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**Translating Qur'an Parables in Surat al-Kahf: Contrastive Cultural
Analysis of Figurative Language in the Noble Qur'an**

Thesis MTST560

In partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Science in Translation Studies

Presented by

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Faculty Supervisor

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Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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THESIS APPROVAL FORM

**Translating Qur'anic Parables in Surat al-Kahf: Contrastive Cultural Analysis
of Figurative Language in the Noble Qur'an**

This thesis, written by Nadeen Al-wazani under the direction of her Thesis Supervisor and approved by the Thesis Committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Dean of Graduate Studies & Research, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Translation Studies.

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Translating Qur'an Parables in Surat al-Kahf: Contrastive Cultural Analysis of Figurative
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Acknowledgement

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

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Last but not least, I owe my deepest warm gratitude to my family, my mother, Taghreed, my step father, Hussain, my siblings, especially Farah and Hiba, and my daughter, Eleen, who have been very patient and supportive all through the different stages of this research. I am sincerely and heartily grateful to my lovely husband, Ashraf, for whom my thankfulness extends beyond words for his moral support and constant encouragement.

Transliteration

The following transliterations are adopted from the Library of Congress Arabic Romanization system, to facilitate reading the Arabic script for the non-Arabic speakers.

Arabic

Letters of the Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ا	ا	ا	omit (see Note 1)
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	th
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
ح	ح	ح	ح	ḥ
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	dh
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ
ض	ض	ض	ض	ḍ
ط	ط	ط	ط	ṭ
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ẓ
ع	ع	ع	ع	' (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ف	ف	ف	ف	f (see Note 2)
ق	ق	ق	ق	q (see Note 2)
ك	ك	ك	ك	k
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
هـ	هـ	هـ ، هـ	هـ ، هـ	h (see Note 3)
و	و	و	و	w
ي	ي	ي	ي	y

Vowels and Diphthongs

اَ	a	آ	ā (see Rule 5)	إِ	ī
أ	u	أُ	á (see Rule 6(a))	أُو	aw
إِ	i	أُو	ū	أِي	ay

Abbreviations

- SL Source Language
- ST Source Text
- TL Target Language
- TT Target Text
- TR Target Reader

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Abstract

Given the sacred and sensitive nature of the Qur'an, this study is designed to provide a thorough contrastive cultural analysis of the figurative language found in four reputable Qur'an translations (Asad's, Ali's, Hilali-Khan's and Abdel-Haleem's translations) of the four parables mentioned in Surat al-Kahf. The study highlights the challenges encountered and the strategies adopted to surmount the Qur'an-specific and culture-specific figurative language. In addition, the study proposes the adoption of communicative exegetic translation (or facilitative interpretive approach) through lexical expansion procedures as the ideal strategy to be applied particularly in translating Qur'an parables. The eclectic methodology utilized for data collection is quantitatively conducted to examine the reader's understanding of the translated Qur'an figurative language, and qualitatively conducted to contrastively analyze the cultural strategies employed in the selected translations of the aforesaid Surah, thus enhancing the study's findings and results.

Key words: Qur'an, Qur'an translation, figurative language, Surat al-Kahf

ملخص

نظراً للطابع المقدس والحساس للقرآن، فقد صممت هذه الدراسة لإجراء تحليل ثقافي تبايني شامل للغة المجازية الموجودة في أربع ترجمات قرآنية معروفة (وهي ترجمات أسعد، وعلي، وهلاي-خان وعبد الحلیم) لأربع قصص رمزية مذكورة في سورة الكهف. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على التحديات التي صادفها والاستراتيجيات التي اعتمدها هؤلاء المترجمون الأربعة للتغلب على صعوبة ترجمة اللغة المجازية الخاصة بالقرآن والخاصة بالثقافة الإسلامية والعربية، مع الحفاظ على المعنى والتأثير المقصودين على القراء المستهدفين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تقترح الدراسة اعتماد "الترجمة التفسيرية التوافقية" (أو النهج التفسيري الميسر) من خلال تطبيق "التوسع المعجمي" كإستراتيجية مثالية لاعتمادها خاصة في ترجمة القصص القرآنية. اتبعت المنهجية المختلطة المستخدمة لجمع البيانات بشكل كمي لدراسة فهم القارئ للغة المجازية القرآنية المترجمة، كما اتبعت بشكل نوعي للتحليل التبايني للاستراتيجيات الثقافية المستخدمة في الترجمات المختارة للسورة المذكورة، وبالتالي تعزيز نتائج البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القرآن، ترجمة القرآن، اللغة المجازية، سورة الكهف.

Introduction

This study is designed to provide a thorough cultural analysis of the figurative language found in four reputable Qur'an translations of the four parables mentioned in Chapter 18: Surat al-Kahf. Instead of exhaustively dealing with the issue of culture-specific figurative items in Qur'an translations from a theoretical point of view, this study will concentrate on providing a practical contrastive cultural analysis by means of analyzing each translation separately and then comparing and contrasting between them to conclude the most frequent and effective cultural strategy adopted. In other words, the study highlights the challenges encountered and the strategies adopted to overcome the problematic figurative language into contemporary English, while reproducing, as much as possible, the sense and effect.

The study proposes the adoption of communicative exegetic translation (or facilitative interpretive approach) in the translation of Qur'an parables in particular, in order to avoid exoticism and foreignness in the target text (TT). The proposed ideal approach is effectively employed by lexical expansion procedures which are explained later in details. In so doing, the study seeks to produce a successfully intelligible TT.

In addition, the present research critically analyzes the major literature on translating figurative language in general and Qur'an parables in particular, thus leading to a better understanding of figurative language found in the Holy Qur'an. To this end, four translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an were all selected, due to the fact that they are universally recognized and considered among the most successful and widely read rendering available in English language (Mohammed, 2005).

Over the past century, the Noble Qur'an has increasingly been translated into English more than ever before, particularly because (Najjar, 2012: 1):

- English is the predominant language spoken all over the world.
- The Qur'an has become more easily accessible to non-Arabic speakers
- Many Muslim and non-Muslim academics are interested in understanding the meaning of the Qur'an.
- Non-Arab Muslims in English-speaking countries are rapidly increasing; thus, increasing their opportunity to understand the meaning of the Qur'an in their languages, in order to spread Islamic faith.

Translations of the meaning of the Qur'an in English are becoming amongst the most read books in the world. Unfortunately, however, almost all the existing renditions fail to transfer the original text (ST) clearly and accurately into the target language (TL) (). This research aims to contribute to overcoming the shortcomings, as much as possible, of the four reputable translations by suggesting workable ideal approaches and procedures for improving them, to produce more accurate and comprehensible TT in a natural-sounding culturally-relevant TL. The cultural approach and 'cultural turn' will be thoroughly examined in the methodology (see chapter 2).

The study's ST, Surat al-Kahf, is most expansive in parables, because it narrates four main parables; namely Ashab al-Kahf (or the people of the cave), the ungrateful rich man with the two gardens, Moses and Al Khidr, and finally Dhu'l-Qarnayn (or the Two-Horned Man). The following will briefly explain each parable of the Surah in question:

The first parable (in verses 9- 22) of the Men of the Cave - after which the Surah is named - illustrates the principle of seeking refuge for the sake of faith without being too attached to the life of this world (Asad, 1980). The young men and their dog slept in a cave fleeing their unjust ruler and awoke 309 years later to find that the people around them had become believers of God and that they were now part of a new society (Khaled). This parable is deepened into an allegory of death, resurrection and spiritual awakening (Asad, 1980). It is worth mentioning that this story was also mentioned in the early Christian tradition, named 'the Seven Sleepers' (Asad, 1980).

The second parable (in verses 32-44) is about a rich man with two gardens whose blessings and fortune had seduced him and left him ungrateful and arrogant. Unlike the grateful poor man, the ungrateful man became absorbed in his new fortune, forgetting completely who granted it to him, and responding with challenge and doubt (Khaled). This parable is an analogy of sincerity and humility to Allah.

The third story (in verses 60-82) is of Moses (Musa) and the sage Al-Khidr who is the most knowledgeable man on earth. Musa (AS), accompanied by a boy servant, traveled a great distance to meet up with the righteous man and learned to trust in the wisdom of Allah's predestination. Al-Khidr's acts of the three mentioned incidents of the Surah seem not to be justified at first glance. This is to prove to the believers that

God may handle matters in ways we may not understand (Khaled). This parable has the allegory of spiritual awakening and the search after ultimate truths (Asad, 1980).

