that we have sound reasons to believe or do what others try to persuade us about (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020). Critical thinking, as a cognitive skill, is based on six core elements: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation (Facione et al., 1996).

According to the studies that confirm the important role of higher-order thinking skills and metacognitive abilities, Bagheri and Ghanizadeh (2016a) in their study investigated the connection between the two subcomponents of critical thinking, inference-making and deduction, and one subcomponent of self-regulation, self-monitoring, as well as the role of gender in each of these constructs. The study indicated that there were significant interrelationships among all variables. Moreover, gender did not play a significant role in students' inference making, deduction, and self-monitoring.

Armstrong (2004) discussed the role of critical thinking in the assessment of arguments based on three criteria: the first is deductive validity, that is, the provision that if the premises were true, the conclusion would definitely be right, based on the laws of logic; the second criterion is deductive soundness, that is, whether the premises are truly valid. Yet, it is not possible to distinguish correctness if some premises are probable statements. CT evaluates arguments based on the criterion of inductive force, which refers to the probability of the premises being true.

The relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking and their self-regulation ability in language institutes was investigated by Ghanizadeh (2011). She also examined how teachers' self-regulation can be affected by their length of teaching experience, as well as their age. Among the six components of CT, 'evaluation of arguments' and 'interpretation' had the most correlations with teachers' self-regulation. Moreover, data analysis revealed that there are significant correlations between teachers' self-regulation, their teaching experience, and their age. In continuation of this study, the factors contributing to the enhancement of CT can be compared and evaluated.

2.2 Argumentation

Many investigators have recently turned to the cognitive aspect of learning. Argumentation as a part of critical thinking is an attempt to persuade somebody else by presenting sound reasons (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020). Although the practice of argumentation is basically a natural human competence, it can be significantly improved and can increase the human capacity for reasonableness (Jackson, 2015). Thus, in recent years, argumentation has become a cornerstone of some studies in different aspects, such as the importance of design in argumentation (Jackson, 2015), teaching how to establish claims, offer supportive arguments, and provide evidence for each one (Lin & Mintzes, 2010), and argumentation

skills in relation to socio-scientific issues (Khishfe, 2012). Additionally, some studies focus on the recognition of argumentation and its elements as well as different types of reasoning and posing an argument (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020).

As explained in the CT section, argumentation is one of the HOTS-enhancing techniques. Although it might be appealing to jump into HOTS-enhancing techniques without understanding theoretical views, this may result in an outward and hasty grasp of them. Teachers and teacher educators need to understand the implications and basis of HOTS and become aware of the different dimensions of HOTS before they can effectively nurture these skills in their students (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020). Two specific sides of HOTS are critical thinking and reflective thinking.

Bowell and Kemp (2005) presented a series of activities to develop argumentation in a classroom context. First, the definition, limits, and elements of argumentation should be stated. Then some necessary steps for teaching it in the classroom are discussed, which include detecting conclusions, identifying and numbering premises, distinguishing arguments from explanations and descriptions, and identifying ambiguity. Finally, five types of reasoning, an important aspect of meaning, are defined to foster students' ability to construct arguments. They are causal reasoning, reasoning from generalization, reasoning from specific cases, reasoning from analogy, and reasoning from term. The techniques of argumentation which inspired the present research were mainly derived from this framework.

A design perspective on argumentation was proposed by Jackson (2015), intended as complementary to empirical and critical scholarship. The key advantage of his perspective was clarifying that humans' talent for reason and reasonableness can be developed through tasks that improve on unaided human intellect. Those three tasks can be categorized in three main groups: logical systems, scientific methods, and disputation frameworks. According to this study, a "design hypothesis" supports each of tasks: an answer to the question, how can we reduce mistakes and enhance the quality of our reasoning results? This paper has focused on theorizing design tasks and evaluating design hypotheses, but the methods and practical aspects of it are not considered.