Finally, the fourth parable (in verses 83-98) of Dhu'l-Qarnayn is about the just king who traveled eastwards and westwards to spread truth, justice and goodness on earth (Khaled). On his journeys, he reached people Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog) who barely understand his words. He built a barrier, which has remained unknown to this day, and the location will be revealed on the Day of Judgment (Asad, 1980). The allegory of Dhu'l-Qarnayn tells us that worldly life and power should not conflict with spiritual righteousness (Asad, 1980).

The four selected translations, are critically analyzed, in terms of the approaches adopted by its five Qur'an translators. The translators selected for this study are those of – chronologically arranged- Asad, Ali, Hilali and Khan, and Abdel Haleem. Brief overview of their background, skills and abilities is highlighted in the following, as assessed by Mohammed (2005: 2).

Mohammad Asad

Asad was one of the most influential European Muslims of the 20th century. A Jewish-born Austro-Hungarian journalist, traveler, writer, linguist, political theorist, diplomat and most importantly Islamic scholar, he was called Leopold Weiss. A Jewish convert to Islam, Asad rose to prominence when he published his book: *The Message of the Qur'an* (1980), after seventeen years of scholarly research. This ingenuous work is regarded as one of the most influential translations of the modern age, both in terms of its comprehensible straightforward rendering and generally knowledgeable exegetic glosses.

Abdullah Ali

Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali (1872-1952), a British-Indian civil servant, lawyer and scholar, had studied classics at Cambridge University, and graduated as a lawyer from Lincoln's Inn in London. Ali's translations of the Qur'an, from its first edition in 1934 until very recently, is one of the most popular English versions among Muslims that are widely read around the globe. As a result, many Muslim scholars have built upon Yusuf 'Ali translation of the Qur'an, because it is one of the first and best translations that has been continuously revised and improved, resulting in more than 10 editions. It is

noteworthy that his translation is favored and financed by Saudi Arabia, thus resulted in free mass distribution throughout the world in 1989.

Ali's *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation a Commentary* (1946), a well-recognized translation among Muslims and non-Muslims in the Western world, was completed after four years (1933-1937) of scholarly work. However, the study's chosen edition, *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary* (1983), is the version which includes only the translation and commentaries while excluding the Arabic text, making it perhaps Ali's most popular version, since readers can easily carry it.

Mohammad al-Hilali and Mohammad Khan

Mohammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali and Mohammad Muhsin Khan, 20th-century scholars, are most reputable for their English translation of the meanings of the Qur'an and Sahih Al-Bukhari. Al-Hilali and Khan's *The Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* (1997) is a distinguished translation of the Qur'an incorporating commentaries from Muslim exegeses, such as *tafsir* al-Tabari, *tafsir* al-Qurtubi, Sahih al-Bukhari, and mainly *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*.

Mohammad al-Hilali is a Moroccan professor who traveled to Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, India and Saudi Arabia in pursuit of his learning and teaching journey. He is a former professor of Islamic Faith and Teachings at the Islamic University at Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. Mohammad Khan, however, is an Afghani doctor who was born in Pakistan where he gained a Degree in Medicine and Surgery. He is a former Director at the Islamic University at Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah.

Dr. Khan's and Dr. Al-Hilali's popular translation is one of the most widely distributed versions of the Qur'an in the English language in most Islamic bookstores and Sunni mosques throughout the English-speaking world. Their English translation is approved by both the Islamic University in Madinah and the Saudi *Dar al- Ifta'* (the institute that issues edicts on Islamic matters). Therefore, Saudi Arabia sponsors the free distribution of millions of copies of this translation throughout the world every year.

Mohammad Abdel-Haleem

Muhammad Abdel Haleem is a Professor of Islamic Studies in London and an editor of the *Journal of Qur'an Studies*. He is a native Arabic speaker, who was born in

Egypt, and who learned the Qur'an by heart during childhood. As a result of a seven-year effort, Abdel-Haleem's book *The Qur'an, A New Translation* (2005) is one of the latest English translations of the Qur'an that is widely distributed by an Arab Muslim translator.

All of the above monumental works represent a notable addition to the body of English Qur'an translations. Their reputable translations of the Qur'an have been regarded among the most widely read in the English-speaking, due to their objectivity, honesty, detailed introduction, and reliable commentaries.

Significance of the Study

There is little concern that has empirically been given to the cultural analysis of Qur'an parables in general. Despite the fact that many research papers have been extensively conducted on translation studies from different points of view, Qur'an translation remains under-researched as it is often overlooked in translation studies. Moreover, although many general problematic areas in the English translations of the Glorious Qur'an have been thoroughly investigated, no substantial work has so far been devoted to figurative items in Qur'an parables especially of Surat al-Kahf, to the best of my knowledge. Therefore, the present study is largely substantial and significant because it will cover such major gap and paucity of research, which will benefit not only Islamic translators in particular, but also literary translators in general.

The rationale behind choosing the Holy Qur'an as the base for this study was two-fold. First, the Holy Qur'an, a religious Text with universal significance, is replete with terms and expressions specific to Islamic culture, thus highly appropriate for the current research. Second, the significance of the suitable translation of cultural figurative items is mostly apparent in the translation of the religious sensitive texts, where even slight pitfall or translation loss could result in the complete distortion of meaning.

In addition, the particular choice of analyzing Surat al-Kahf stems from the fact that its verses narrate four different parables; besides, the benefits of reciting this Surah while understanding its meaning brings tranquility, protection from the Dajjal¹ (the

¹ An evil figure in Islamic eschatology who will seek to impersonate the true Messiah.

false Messiah), a source of guidance/light, as well as for purification from sins, as proven by a number of Hadiths, which clearly show the immense importance and rewards for reading this particular Surah in Muslims' lives, hence the significance of researching this Surah and its four translations.

Objective of the Study

The present study examines the approaches (the literal vs. free, semantic vs. communicative, and domestication vs. foreignization dichotomy) of translating the cultural figurative items of the Surah in question. Therefore, the thesis's main objective is to examine the constraints, the flaws and failures of translating Qur'an parables with particular emphasis on the Qur'an's figurative language that is culture-specific. In addition, the research's aim is to shed light on the frequency and success of the applied cultural strategies for overcoming such challenging cultural figurative items, therefore, promoting a better comprehension for the English native speakers.

The study aims, moreover, to roughly examine the reader's understanding of a number of culture-specific figurative language selected from four English versions of Qur'an translations, through a specially-designed questionnaire.

So, clearly the overall purpose of the thesis is to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To critically review the adopted approaches to Qur'an translations.
- 2) To investigate the challenges and constraints facing five translators of the Qur'an.
- 3) To assess the shortcomings of the selected four translations of the Surah.
- 4) To deduce the ideal procedures to be employed to overcome the problematic figures of speech.
- 5) To statistically measure the reader's comprehension of the exact intended meaning.

Research Questions

According to the above objectives of the study, the following questions are posed to be pursued:

- ✚ What is the frequency and adequacy of the approaches adopted while translating culture-specific figurative items in "Surat al-Kahf"?

- ✚ What are the most challenging translational issues encountered in the Qur'an translations?
- ✚ Are the culture-specific figurative items rendered in a way that enables English readers to grasp their intended meaning correctly?
- ✚ What are the ideal translational procedures to follow while translating the Holy Qur'an in general, and the Qur'an parables in particular?
- ✚ Which of the four Qur'an translations is most appropriate and thus most comprehensive, the one adopting target-oriented or source-oriented strategies?

Hypotheses

The research attempts to test five basic hypotheses based on the above five questions. These hypothetical statements which I seek to investigate are the following:

The first plausible hypothesis is that the most adequate approach to be adopted throughout Qur'an translation is the communicative translations, which are target-biased approaches, in order to make the TT readable and comprehensible for target audience.

Secondly, the problematic translational issues are numerous, including lexical/semantic, syntactic/grammatical, textual, pragmatic, morphological, cultural, phonological issues, etc. However, the thorniest issue encountered in translating parables is, by far, the culture-specific and Qur'an-specific figurative verses.

Thirdly, the research hypothesizes that the most comprehensive rendering of figurative verses is the one that domesticates the cultural references and foreign concepts to make them relevant to the target culture.

Fourthly, the most adequate procedures adopted among the selected four translations are the target-oriented ones which explicitly convey the cultural subtleties of the Qur'an parables through employing lexical expansion procedures.