A study was conducted on the argumentation skills of Taiwanese sixth-grade students through training of socio-scientific topics by Lin and Mintzes (2010). A practiced elementary school teacher who had received specific instruction on argumentation skills and socio-scientific issues carried out a 17-h classroom unit. Establishing claims and warrants, constructing counterarguments, offering supportive arguments, and providing evidence for them were the outcomes of that course for students. According to this study, there is a significant relationship between students' ability levels and success in learning argumentation skills. High-ability students were significantly able to generate complete arguments. Consequently, the remaining question is how we can specifically improve the argumentation skills in low-ability students? In another survey by Khishfe (2012), the relationship between high school students' perception about the nature of science (NOS) and argumentation skills, regarding two dialectic socio-scientific issues, were investigated. A survey made of two scenarios concerning the controversial socio-scientific issues had been done in five schools from different areas of Beirut, Lebanon. This study highlights the role of counterarguments and the importance of considering contextual factors that involve issue exposure and familiarity, prior content knowledge, and personal relevance are two central implications for the teaching of NOS and argumentation skills. In this study, there is a lack

of necessary prerequisite materials for teachers and how these argumentative issues were presented in the classroom.

2.3 Learning approach

The approach that learners follow during learning can influence their good learning (Ghanizadeh & Allahdadi, 2015). According to Marton and Säljö (1976, as cited in Allahdadi & Ghanizadeh, 2015), learning approach is divided into two categories of deep and surface. Usually, students choose an approach for their learning according to the understood goals of the lesson they are studying and the quality and quantity of their learning can be determined through them (Ghanizadeh & Allahdadi, 2015). Researchers have investigated learning approaches from different points of view.

In a comprehensive study, Newble and Entwistle (1986) reviewed the literature on learning styles and approaches to learning. According to this study, two distinct streams of research have been identified; one initiated from majority cognitive and psychometric psychology and one from research commenced within the everyday learning situation. The latter is dealt with in larger detail as it seems to have more direct practical relevance. Student's learning method which are attributable to their preferred learning style and partly to the context in which the learning takes place, is presented in a simple model of the teaching-learning process. Accordingly, three basic approaches have been identified: surface, deep, and strategic, each resulting in a different learning outcome. The most needed and fruitful is the deep approach. The work reviewed here proposes that the treatment will require not only extensive changes in the teaching, curriculum and, mainly, assessment, but also a new approach based on recognising and supporting individual students whose methods of study are not those expected of a competent university-educated doctor.

Ghanizadeh and Allahdadi (2015) have investigated the validity of the Persian versions of two explored scales among Iranian EFL learners: second language tolerance of ambiguity (SLTA) and revised study process questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F). The latter estimates learning approach and includes two scales: deep and surface learning approach. Each scale contains two subscales: strategies and motive. The outcomes of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) confirmed the validity and reliability of the translated versions of scales in Iranian context. It was also revealed that there is a considerable correlation between EFL learners' ambiguity tolerance and learning approach. In particular, it was found that ambiguity tolerance is positively associated with deep learning approach and negatively with surface learning approach.

About the relationship between the motivation level of students and their learning approach two studies present noticeable results. According to Bernardo (2003), a relationship between deep approach of learning and students' motivation and levels of anxiety were found. Students with deep approaches of learning are more essentially motivated while students who choose surface approaches have more extrinsic motivation encouraged by the fear of failure. The other research was conducted by Tickle (2001). He reported that students with surface strategies are motivated by pass-only goals and have a minimum degree of exertion for learning, and typically choose rote learning. On the other hand, students who take a deep approach are motivated by the subject material. Therefore, this type of approach will benefit learners to recall the details more successfully while those who take surface approach just are afraid of failure.