Finally, the research argues that target readers can best interpret and comprehend the Qur'an parables correctly through rendering equivalent meaning and effect, as closely as possible, as that relayed to the original readers.

Overview of the study

The present study is divided into three chapters. The first section introduces the background of the study, the thesis statement, the significance and the objectives of the study, research questions, hypotheses and the overview of the present study.

Chapter one is the literature review which aims to critically review different theoretical aspects of translation, including translation studies and approaches, religious translation, Qur'an translation, as well as translating parables and figurative language.

The second chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework on the cultural analysis of the extracts chosen and provides brief explanations about the hybrid methodology utilized, in terms of conducting the data collection and procedures.

The third chapter is the practical application of the methodology and literature review, where the cultural figurative language of both the ST and its four TTs are presented, discussed and culturally analyzed separately, and then all the translations are comparatively and contrastively analyzed in a coherent argument. Equal attention is given to the strategies adopted to overcome the problematic figurative language in the chosen Surah. Then the study's findings and thus recommendations are examined.

Finally, the last section concludes the study, sums up the objectives and answers the research questions clearly, putting more emphasis on the proposed approaches and procedures. In addition, the study's limitations and suggestions for future research are presented.

Last but not least, the appendices part consists of the six appendices where the Surah is in Appendix 1-ST and the rest of the four appendices (TT1 – TT4) are the selected translations to be analyzed and discussed thoroughly. In addition, the questionnaire is in Appendix 6.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

This chapter aims to critically review different theoretical aspects of translation argued by many scholars in translation studies, namely religious translation, Qur'an translation, as well as translating parables and figurative language of the Qur'an. The following will provide a succinct account of the theoretical background for each subfield of translation studies to widen the scope of understanding each theoretical concept in the research context which is appropriately linked to the study's practical application as mentioned in the discussion chapter.

The chapter studies two opposing views of translation theorists and Islamic scholars - who advocate literal or semantic translation versus those who favor free or communicative translation; those who strictly oppose translating the Qur'an versus those who support translating the meaning of the Qur'an; and finally, those who believe in the exclusion of figurative language in the Qur'an versus those in the inclusion of figurative language in the Qur'an.

Therefore, the translation approaches and procedures are succinctly discussed pointing out their merits and demerits to give reasons for adopting one approach versus the other. Meanwhile, the research gives due attention to the inevitability of translation loss in translating the Noble Qur'an. Equal weight is given to exploring earlier religious translation of sacred books such as the Bible.

More importantly, the thesis highlights the importance of Qur'an in Muslim life as it is the eternal miracle of Islam. Special attention is given to the issues related to Qur'an translation such as its permissibility, difficulty, untranslatability, and approaches. The research argues that the ultimate goal of translating the Qur'an should be to reproduce the intended meaning and effect on the target readership as that of the original receptors.

Since parables and figurative language are often studied together, parables of Surat al-Kahf are briefly explained; figurative language in English, Arabic and the Qur'an in particular are also examined from linguistic and cultural points of views.

So far, a limited number of recent studies have investigated some problems in the translation of the meaning of Qur'an (e.g. Al-Jabari 2008, Najjar 2012, Tawfik 2012). However, these studies do not seem to provide a holistic view of the figurative

Qur'an translation and how it can be handled. Therefore, this study aims at probing the problems faced in rendering the implicit connotative meaning in the translation of figurative verses in the Noble Qur'an.

1.1 Translation and Translation Studies

What is translation? Translation has typically been defined by many prominent scholars, as Newmark (1981), Nida and Taber (1969) and many other reputable theorists, as the transference of source language (SL) messages into equivalent target language (TL) messages. Although most definitions seem to imply that translation attempts to reach some kind of equivalence, there is no consensus on how to specifically define translation

The term 'translation', according to Munday (2001: 4), has several denotations and can refer to the below three categories:

- i. The general 'subject field',
- ii. The 'product' (the text that has been translated),
- iii. The 'process' (the act of producing the translating).

Furthermore, according to Roman Jakobson (1959), translation as a 'process' can be further divided into:

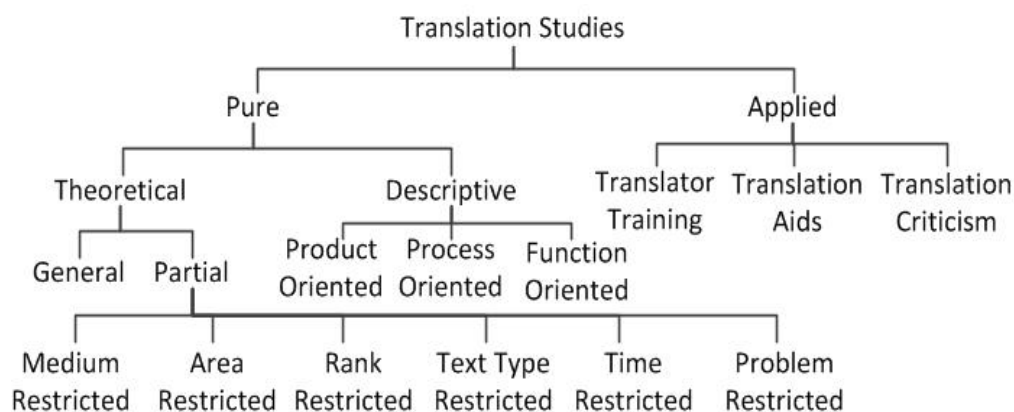
- i. 'Intra-lingual' or 'rewording' i.e. paraphrasing within the same language.
- ii. 'Inter-lingual' or 'translation proper' i.e. an interpretation across languages.
- iii. 'Inter-semiotic' or 'transmutation' i.e. an interpretation across verbal signs and non-verbal sign system.

Thus, the research is a product-oriented research that focuses on analyzing four inter-lingual translations (see Appendices 2-5) in terms of the strategies adopted during the process of translating.

What is translation studies? Translation studies is the established academic discipline and the systemic study of translation, as cited in Najjar's published Ph.D. dissertation (2012). It first emerged when Holmes puts forward an overall map (1988), describing what translation studies covers and establishing 'Translation Studies' as an academic discipline (Najjar, 2012: 20). This framework has subsequently been

presented by the leading translation scholar Gideon Toury (1980), who classified translation studies (TS) into 'applied' TS and 'pure' TS. Pure TS is further classified into 'theoretical' and 'descriptive' (Toury). To illustrate this, see the below figure.

Figure 1: Map of translation studies (Toury, 1980)



When analyzing a translation, equivalence, a controversial issue, is one of the essential standards. According to Baker and Saldanha (2009) in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, authors such as Catford (1965), Nida and Taber (1969), Newmark (1981), and others consider equivalence of paramount importance in translation theories. They all categorize equivalence into different typologies, because they view this controversial concept differently. Although the equivalence phenomenon is beyond the scope of this study, it will be briefly mentioned through comparing Nida's dynamic and formal equivalences with Newmark's semantic and communicative approaches.

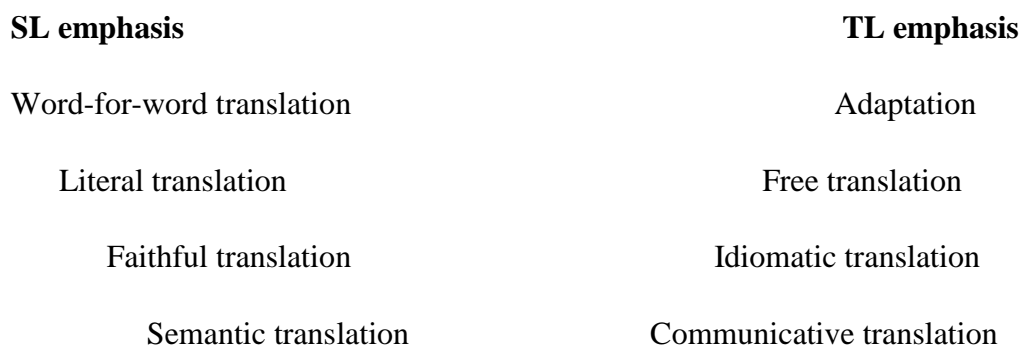
1.1.1 Translation Theories, Strategies, and Procedures

Translation studies have different theoretical perspectives, which have created diversity in approaches, strategies, methods and procedures from which translation can be studied. These approaches and techniques have succeeded in assisting the translator during the process of translation to better understand the major thorny challenges often encountered during the translation process, as well as to provide practical guidelines to surmount such translational challenges.