In a study by Phan (2007), the causal and mediating relations between students' learning approaches, self-efficacy beliefs, stages of reflective thinking, and academic performance were attended. According to this latent variable analysis, habitual actions are associated with the surface learning approach, and the same for understanding and self-efficacy through the deep learning approach. This study also shows that reflective thinking, except for critical thinking, can be directly predicted by self-efficacy and the same for academic performance that can be predicted by understanding negatively. Finally, there is a causal relationship among the stages of reflective thinking (except critical thinking) in a unidimensional manner. An investigation, based on the work by Leung and Kember (2003), was conducted to examine the association between students' approaches to learning and stages of reflective thinking. This work with Hong Kong students, in particular, has been notable in exploring SAL according to the four stages of reflective thinking. Researchers found a positive correlation between habitual action and a surface approach to learning, as well as a correlation between understanding, reflection, and critical reflection with a deep learning approach, via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Consequently, a surface approach to learning is associated with habitual action, whereas a deep approach to learning aligns more closely with the other three types of reflective thinking.

Suhartini and Rahayu Kariadinata (2022) have offered a study to examine and define students' learning motivation in Islamic religious learning through the Mastery Learning approach. The present study employed an experimental design with mixed methods. Through random sampling from two classes in SMP Negeri 51 Bandung, participants were selected. The mastery Learning Approach was the treatment in the experimental class; meanwhile, the expository method was applied in the control class. The motivation questionnaire used in this study included six aspects: 1) desire to succeed, 2) encouragement and need to learn, 3) hope and future aspirations, 4) awards in learning, 5) interesting activities in learning, and 6) the existence of a conducive learning environment. Data analysis in this study was conducted quantitatively at the first stage and qualitatively at the second stage. Data analysis shows that students' learning motivation in the Mastery Learning class is higher than that of students in the Expository class. In the Mastery Learning class, the percentage of student motivation is 83,85%, while it is 78,80% in the Expository class. Consequently, students' learning motivation can be effectively developed by the Mastery Learning approach.

As implied by the above literature, we can safely conclude that effective learning is largely shaped by deep approaches to learning and higher-order thinking skills. In this study, it is presumed that argumentation can be an effective, influential, and engaging technique in this regard for seminary students in different branches of Islamic studies, fields that are typically logic-driven.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

This study was conducted in two classes, with a convenience sample of 12 female students with an intermediate level of English and a background in Islamic studies or seminary education in Mashhad, a religious city in northeastern Iran. The age of participants ranged from 21 to 29. The Islamic Propagation Office (IPO) was selected as the center for hosting the courses, given its strong affiliation with students interested in the religious ESP context. The eligible participants were selected from a pool of 45 available students. One of

these classes was the experimental group, and the other was the control group. The participants were assigned to the two groups randomly.

3.2 Instruments

In this experimental study, the data for the project were collected by pretest and posttest of the Critical Thinking Appraisal (CTA) and Learning Approach questionnaire.

3.2.1 The Farsi Version of the Watson-Glaser's Critical Thinking Appraisal (CTA)

To evaluate students' inference and interpretation skills, two subtests of the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA) were employed. Over the past few years, various general tests of critical thinking (CT) have been used by several researchers. For the current study, the WGCTA was used because it has been widely employed by CT researchers (e.g. Bagheri & Ghanizadeh, 2016b; Fahim et al., 2010; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011).

In the present study, the Persian version of the Watson-Glaser test was used. According to Mohammadyari (2002), this test and its subcomponents are highly reliable and valid within the context of Iranian culture. To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, she conducted a split-half reliability evaluation. Moreover, with the adapted version used in Iran, the reliability was found to be 0.98, and the results of the factor analysis provided support for the inventory's hypothesized structure (Mohammadyari, 2002).

Table 1. The subtests of CTA used in this research along with the corresponding descriptions

Subtest	Description
Test 1. Inference	Discriminating among degrees of truth or falsity of inference drawn from given data.
Test 2. Interpretation	To judge if a conclusion logically follows beyond a reasonable doubt.

3.2.2 Learning Approach Questionnaire

This study used Biggs's Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) (1987a, 1987b) to detect the learning approaches of students. The SPQ is a self-report survey consisting of 42 items across six subscales. Each subscale contains seven items. The six subscales are surface strategy (SS), surface motive (SM), deep strategy (DS), deep motive (DM), achieving strategy (AS), and achieving motive (AM). Three different learning approaches are calculated by summing the strategy and motive of a given approach. For example, the surface approach score is calculated by adding the surface strategy and surface motive scores (Table 2). Each item on the SPQ uses a five-point scale, ranging from (1) 'this item is never or only rarely true of me' to (5) 'this item is always or almost always true of me'.