Translation is a decision-making process that involves deep critical thinking, through opting for the best approach to adopt one rendering amongst a set of alternatives (Tawfik, 2012: 5). Thus, the translators' main task is to overcome the linguistic differences and the cultural discrepancies in order to increase reader's

understanding without losing the 'flavor' or 'spirit' of the ST, thus bridging the gap between the ST and the target reader (TR).

Among the prominent approaches/methods in translation studies are the below V diagram, as presented by Newmark (1988: 45):



According to Newmark (1988), among the above-mentioned eight methods, only semantic and communicative translation can fulfill the two main goals of translation - accuracy and economy. Communicative translation is viewed by the present research as the ideal strategy to be employed by Qur'an translators to tackle the acute translational issue of culture-specific figurative language of the Qur'an.

As the above diagram shows, translators face a tension between two polar opposite approaches - either SL-biased or TL-biased. Literal vs. free and semantic vs. communicative translation will be succinctly presented in the following section and thoroughly discussed in chapter 3 of the study.

1.1.1.1 Literal vs. Free Translation

Literal translation (word-for-word) is the approach or method that reproduces as much as possible the SL grammatical constructions (i.e. ST word order, form and structure), whereas the ST lexical words are translated out of context (Baker, 1998a; cited in Najjar, 2012: 13). On the other end of the spectrum, free translation (sense-for-sense) is the approach that conveys the SL contextual meaning and message while respecting the TL norms and conventions (Najjar, 2012).

A heated ongoing debate over literal vs. free dichotomy has simmered for years in translation studies (Munday, 2001: 18). The main theorists who favor literal translation are Newmark (1988), Dryden (1992) and Forrest (2003). However, the main

theorists who oppose literal translation are Nida and Taber (1969), Catford (1965), Dickins and Higgins (2002), and Hatim (1997).

The first debate over literal vs. free translation emerged when translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into European languages, as asserted in Al-Jabari's published Ph.D. thesis (2008: 38). Some Bible translators advocated literal translation and favored accuracy and faithfulness to the original to avoid any subjective bias of opinion of the meaning of the original. Other Bible translators run contrary to the aforementioned approach, arguing that TL norms and conventions must be respected and taken into account (Al-Jabari, 2008).

In the 9th and 10th centuries, moreover, the 'golden era of translation' in the Middle East, translation reached its peak and literal translation strategy was introduced and adopted by Yahyah Ibn al-Batriq which became known in Arabic as 'al-naql' or 'transfer' (Baker, 1998b; Najjar, 2012: 28). He believed that free translation can only be employed as a commentary on the text, but the original must be translated literally. Opponents, such as Hunayn Ibn Ishaq, believed it resulted in unintelligible TT, thus adopted the sense-for-sense translation method, because it focuses on the readability and comprehensibility of the TT. This approach became known in Arabic as 'al-taqreeb' or 'approximation' (Najjar, 2012:28).

In the 20th century, translation approaches have radically shifted towards producing sense, where literal (word-for-word) translation was strictly refuted and free translation was hugely favored. Thus, free translation gives translators some leeway to be creative without strictly following the ST structure and form to produce a natural intelligible TT (Munday, 2001).

Literal translation has different terminologies, such as word-for-word, faithful translation, 'formal equivalence' (Nida, 1964), 'rank-bound translation' (Catford, 1965), 'direct translation' (Vinay and Darbelent, 1995), and 'metaphrase' (Dryden, 1992). All those categories of literal translations share the same concepts and focus on rendering "the message itself in both form and content" (Nida, 1964:159; Al-Jabari, 2003: 39).

Catford (1965: 27) identifies literal translation as when "any TL category [unit, class, structure, element of structure, etc.] which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the same place in the economy of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL."

In a similar vein, Newmark (1988) argues that translators must be faithful to the author without changing the style, adding or omitting items, nor translating connotatively, because the readership wants to mirror exactly the author's words in the TL. Newmark, therefore, considers figures of speech out of their context while neglecting the cultural and contextual levels, thus failing to properly reproduce an equivalent impact on the TR.

Those theorists' arguments of advocating the literal translation approach are merely theoretical and they failed to produce an adequate intelligible translation. Although literal translation was adopted by some prominent translators, this approach was severely rejected by many other translation scholars.

In the modern era, Nida and Taber (1969: 16; Al-Jabari, 43) strictly opposed the notion of literal translation, arguing that it results in an unnatural and misleading TT. They (Nida and Taber, 1969: 101) emphasized a basic principle that 'contextual consistency' is prioritized over 'verbal consistency', and that the 'form' may be sacrificed for the sake of 'content'. They add that the use of 'formal equivalence' might at times have serious implications in the TT as it distorts TL norms and thus the intended message is distorted since the translation will not be easily understood by the target reader (TR).

Mona Baker (1992) also refutes the adoption of literal translation, arguing that literal translation is impossible in most cases depending on linguistic and extra-linguistic factors, and that equivalence must be attained "at text level, rather than at word or phrase level." Dickins, Hervey and Higgins (2002: 97) reject the literal translation approach as well, arguing that lexical loss in translation is inevitable because absolute synonymy between ST words and TT words is relatively rare.

To sum up, all the above prominent translation scholars have valid arguments for favoring free over literal translation. Ideally, content and form must be equally rendered. However, in some cases, as translating some Qur'an verses, the structure is sacrificed for the sake of meaning, thus rendering the content should be taken as the highest priority over form, in order to minimize translation loss and produce a comprehensive and communicative TT.

1.1.1.2 Semantic vs. Communicative Approach

Communicative versus semantic approaches represent Peter Newmark's main contribution to general translation theory. Newmark's *Approaches to Translation* (1981) and *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) thoroughly elaborate the two polar approaches. According to Newmark (1981), communicative and semantic translation are derived from old traditional methods of 'free' and 'literal' translation.

Communicative translation, as proposed by Newmark (1981), attempts to reproduce on TL readers a similar effect to that relayed onto the readers of the SL. Semantic translation, on the other hand, attempts to render, as closely as possible, the semantic and syntactic structures of the TL (Newmark). The major difference between the two approaches is that semantic translation focuses on meaning whereas communicative translation concentrates on effect.

Therefore, semantic “word for word” translation may not communicate well, whereas communicative “thought for thought” translation is natural and communicates well, though may not be very precise as it is not literal. This tension between accuracy versus naturalness has always been challenging especially for literary translators. Thus, the literary translator should strike a balance between representing the SL accurately and maintaining naturalness in the TL as much as possible.

Newmark replaces Nida's terms of formal and dynamic equivalence with semantic and communicative translation respectively (). Like Nida's formal equivalence, Newmark's semantic translation focuses on reproducing both form and content. Like Nida's dynamic equivalence, Newmark's communicative translation seeks the closest natural equivalence to the SL message, thus translators have more leeway to depart from the ST structure to produce an 'equivalent effect' on the TR. See the below table for further distinction between the two approaches.

Table 1: communicative vs. semantic translation (Newmark, 1982)

Communicative	Semantic
Reader-centered	Author-centered
Effect-oriented	Semantic and syntactic oriented

More free	More literal
Subjective	Objective
Smoother and clearer TT	More complex and odd TT
TL-biased	SL-biased
More natural and detailed	More accurate and economical
Priority to the meaning over form	Priority to the SL meaning and form

The two polar methods of translation may be used in parallel with varying focuses, i.e. employing semantic approach for certain verses where literal meaning is intended and employing communicative approach for other verses where figurative meaning is intended. Therefore, although communicative translation sacrifices accuracy for the sake of naturalness, it is proposed to be the ideal approach for communicating the same contextual implicit meaning of the cultural figurative language of the Qur'an with its readership. As a result, the study gives primacy to communicative or free translation over semantic or literal translation. Lexical expansion procedures are often resorted to when employing such communicative translation approach (see the section below for further details).

1.1.2 Translation Loss

Translation loss is inevitable in most fields, particularly in religious translations, such as Qur'an translation. As mentioned in Khaled Tawfik's Ph.D. (2012: 36), translation loss has three types:

- Loss in economy (due to addition or omission procedures)
- Loss in linguistic (due to the unavailability of morphological, phonological, lexical, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic equivalents in the TL)
- Loss in culture or 'cultural loss' (due to the absence of a relevant situational or shared cultural feature in the TL)

The degree of translation loss in the translation process differs from one text type to another depending on the register, the translators' skills and background knowledge of both the source and target cultures (Tawfik, 2012). This means that the

degree of translation loss increases if the SL and TL are linguistically and culturally diverse, as in the case of Qur'an Arabic and English.