Table 2. Motive and strategy in approaches to learning and studying (Biggs, 1987)

Learning Approach	Learning Motive	Learning Strategy
Surface Approach (SA)	Surface motive (SM) is to meet requirements minimally; a balancing act between failing and working no more than it is necessary.	Surface strategy (SS) is to limit target to bare essentials and reproduce them through rote learning.
Deep Approach (DA)	Deep motive (DM) is intrinsic interest in what is being learned: to develop competence in particular academic subjects.	Deep strategy (DS) is to discover meaning by reading widely, inter-relating with previous relevant knowledge.
Achieving Approach (AA)	Achieving motive (AM) is to enhance ego and self-esteem through competition; to obtain highest grades, whether or not material is interesting.	Achieving strategy (AS) is to organize one's time and working space; to follow up all suggested readings, schedule time, behave as "model student".

3.3 Procedure of data collection

3.3.1 Data collection

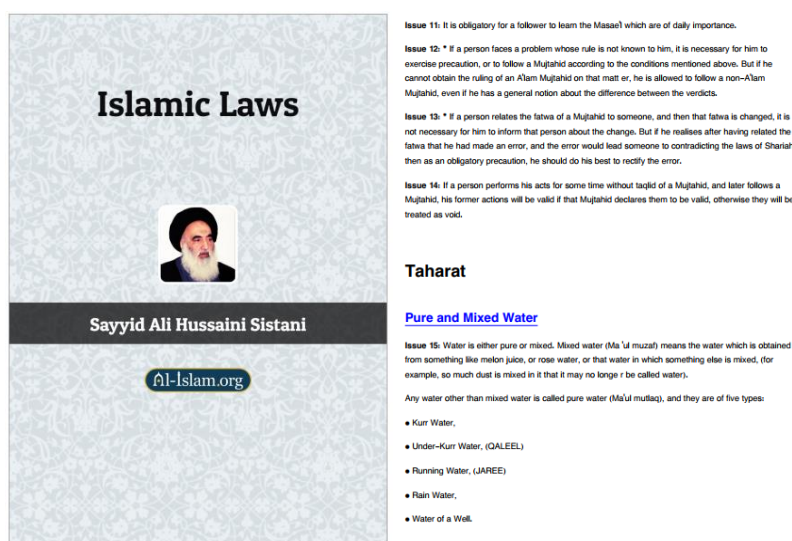
On an Iranian-based platform, Eitaa, two groups were set up to inform the participants about the details of the course. They were directly in touch with one of the researchers, who was also the course instructor, and could ask any potential questions. All participants in both the experimental and control groups were asked to respond to three different questionnaires on inference, interpretation, and learning approach twice: once as a pretest before the treatment and once as a posttest at the end of the course after the treatment. They sent their answers to the researchers through private messages on Eitaa. To ensure reliable data, the purpose of completing the questionnaire was explained to the participants before they responded. All participants were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. They were also asked to provide their age and educational background.

3.3.2 Pretest

In this experimental study within a religious ESP context, argumentation techniques were used as the treatment for the experimental group. All participants volunteered to participate in the study. To assess the students' background knowledge, a session was held before the start of the course to check their levels. Among the 45 individuals who volunteered for the study, 24 were at the intermediate level of English and were randomly divided into two groups: experimental and control. At the start of the course, the students in both groups were given the CTA and Learning Approach questionnaire as a pre-test. The students in the experimental group then participated in classroom activities focused on argumentation techniques, while the control group received standard instruction without any argumentation techniques.