Moreover, the degree of loss is maximal when translating sacred texts (Tawfik, 2012), such as the emotive allegorical parables in the Qur'an. Reproducing the splendid literary effect of the Qur'an is by far the hardest task to achieve during the translation process. Therefore, translating the meanings of the Qur'an is bound to suffer a considerable loss on the figurative level due to differences between Classical Arabic, the language of revelation, and any TL (Tawfik, 2012: 36).

Another reason for the inevitable translation loss, while translating the Qur'an in particular, is whenever the form is strongly connected to the content (Tawfik, 2012). The same case applies to the translation of the Qur'an, where the effect on its readers and listeners is vitally attributed to form, i.e. its parallel structures, repeated words or verses, and charming rhythm, etc. Due to morpho-syntactic differences between English and Arabic, such an effect cannot be kept intact (Tawfik, 2012). Therefore, the Qur'an cannot be translated without grave loss in form, because of its peerless stylistic perfection.

Translation loss reaches its apex in the case of the translator's fidelity to the ST (Tawfik, 2012: 37). In order to avoid being accused of religious bias, translators tend to remain close to the ST and render it literally. To put it more clearly, they "tend to concentrate on lexical accuracy rather than convey the communicative value of the original work" (Tawfik).

In my point of view, the translator has to flexibly move from one approach and procedure to the other, rather than opt for one extreme option over the other, to achieve maximum communication depending on the translational issue involved. Thus, the ideal translation is the one that strikes a balance between the two extremes of accuracy and naturalness as well as fidelity and fluency as much as possible depending on the translational situation at hand.

1.2 Religious Translation

Generally, translating religious texts, characterized as sacred and sensitive, is considered a hugely challenging task for translators. Naturally, religious texts are distinctively differentiated from other text types. Aziz and Lataiwish (2000; cited in Najjar, 2012:12) believe that religious texts are divided into two types:

- i. Religious texts in which both the message and the individual words conveying the message are holy such as the Qur'an.
- ii. Religious texts in which only the message is sacred, whereas the words expressing the message are not, such as the Bible.

Many scholars strongly opposed translating religious texts, arguing that it leads to the distortion of divine words. Such scholars include Al-Faruqi (1986, Najjar, 2012: 13) who points out that religious translation can be problematic because of three reasons:

1. Allah's words are uniquely divine in their content and form.
2. No translation of Allah's words can be regarded as an accurate rendering of the exact intended meaning and spiritual concepts.
3. Allah's divine language cannot be replaced by human words.

In the late 19th and 20th centuries, however, religious translations, such as Qur'an and Bible translations, into English has dramatically increased, especially in the last decade (Baker and Saldanah, 2009: 21).

In the early 20th century, only literal renditions of religious texts were accepted, through strictly following grammatical structures, word order and sentence order (Baker and Saldanah, 2009). Literal translation was closely linked to religious translation of sacred texts to propagate the faith. This approach was characterized by fidelity to the ST which stemmed from the strong belief that God's words are divine and should not be modified or tampered with. Translators who took liberty of adding or "altering the holy Scriptures" (Munday, 2001: 22) were accused of "verging on the sacrilegious" (Munday, 2001:43) or blasphemy for the strategies they adopted (Najjar, 2012: 27).

In the late 20th century, however, Nida and Taber's (1969) 'dynamic equivalence' resulted in producing a natural comprehensible renderings of religious texts, by prioritizing meaning and naturalness over form and accuracy. However, such an approach has been heavily criticized as being too explicit because translators can inadequately incorporate their ideological personal biases into their translations and "take too much liberty, thereby violating the historical accuracy" of the religious text (Baker and Saldanah, 2009: 22).

According to Beekman and Callow (1974), figurative language forms an integral part of religious or Sacred Books, as it is used not only as a decorative aesthetic tool but also as a sublime rhetorical effect in order to instill the religious divine message in readers' minds. (see the following for further details).

1.3 Qur'an and Qur'an Translations

What is the Qur'an? The Qur'an (sometimes spelled Koran), the Holy Book of the Islamic faith, has been revealed by God (Allah) over 1400 years ago to His messenger, Prophet Mohammad (SAAW), in Arabic through the Angel Gabriel, in order to lead people out of ignorance and polytheism to the light of guidance and monotheism (Ayoub, 1984: 16). Morphologically speaking, the word 'Qur'an' derives from the Arabic verb 'qara'a' which means 'to read', as mentioned by Matar (1998; Najjar, 2012: 9).

The Qur'an is divided into 30 equal divisions called 'Juz'', and there are 114 chapters called 'Suwar'; each 'Surah' is further divided into verses called 'Aayat' (Al-Jabari, 2008). Chapters in the Qur'an are categorized into two kinds according to their place of revelation (Al-Jabari, 2008). Those chapters revealed in Mecca before the Prophet's migration to Medina are called Meccan, while those revealed in Medina are called Medinan. Meccan chapters, such as the study's chapter 18 Surat al-Kahf, are generally short and consist of brief verses that are effective, dynamic, and poetic (Al-Jabari, 2008). The Medinan chapters, on the other hand, are long and the verses are more prosaic and informative, which clarify Islamic law (Sharia) (Lings 1991; Al-Jabari, 2008: 17).

1.3.1 Miracle of the Qur'an

The Qur'an, according to Muslims, is considered the eternal miracle of Islam. The teachings of the Qur'an are timeless and universal, addressed to all people throughout the world regardless of their race, creed, color or linguistic differences. Muslims also believe that the Qur'an is the primary source of knowledge and the ultimate guidance for living one's life and seeking God's pleasure (Sarder, 1989: 1; Najjar, 2012: 9).

The essence of the Qur'an miracle is its inimitability and uniqueness, i.e. preserved by Allah from any alteration or corruption. As Matar (1998: 97) states, "since it was revealed, the Qur'an has remained exactly the same." In other words, the Qur'an

is impossible to replicate or challenge linguistically to this day because human capacity is too limited to compose something like it.

The Qur'an was revealed to challenge many Arabs of the Prophet's time who had literary and poetic talents, lofty linguistic eloquence, and innate rhetorical sense (Ayoub, 1984: 2; Najjar, 2012: 9). However, the Qur'an's stylistic perfection is beyond their limited human writing capabilities (Najjar, 2012). Moreover, Ayoub (1984) emphasized that the Qur'an is unmatched in its own language let alone in another foreign language.

For centuries, the language of the Qur'an with its unrivaled and sublime style, or *i'jaz*, has been the focus of interest of many Muslim scholars and rhetoricians (Tawfik, 2012: 9). As mentioned in Tawfik's book (2012), the idea of *i'jaz* (inimitability or unparalleled uniqueness) can be referred to the historical *i'jaz*, scientific *i'jaz*, *i'jaz* of numbers, stylistic *i'jaz* and rhetorical *i'jaz*. Rhetorical *i'jaz* of the Qur'an, which is the main focus of this study, is closely associated with its rhetorical perfection and stylistic inimitability which charms the ears and captures the hearts and minds of its addressees. Naturally, the rhetorical *i'jaz* is highly challenging to the four selected translators in this study.

1.3.1.1 Qur'an Discourse

Qur'an discourse is a literary genre in its own right, it is classified as neither poetry nor prose, as asserted by Arab literary scholars. Along similar lines, Arthur J. Arberry (1980: 5) asserts that "the Koran is neither prose nor poetry, but a unique fashion of both." Belonging to the Semitic language family, Arabic is classified into three distinct categories: classical Arabic (the language of the Qur'an), modern standard Arabic (MSA) and spoken Arabic (colloquial).

Abdul Raof (2001) points out that Qur'an language is distinguished by its unique choice of words and brevity, i.e. economy of expression. Moreover, the language of the Qur'an is seen by Abdul-Roaf (2003: 92) as "a rainbow of syntactic, semantic, rhetorical, phonetic and cultural features that are distinct from other types of Arabic discourse."

Furthermore, the language of the Qur'an has imaginative pictorial that is bemusing to the Arabs who mastered the language, due to its peerless enchanting style and highly emotive language (Abdul-Roaf, 2003). Muhammad Pickthall (2004: 2;

Najjar, 2012: 11), a reputable translator of the Qur'an, also emphasized its own matchless realm, unparalleled language eloquence, and unsurpassable style with deep multilayered meanings.