3.3.3 Treatment

The syllabus of the control group included high-frequency issues of Ahkam (Islamic Rulings) that were taught in a traditional manner, without any argumentation. On the other hand, the experimental group received instruction in logical argumentation using relevant techniques, as follows. Online classes were held on the Big Blue Button platform, which was run by the Islamic Propagation Office. It provided a suitable environment by supporting various file formats, including PDF, PowerPoint, and whiteboard. The teacher was also able to share her laptop screen to show the results of online searches on Google. Both groups were provided with similar materials. The E-book Islamic Laws by Grand Ayatullah Sistani was used as the main source for extracting commonly addressed rulings, not only because of most Muslims' familiarity with the author but also due to the cohesive and popular English translation of his Risālah.



One of the main sources for the experimental group was the book 'New Sciences in Islam'. In this book, several practical laws of Islam are listed, and each one is provided with some new findings of scientists that confirm those claims. This book is in Farsi; therefore, the researchers translated and summarized the chosen parts for their experiment.



Students received a corresponding PPT and PDF for each session, which included details such as the full text of the selected rulings of Ahkam for the control group. The same text was supplemented with argumentation techniques and exercises for the experimental group.

TAQLID;

In this lesson we will read:

- Is it a must to be a follower?
- Who is a Mujtahid?
- What does Taqlid mean?
- Ways of identifying a Mujtahid

Argumentation

Philosophy of Wudu from the physical point of view

In terms of hygiene, washing the face and hands five times or at least three times a day has a significant effect on body hygiene. E.g. Water in touch of the skin stops the anaerobic microorganisms. Other important point is that these two parts (face and hands) are completely related to eating and drinking.

Wiping the head and the back of the legs with the condition that the water reaches the hair or the skin of the body makes us keep these organs clean, and the contact of water with the skin of the body has a special effect on the balance of sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves.

Philosophy of Wudu from the spiritual point of view

A recommended act: We pick a hand of water and wash our mouth with it.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh): As soon as he touches the water, the devil moves away from him, and when he turns the water in his mouth, God illuminates his heart and tongue with wisdom. [Thawab al-A'mal, p. 35]

Premises:

- When you are not in the state of Taharah devil is near you.
- To be near the devil is an obstacle in the path of spirituality.
- Wudu moves the devil away.
- + Wudu paves the way of spirituality.

Students in the control group attended the live meeting while having the instructional text with them. The teacher discussed the issues one by one without specifically focusing on the reasoning behind them. Even when students were asked 'why' questions, they did not receive detailed answers grounded in argumentation. On the other hand, students in the experimental group were expected to study the issues before class. After a quick review in class, the teacher led the discussion toward establishing premises and ultimately reaching a reliable conclusion.

The argumentation phase in the experimental group focused on answering 'why' questions using deductive reasoning. In Islamic sciences, this is known as the philosophy [Hikmah] of Ahkam, which refers to a partial, not complete, cause of Ahkam. It is difficult to identify a specific philosophy for every issue in Islamic rulings. This is primarily because divine rulings are based on the 'Expediency and Harm' of human beings. As the Creator and Ruler, Allah Almighty has full knowledge of human growth and destruction and is not required to reveal the philosophy behind every ruling. Furthermore, Muslims should not follow divine rules solely for personal benefit, but as an act of worship and servitude. Although understanding the philosophy behind rulings may encourage a person to follow them, the primary motivation should be to draw closer to God.

Therefore, the only context in which this issue can be addressed is when a trace of philosophy can be found in the Sunnah or verses of the Holy Quran, or where contemporary science supports it through scientific methods (Makarem Shirazi & Subhani, 2002). Based on this, after a quick review of the rulings, a related Hadith, Quranic verse, or scientifically proven finding was presented as a key step in establishing premises and supporting logical argumentation.

A sample of argumentation applied in the experimental group. Under the topic of Purity (Taharah), some of the rulings regarding Wuḍū (Minor Ablution) as a type of spiritual purity were discussed, such as the conditions for the validity of Wuḍū and the situations in which Wuḍū is obligatory. Regarding the obligation of Wuḍū, there are many rational explanations (philosophy or Hikmah) that include narrations (Aḥādīth) and scientific findings. Some of

these confirm the positive effect of Wuḍū on one's body, while others highlight its spiritual advantages. Two examples are presented below.