Muslim scholars and Arab rhetoricians believe that the *i'jaz* of the Qur'an is constituted by its words, arrangement, and eloquence or rhetoric, which are unique to the Arabic language of the Qur'an (Tawfik, 2012: 11). Tawfik asserts that if the Qur'an is translated into another TL it will lose its *i'jaz* and effect on its readers and listeners. In other words, classical Arabic is an integral part of the sacredness and uniqueness of the Qur'an (Tawfik, 2012: 11).

1.3.2 Permissibility of Translating the Qur'an

Since the dawn of Islam, translating the Qur'an from Arabic into any other language has always been a controversial issue among Muslim scholars. At the beginning of the 20th century, the issue of translating the Qur'an was debated more heavily for three main reasons, as pointed out by Aziz and Lataiwish (2000:135-136):

1. Muslim scholars wanted to counteract the corrupt translations of the Qur'an rendered by non-Muslim orientalist, missionaries and sectarian translators.
2. Muslims had ambitions to further spread Islam among communities whose mother tongue is not Arabic regardless of their religion or language.
3. Muslims felt that it was necessary to translate the meaning of the Qur'an for the newly converted non-Arab Muslims.

The following are two feuding opinions regarding the permissibility of translating the Qur'an. Some Muslim scholars strictly opposed the permissibility of translating the Qur'an. Others, however, permitted and encouraged translating the Qur'an.

On the one hand, many Muslim scholars, such as Sheikh Mohammad Shakir (1925; Al-Jabari, 2008: 24), opposed and condemned the translation of the Qur'an into any language as a heresy and sacrilege. Such scholars argue that Qur'an translation fails to convey the divine message of the original text, and the charming rhetorical effect of the Qur'an, as Tibawi mentioned (2004; Najjar, 2012: 11).

Shakir (1925) also warned that translations of the Qur'an will differ from each other, thus Muslims will indefinitely face a great challenge of corrections and revisions.

Sheikh Hasanayn Makhluḥ (1925; Al-Jabari, 2008: 24), former Mufti of Egypt, supported Shakir and classified three translations of the Qur'an:

- i. Equal literal translation,
- ii. Unequal literal translation, and
- iii. Interpretative translation.

Makhluḥ argued that equal literal translation is the absolute equivalence to the original in its composition, style and rhetoric which is unequivocally impossible. Unequal literal translation, however, is impermissible because it alters the composition of the Qur'an and distorts its meaning. Interpretative translation, on the other hand, is not a translation, it is rather a commentary on the Qur'an in another language. Therefore, the two latter types contradict the protection of the Qur'an and deviate from God's teachings (Al-Jabari, 2008: 24). Consequently, these aforementioned scholars believe that spreading Islam to all human beings is not dependent on the translation of the Qur'an but on an adequate translation of the principles of Islam.

On the other hand, many scholars, such as Sheikh Mohammad al-Maraghi (1936), a former Grand Sheikh of al-Azhar in the 20th century, permitted and advocated Qur'an translations. Such scholars argue that translating the meaning of the Qur'an is part of *da'wa*, propagation of Islam, to be spread to the non-Arabs. Al-Maraghi (1936) also maintains that it is possible to translate the Qur'an if the full meaning is taken into account, since the interpretation, '*tafsir*', of the Qur'an is permissible; thus the 'interpretive translations' can be regarded similar to the commentaries or exegesis. The similarity is that both, interpretive translations and commentaries, convey the intended hidden meanings of the Qur'an in other words and both are ways of scholarly pursuit, *ijtihad* (Tawfik, 2012: 9). However, the only difference is that the commentator uses Arabic while the Qur'an translator uses a foreign language (Al-Jabari, 2008). Since it is possible that a commentator, whether right or wrong, expresses the meanings understood, the same permissibility should be accepted with respect to translators as long as both possess the required skills and qualifications (Al-Jabari, 2008: 26).

As a counterargument to the opponents of translating the Qur'an, al-Maraghi (1936) maintains that although it is impossible to render its inimitable literary composition, it is rather possible to render its meaning. Advocates of Qur'an translation also stress that a translation of the meanings of the Qur'an can never replace the original,

and that only when read in its original Arabic language that the full meaning, effect, and charm are understood (Tawfik, 2012: 9).

Historically speaking, translating the Qur'an is permissible since the Prophet Muhammad did not reject it (Abou Sheishaa, 2001; Al-Jabari, 2008: 22). In the early days of Islam, translation of the Qur'an began when the Prophet sent letters which included several verses to the rulers of neighboring countries to propagate Islam. According to Baker (2001: 317-318), "this kind of exchange between the Prophet and non-Arab rulers could not have taken place without some form of linguistic mediation." Although no full translation of the Qur'an was conducted during the lifetime of the Prophet, it is reported that Salman the Persian, the Prophet's companion, translated the 'Fatiha' (chapter 1) into Persian to give the new Persian converts the opportunity to understand the Qur'an (Najjar, 2012: 18).

Fast forward, the first translation of the Qur'an into English was made by Alexander Ross in 1649, who called his translation 'The Alcoran of Mohomet, the Prophet of the Turks' (Abdel Haleem, 2005). Although his translation and many subsequent early translations were replete with religious bias and lack of objectivity, each of which has the same goal, that is to convey the content of the Qur'an.

1.3.3 Difficulty of Translating the Qur'an

Even for native Arabic speakers, the Qur'an is a difficult Holy document. Its archaic language, complex structure, cultural and historical references and rhetorical expressions are extremely difficult hurdles to cross. Translation only accentuates the complexity.

Translating a sensitive book as the Holy Qur'an is considered one of the hardest, if not the hardest, task any translator may encounter for a number of reasons. The following paragraphs highlight the multiple translational challenges:

Needless to say, the sacredness of the Qur'an makes it extremely difficult for human translators to achieve absolute equivalence as the exact intended meaning of the Qur'an remains vague to humanity because of our limited cognitive capacity (Pickthall, 2004). Qur'an text itself is so difficult to fathom that the exegesis plays a vital role in understanding it (Najjar, 2012: 12). Therefore, translation has to accompany an exegetic facilitative interpretation to explicate what is contextually understood in any given

verse, though the sacred miraculous nature of the Qur'an is inevitably lost in the translation process.

Another difficulty of translating the Qur'an stems from the fact that classical Arabic in the Qur'an and English are totally incongruous languages; thus, many features of the language of the Qur'an are alien to the norms of the English TL because of linguistic voids. Awad (2005:29; Najjar, 2012: 106) asserts that the language of the revelation is superior to any other language and "presents difficulties beyond those encountered in most foreign languages owing to its style and complex structure." In addition, Al-Faroqui (1986: 11) argues that many meanings imbedded in the classical Arabic language of the Qur'an will inevitably suffer great loss from its linguistic complexity that no human being is able to replicate.

Yet another difficulty of translating the Qur'an mainly lies in its figurative nature, where each Surah, particularly Surat al-Kahf, is replete with figures of speech. In other words, figurative features of the Qur'an, according to many scholars, will definitely impose huge limitations on the translator of the Qur'an (Tawfik, 2012: 58). Therefore, the translator's task is not limited to rendering only the surface denotative meaning of the lexical expressions but also to rendering the underlying meaning particularly embedded in the rhetorical language.

Moreover, the Qur'an abounds with a number of lexical items which are considered culturally specific, namely the theological and ritual items. A number of theological expressions, according to Abdul-Raof (2005:166), such as 'God' and 'paradise' convey "distinct messages to different non-Muslim TL readers whose faith provides different theological meanings to these same words." Furthermore, some Qur'an expressions are totally absent in the TL culture, thus called de-lexicalized expressions (Abdul-Raof, 2005). Therefore, the translator has to clearly grasp not only the implicit figurative aspects but also the broader extra-linguistic and cultural aspects. In order to understand and render such implicit cultural nuances, the translator has to involve the various interpretations of the Qur'an offered by authorized exegeses, in an objective approach that is free from any religious biases.

The Qur'an also abounds with a number of challenging expressions which are regarded as Qur'an-specific. Most translators of the Qur'an, such as Ali (1983), Arberry (1996), and many others, unanimously agree that the limits of translatability of the

Qur'an stem from the complex nature of its linguistic idiosyncrasies and prototypical features that are peculiar to the Qur'an. Therefore, these translators of the Qur'an admitted that they faced many obstacles during the translation process because they have to be well versed in the Qur'an and its teachings, Islamic historical events, prophetic traditions, etc. in order to render the subtle Qur'an-specific items as adequately as possible (Najjar, 2012: 14).