One of the arguments of Wuḍū that proves its positive physical effect on the body based on scientific findings:

In terms of hygiene, washing the face and hands five times or at least three times a day has a significant effect on body hygiene. E.g. Water in touch with the skin stops the anaerobic microorganisms. Another important point is that these two parts (face and hands) are completely related to eating and drinking.

Wiping the head and the back of the legs with the condition that the water reaches the hair or the skin of the body makes us keep these organs clean, and the contact of water with the skin of the body has a special effect on the balance of sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves.

Premises:

Water in touch with the skin stops the anaerobic microorganisms.

The contact of water with the skin of the body has a special effect on the balance of sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves.

To make Wuḍū one needs clean and pure water.

Result:

+ Wuḍū stops the anaerobic microorganisms and has a special effect on the balance of sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves.

One of the arguments of Wuḍū that proves its positive spiritual effect based on a narration:

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) says, "As soon as one touches the water, the devil moves away from him, and when he turns the water in his mouth, God illuminates his heart and tongue with wisdom".

Premises:

When one is not in the state of Ṭahārah devil may get close to them.

Being close to the devil is an obstacle in the path of spiritual improvement.

Wuḍū moves the devil away.

Result:

+ Wuḍū paves the way for spiritual improvement.

3.3.4 Posttest

To collect data for this experimental study in a religious ESP context, we used argumentation techniques as activities in the experimental class. These techniques were primarily based on argument reconstruction and drew from the following tenets: detecting

conclusions, numbering premises, distinguishing arguments from explanations or descriptions, identifying ambiguity, and applying five types of reasoning (causal reasoning, generalization, reasoning from specific cases, analogy, and term reasoning) (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020).

4. Results

To ensure that the two groups were homogeneous in terms of inference, interpretation, deep approach, and surface approach, independent samples t-tests were conducted. The results confirmed the homogeneity of participants in both groups prior to the study: inference ($t = 1.12$, $p = .88$), interpretation ($t = .46$, $p = .65$), deep approach ($t = .44$, $p = .66$), and surface approach proficiency ($t = -.37$, $p = .71$). To examine whether argumentation had a significant impact on inference, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 3 summarizes the descriptive results for inference in the two groups. As shown, the mean inference scores of participants in the control and experimental groups differ: control ($M = 5.58$, $SD = 1.62$), experimental ($M = 7.00$, $SD = 1.35$).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of post-test on inference across control and experimental groups

	Exp/Cnt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Inference (post) 1	Control	12	5.58	1.62	.47
	Experimental	12	7.00	1.35	.39

To see whether this observed difference is statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was run. Table 4 presents the results of t-test run on Inference. As can be seen, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the degree of their Inference ($t = 2.33$, $p = .03$). In other words, the treatment implemented in experimental group was influential in seminary students' Inference.

Table 4. independent samples *t*-test showing the results of posttest on inference

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Inference (post)	Equal variances assumed	.45	.51	2.33	22	.03	1.42	.61
	Equal variances not assumed			2.33	21.29	.03	1.42	.61

To examine whether argumentation had a significant impact on interpretation, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 5 summarizes the descriptive results for interpretation in the two groups. As the table shows, the mean interpretation scores of participants in the control and experimental groups differ: control ($M = 10.95$, $SD = 2.81$), experimental ($M = 13.00$, $SD = 1.54$).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of post-test on interpretation across control and experimental groups

	Exp/Cnt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Interpretation (post) 1	Control	12	10.95	2.81	.81
	Experimental	12	13.00	1.54	.44

To determine whether this observed difference is statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 6 presents the results of the t-test on interpretation. As shown, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in the degree of their interpretation ($t = 2.25$, $p = .03$). In other words, the treatment implemented in the experimental group had a significant influence on seminary students' interpretation.