In terms of Qur'an translation, as both a scientific and artistic task, all of the above suggests that translating the Qur'an is a formidable challenging task. The major acute translational dilemmas are compounded by the sacred, classical Arabic, figurative, culture-specific and Qur'an-specific expressions that cannot be rendered successfully and accurately into English without some form of translation loss.

Therefore, the primary aim of Qur'an translation is to communicate the intended message and effect of the Qur'an, as closely as possible. In doing so, translators should exert every effort to produce a qualitative communicative translation of the meaning of the Qur'an through adding exegetic glosses.

1.3.3.1 Untranslatability of the Qur'an

A number of Qur'an translation scholars and theorists, such as Pickthall (1930), Arberry (1980), Irving, T. (1979), Tibawi (1962), and Abdul-Raof (2001), and many others, argue that the Qur'an is untranslatable, due to its linguistic density, cultural richness and wealth of ideas and this is superior to all other languages. Recognizing this extreme difficulty, those scholars title their translation books "the translation of the meaning of the Qur'an" and refrain from calling their works the "translation of the Qur'an" (Najjar, 2012), in order to prove that it is a mere companion of the Qur'an instead of a substitution of it (Al-Jabari, 2008).

In his introduction to his book *The Koran Interpreted*, Arberry (1980) stresses the fact that the exotic eloquence, symphonic style and idiomatic language of the Qur'an cannot be rendered into any other language. Arberry supports Pickthall's argument that the Qur'an is unequivocally untranslatable (1930; Al-Jabari, 2008: 18).

Moreover, Irving (1979: 9) addressed the untranslatability of the Qur'an by asserting that translations of the Qur'an are mere explanations and interpretations. Accordingly, any translation of the Qur'an should not be considered as a replacement

or an absolute equivalent of the original Qur'an but as an explanation of its senses (Irving, 1979).

Tibawi (1962) is one of those eminent Muslim scholars who argued that no language could rival the Qur'an's rich, figurative and concise vocabulary. He also argues that no translator is able to reproduce even partially its exotic beauty, wonderful grandeur and magical vividness without grave translation loss. Asad (1980: viii), supports Tibawi's argument, and claims that rendering the Qur'an does not and could not 'do justice' to the Qur'an and its meaning.

Furthermore, Hussein Abdul-Raof (2001), a recent Muslim scholar, supports Tibawi's (1962) argument who stresses that any translation is merely an approximation of the original meaning of the Qur'an itself. On a similar note, Abdul Raof (2001:9) states that the incongruent syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and cultural features between the language of the Qur'an and any foreign language leads to both non-equivalence and untranslatability.

Untranslatability, according to Catford (1965), has two types: linguistic and cultural. He argues that linguistic untranslatability is due to the differences between the SL and the TL, whereas cultural untranslatability is due to the lack of equivalence in the TL culture. Therefore, linguistic incongruence and cultural gaps, between the Qur'an and any other foreign language, create untranslatability, since linguistic norms in the SL are exotic and alien to the TL, and since intercultural equivalence across Islamic and Western cultures rarely exists.

1.3.4 Approaches to Qur'an Translation

Various approaches have been adopted in the translation of the Qur'an. Some translators are more faithful to the original, while others have more leeway with their rendering of the original Arabic into English. Given that Qur'an translation is of a sensitive nature, translators should exert every effort to adopt the optimal approach. Despite centuries of debated discussion, opting for the ideal approach in Qur'an translation remains an intriguing issue.

There are two well-established approaches in the field of Qur'an translation semantic (literal/faithful or SL-biased) and communicative (free or TL-biased), as pointed out by Tawfik (2012: 45). The semantic approach is best adopted for informative verses (such as in the Medinan chapters) that convey Islamic laws and

include no evaluative figurative language, thus requires precision and accuracy of terminology (Tawfik, 2012). The communicative approach, however, is best adopted for emotive performative verses that are replete with figures of speech and forceful cultural aspects (such as Meccan chapters like Surat al-Kahf).

I strongly advocate the adoption of interpretive communicative approach as the ideal method to surmount 'untranslatability' and 'non-equivalence', particularly in Qur'an parables. An advantage of this approach is that it gives translators some freedom to adequately render difficult theological concepts and cultural figures of speech, which would be incomprehensible or poorly understood if rendered literally (Al-Jabari, 2008: 29).

The interpretive approach (or the explanatory approach) is considered by many Arab translators, as Al-Jahidh, as the ideal method, particularly in terms of translating not only cultural voids in sacred texts but also in figurative Qur'an verses. This approach aims to explain and interpret the implicit meaning in the culture-specific expressions of the ST. From a culture-specific point of view, Shunnaq (1998) strongly believes translators of the Qur'an should bear in mind the fact that s/he should "exchange ideas and messages and not merely words" (Shunnaq, 1998: 14).

Unlike literal translation that preserves surface aspects of the source message, communicative translation keeps intact the deeper levels of meaning and communicates the figurative message to be clearly comprehended by the TR. Abdul-Raof (2013) points out, in his book *Qur'an translation: Discourse, texture and exegesis*, that almost all existing English translations of the Qur'an suffer from the shortcomings of the literal approach which hinders the communication and interaction between the Qur'an and the TR. He adds that these translations generally follow the archaic English instead of contemporary English to preserve the formal tone, which makes the meaning of the Qur'an unintelligible (Abdul-Raof, 2013).

According to this communicative interpretive approach, through specifically using facilitative exegesis, the translator has to go beyond the linguistic context and take figurative, cultural and communicative considerations into account. In other words, the translator must produce a highly communicative TT void from exoticism to be culturally and pragmatically comprehensible to the TR who may not be familiar with the Qur'an (Tawfik, 2012: 47).

As far as the Qur'an is concerned, most translation scholars and theorists, such as Sheikh Makhoulf (1925), believe that the communicative interpretive approach is highly effective in the translation of literary verses, such as the Qur'an parables, to preserve the Qur'an 'spirit', as much as possible (Tawfik, 2012: 47).

To be more specific, then, this thesis highly recommends the adoption of the facilitative interpretive approach (i.e. communicative exegetic approach) - using facilitative exegesis through lexical expansion procedures - throughout translating the Qur'an parables that abound with culture-specific figures of speech. As for the case of translating informative verses that are void from rhetorical cultural nuances, the study proposes a compromise between the two extremes of semantic and communicative approaches - to closely stick to the original while respecting the TL norms and readership at the same time.

1.4 Parables and Figurative Language

What are parables? A parable is a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as defined by *Oxford Dictionary*. Parables are specifically used in religious texts, such as the Bible or the Qur'an. Morphologically speaking, a parable is an Anglicized form of the Greek word *parabole*, which means "comparison," or "to place alongside" (Fowler, 1965: 46). Thus, the purpose of parables is to provide further light and additional truths placed alongside previously revealed truths.

According to Fowler (1965), a parable is a figure of speech and a type of analogy, which presents a short didactic narrative that illustrates a universal truth and a certain moral lesson. Although the intended meaning of a parable is implicitly stated, the setting, action, and/or character are explicit and straightforward (Fowler: 1965). Frequently, parables employ figurative language to express an abstract complex idea by means of using a concrete narrative which is easily understood (Fowler: 1965).

The Eighteenth Surah of the Qur'an, Surat al-Kahf (The Cave), is a Meccan chapter because it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) before the Hijrah to Medina. The Surah is almost entirely devoted to a series of parables or allegories based on the main theme of believing only in God and denouncing the worship of idols. These four parables teach a number of moral lessons (Khaled: 4):

- The unity and majesty of God,

- God has power over life, death, and resurrection,
- Paradise is promised for the righteous and hellfire is warned for the wrongdoers.
- The importance of having righteous companions
- Remembering the hereafter
- World-abandonment (not to be attached to the life of this world)

The following are four major themes embedded in the four parables of this Surah (Khaled: 4):

1. Trial of Faith – the Men of the Cave
2. Trial of Wealth – The story of the rich and the poor
3. Trial of Knowledge – Moses and Al-Khidr
4. Trial of Power – Dhul-Qar-nayn with Yajuj and Majuj

The main objective of the Surah, therefore, is the protection from the above major trials and temptations in human life. These four basic temptations represent the connection that ties the four parables/stories together in Surat al-Kahf.

Generally, parables and figurative language are often studied together, because parables usually employ a number of figurative expressions to demonstrate the moral lesson intended to be taught. Approximately, out of the 110 verses in the researched Surah, there are more than 45 verses that include figures of speech, mainly metaphors, synecdoches, metonymies, similes, and allegories (each of which will be discussed later in detail).