Table 6. Independent samples *t*-test showing the results of posttest on interpretation

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances										
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error	95% confidence	
Interpretation (post) 1	Equal variances assumed	1.64	.21	2.25	22	.03	2.08	.92	.16	4.00
	Equal variances not assumed			2.25	17.04	.04	2.08	.92	.13	4.03

The same analysis was conducted to examine if Argumentation has any significant impact on Deep Approach. Table 7 below summarizes the descriptive results of Deep Approach in two groups. As the table shows, the mean scores of Deep Approach across participants in control and experimental groups are different: control ($M = 31.33$, $SD = 6.27$), experimental ($M = 37.42$, $SD = 3.78$).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics of post-test on deep approach across control and experimental groups

	Exp/Cnt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Deep Approach (post)	Control	12	31.33	6.27	1.81
	Experimental	12	37.42	3.78	1.09

To see whether this observed difference is statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was run. Table 8 presents the results of t-test run on Deep Approach. As can be seen, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the degree of their Deep Approach ($t = 2.88$, $p = .01$). In other words, the treatment implemented in experimental group was influential in seminary students' Deep Approach.

Table 8. Independent samples t-test showing the results of posttest on deep approach

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances										
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence	
									Lower	Upper
Deep Approach	Equal variances assumed	9.89	.00	2.88	22	.01	6.08	2.11	1.70	10.47
	Equal variances not assumed			2.88	18.05	.01	6.08	2.11	1.64	10.52

To examine whether argumentation has any significant impact on surface approach, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 9 summarizes the descriptive results for surface approach in the two groups. As the table shows, the mean surface approach scores of participants in the control and experimental groups differ: control ($M = 21.67$, $SD = 4.75$) and experimental ($M = 18.33$, $SD = 2.42$).

Table 9. Descriptive statistics of post-test on surface approach across control and experimental groups

	Exp/Cnt	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Surface Approach (post)	Control	12	21.67	4.75	1.37
	Experimental	12	18.33	2.42	.70

To see whether this observed difference is statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was run. Table 10 presents the results of t-test run on Surface Approach.

Table 10. Independent samples t-test showing the results of posttest on surface approach

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances										
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence	
									Lower	Upper
Surface Approach (post)	Equal variances assumed	1.78	.20	-2.16	22	.04	-3.33	1.54	-6.53	-.14
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.16	16.36	.05	-3.33	1.54	-6.59	-.07

As can be seen, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the degree of their Surface Approach ($t = -2.16$, $p = .04$) in favour of the control group. In other words, the treatment implemented in the experimental group was effective in reducing the seminary students' Surface Approach

5. Discussion

In this study, the researchers hypothesized that the argumentation method deepens the learning approach, increases inference-making, and positively affects interpretation in seminary ESP Classes. The results attested to the hypothesized contentions. In other words, the learners in the experimental group, who were provided with argumentative materials and methods, demonstrated a deeper learning approach and could improve critical thinking (inference and interpretation).

Regarding the first research question about whether the argumentation method deepened learners' learning approach, the results indicated using argumentative materials and techniques in the experimental group positively influenced students' learning approach. Argumentation involves presenting and defending a position or claim through evidence and reasoning (Ghanizadeh et al., 2020). This approach encourages students to think critically, evaluate information, and develop their own opinions. When students engage in argumentation, they are more likely to be actively involved in their learning. They are encouraged to ask questions, seek out information, and consider different perspectives. This can lead to a deeper understanding of the subject matter and a more meaningful learning experience.

In addition, the argumentation method can help students develop important skills such as communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Boyd & Fales, 1983). These skills are valuable not only in academic settings but also in everyday life and future careers. However, the effectiveness of the argumentation method may depend on how it is implemented. Teachers need to provide clear guidelines and support for students so they can engage in productive argumentation. They also need to create a safe and respectful classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing their opinions and challenging others' ideas.

Regarding the second research question asking whether the argumentation method influences learners' inference-making, the results demonstrated that argumentative instruction enhanced students' inference-making. When students engage in argumentation, they are required to critically evaluate evidence, consider different perspectives, and construct logical and coherent arguments to support their claims (Jiménez-Aleixandre & Puig, 2012). This process helps students develop the skills needed to make informed inferences based on evidence and reasoning.

Through argumentation, students are encouraged to analyze and evaluate the strength of evidence, identify underlying assumptions and consider alternative explanations. This can help them become more adept at making inferences that are grounded in evidence and logical reasoning, rather than relying on intuition or unsupported assumptions (Brookfield, 2011). Furthermore, argumentation can help students develop a deeper understanding of complex concepts and topics, which can in turn enhance their ability to make accurate inferences. By engaging in discussions and debates with their peers, students can gain new perspectives that broaden their knowledge and improve their inference-making abilities (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011).

Regarding the third research question about whether the argumentation method influences learners' interpretation, the results indicated that argumentative materials had a positive effect. In other words, when students engage in argumentation, they can develop the skills necessary to interpret information effectively and make informed judgments based on evidence and reasoning. By engaging in argumentation, students are encouraged to carefully consider the meaning and implications of the evidence, and critically evaluate the validity and relevance of different perspectives. This can help them become more adept at interpreting information in a nuanced and comprehensive manner, rather than relying on surface-level understanding or biased interpretations (McNeill et al., 2016).

Furthermore, argumentation helps students develop a deeper understanding of complex concepts and topics, enhancing their ability to interpret information accurately. By engaging

in discussions and debates with their peers, students can gain new insights and perspectives that can broaden their knowledge and improve their interpretation abilities.

6. Conclusions

The present study aimed to assess the impact of applying the argumentation method on the learning approach and critical thinking of a group of Iranian EFL students in ESP classes. It was concluded that, based on the significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups, the treatment had been a successful one in deepening the learning approach as well as enhancing critical thinking (inference-making and interpretation).

These findings can have valuable implications for seminary ESP courses, as the argumentation method can positively affect the learning approach and critical thinking (inference-making and interpretation). Teachers of ESP classes can use this method of teaching to transfer monotonous classes to challenging ones with ample discussion. This can increase the level of motivation and achievement in all stages of learning. Furthermore, if it continues successfully, it can enhance the self-confidence of the propagators and prepare them for real-world situations (Lin & Mintzes, 2010).

The argumentation method is one of the most effective ways to help students heighten their learning of both Islamic concepts and the language. Based on the findings of this study, the learning approach is deepened due to applying this method. This means learners meditate on the lessons and try to find the answer to the question ‘why’ without needing to be prompted by the teacher. Therefore, the teacher can instead spend the class time for more discussions and motivating students to participate in discussions and consequently improve their speaking skills.

There is an implication for the authorities of the Islamic seminaries, especially those who are in charge of training the linguist students and have the right to make decisions for the material of ESP classes. They can change those materials in an argumentative way to let the students to engage in discussions based on more flexible materials that are prepared according to the students’ careers and needs.

Considering that one of the main sources for the premises of logical reasoning is the scientific findings of the day, an essential tip should be pointed out here to the teachers of this method. It is very necessary that teachers use new and up-to-date teaching resources and continually update them with new findings. This aspect of logical reasoning is as important as the mastery of the teacher on the verses of the Qur’an and Ahādīth.

Generally speaking, students and teachers of Islamic propagation courses must be proficient in the latest technology for collecting and analyzing data, be aware of the latest events and trends worldwide, and make the maximum use of social media to achieve their propagation goals. They should connect with Islamic activists worldwide to exchange ideas and adapt to the evolving questions of curious minds.

The current research was limited in a number of aspects. First, largely due to the feasibility concerns, the participants were selected according to convenience sampling, among female learners in the office of Islamic Propagation who had learned English as a foreign language in Mashhad. Therefore, the replication of this study with other samples from different gender and other centers in different parts of the country with greater number of participants would be suggested. This investigation was limited to non-native speakers of

English; hence, future research could focus on native or non-Iranian students, or on students of different age groups. Third, the dependent variables in this study were assessed via self-report questionnaires and tests, and no qualitative technique was employed.

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