What is figurative language? Figurative language usually goes beyond the actual surface meanings of words so that the reader gains new insights of a particular idea in a stylistic literary form (Abrams, 1988). Unlike the literal language that has denotative explicit dictionary meaning, the figurative language has a connotative implicit meaning that tends to deviate from its defined meaning in order "to achieve some special meaning or effect" (Abrams, 1988: 63). More specifically, figurative meanings of words have an emotive expressive nature that adds an aesthetic and

stylistic dimension to the text, which can evoke vivid imagination, arousal of sentiments, fresher perspective, and broader comprehension (Menacere, 2009).

The following aims to define and explain each figure of speech (simile, metonymy, synecdoche, and metaphor) from English, Arabic, and Qur'an points of view and to critically analyze a number of major theories of figurative language.

1.4.1 Figurative Language in English

There are many types of figures of speech in English discourse that have been defined, debated and researched by both linguists as well as translation practitioners. Many scholars, including Newmark (1981: 96), consider figures of speech as "the center of the problems of translation theory, semantics and linguistics." The following figures of speech (arranged from the least to the most frequent in the analyzed Surah) are defined and further examined in more detail, putting more emphasis on metaphors, due to their highest frequency in the Surah in question. Although they are of immense importance to translation practitioners, the research excludes other stylistic devices, such as allusion, irony, euphemism, hyperbole, etc., because of their low frequency.

Simile

A simile is a figure of speech that shows similarity between two things or more which share one or more features linked by a particle (i.e. like, as) (Najjar, 2012: 67). A simile, moreover, is regarded by Knowles and Moon (2006: 8; Najjar, 2012: 67) as very much similar to a metaphor, however the only visual difference is that similes are distinguished by words such as 'like', 'as', 'compare', 'resemble', etc.

Another distinction they present is that metaphors are "paradoxes or falsifications" i.e. literally untrue; however, a simile is literally true even if it is not appropriate or clear (Knowles and Moon, 2006). Therefore, similes can be regarded as less problematic than metaphors.

Metonymy

A metonymy is a figure of speech that involves replacing one linguistic expression with something else with which it is closely associated, according to Panther and Thornburg (1999: 334).

They consider metonymy as synonymous with metaphor as well, however, the distinction between the two is that metonymy involves indirect referring and associations (Panther and Thornburg: 1999), whereas a metaphor is the umbrella that includes most other figures of speech.

Synecdoche

A synecdoche is a figure of speech that involves hyponym-superordinate relations or part-whole relations, i.e. a part of something is used to denote the whole or the whole of something is used to represent part of it, thus regarded as a special kind of metonymy (Panther and Thornburg, 1999).

Metaphor

A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable (*Oxford Dictionary*). Also, the *Oxford Dictionary* defines metaphors as representative or symbolic of something else.

The literature related to the study of metaphor in English abounds with definitions aiming to explain its meaning, because it has been seen from various perspectives and different schools of thought. Although there is no specific definition of 'metaphor' in the English discourse, there is a consensus among scholars that a metaphor is the most widespread figure of speech. A metaphor, as mentioned in Najjar's thesis (2012: 70), is a figure of speech in which a comparison is made between two dissimilar things that have something in common.

According to Knowles and Moon (2006: 7), metaphors can be defined as:

Instances of non-literal language that involve some kind of comparison or identification: if interpreted literally, they would be nonsensical, impossible, or untrue. The comparison in a metaphor is implicit.

In the same vein, Knowles and Moon (2006: 6-7) consider the literal meanings of a metaphor refer to "a concrete entity - something with physical existence in the world," while its non-literal meaning refers to some abstract qualities.

According to Goatly (1997:116), metaphors are just kinds of flowery "decorative device," or devices that portray stylistic effect on the given text. Unlike similes, metaphors, he adds, are covert implicit comparisons, and a stylistic device of "the poetic imagination and extraordinary rhetorical matter" (118).

According to Newmark (1988: 106), "any word can be a metaphor." Newmark (1988: 106) points out that understanding metaphors can be done through "matching its primary meaning against its linguistic, situational and cultural contexts." He (1988: 104) also states that a metaphor may involve "a non-literal word, phrase, sentence, or a complete imaginative text." Newmark (1988: 104) presents a number of general metaphorical usage:

It can represent similarity between two objects, an implicit comparison, the transferred sense of a physical word, the personification of an abstraction, collocations, proverbs, allegories, all polysemous words, and most English phrasal verbs.

Since English scholars view metaphors differently, there are several types of metaphors. The following is a number of metaphor classifications characterized by Fowler (1926), Newmark (1988), and Dickins and Higgins (2002: 147) (Najjar, 2012: 123):

Fowler (1926) classifies metaphors as either 'common metaphors' (shared between source and target cultures), or 'specific metaphors (culture-specific). Newmark (1988), however, classifies metaphors into five types:

1. Dead (universal expressions),
2. Cliché (substitute for clear thought),
3. Stock/standard (in informal context),
4. Recent ("anonymously coined"), and
5. Original.

Dickins and Higgins (2002:147) classify metaphors depending on their inclusion in a dictionary into two main types:

- A. Lexicalized metaphor (well-established meaning found in dictionaries):

- a) A dead metaphor: one that is not even realized as a metaphor anymore.
- b) A stock metaphor: one that is used extensively as an idiom.
- c) A recent metaphor: or a 'metaphorical neologism'.

B. Non-lexicalized metaphor (not clearly fixed meaning and may vary from context to context; thus, not found in dictionaries):

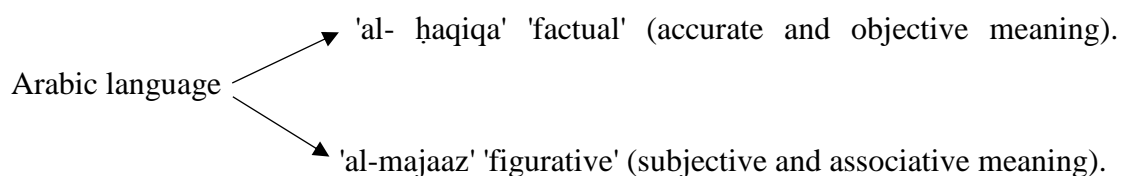
- a) Conventionalized metaphors: metaphors that draw on either cultural or linguistic conventions.
- b) Original metaphors: metaphors that cannot be related to existing linguistic or cultural conventions. They are described as "difficult to interpret", according to Dickins and Higgins (2002: 150).

To sum up, all the above figures of speech can be considered synonymous to metaphors, because metaphors can be regarded as their super-ordinate. Although scholars have approached figurative language in English discourse from different points of view, there seems to be a consensus that figures of speech are problematic to any translator.

1.4.2 Figurative Language in Arabic

Arabic language is divided by Arab rhetoricians into 'al- ḥaqiqa' (the factual language) and 'al-majaz' (the figurative language) (Samarrai, 1974; Najjar, 2012: 80). The term 'al-ḥaqiqa' is the language that conveys an accurate and precise meaning, 'al-majaaz', on the other hand, is the language that conveys an expressive meaning which goes beyond its literal meaning, as defined by Arab rhetoricians (Najjar, 2012: 80).

Figure 2.1: Types of Arabic language (El -Sadda, 1992)



Morphologically speaking, 'al-majaaz' is derived from the verb 'jaaza', i.e. to cross over and go beyond (El -Sadda, 1992:103). The literal meaning of 'al majaaz' "denotes the transference of the meaning from one word to another (El -Sadda, 1992:103).

Figures of speech in Arabic rhetoric are referred to as 'ilm al-bayan'. Morphologically speaking, 'ilm al-bayan' is derived from the verb 'bana' which means 'to become clearer and more transparent' (Abdul Raof, 2006: 197). Rhetorically speaking, 'ilm al-bayan' is a discipline "through which we can shape up the aesthetic form of the proposition and vary the style in order to expose the required signification" (Abdul Raof, 2006: 197).

Simile, metonymy, synecdoche and metaphor are considered the major figures of speech in Arabic rhetoric. The following will explain each figure of speech in Arabic rhetoric:

Simile (التشبيه)

A simile, as unanimously defined by most Arab rhetoricians such as Abdul Raof (2006) and others, is a similarity between two entities (the likened-to and the likened) which share one or more mutual features linked by a connecting particle 'kaf' ,ك, or any similar tool (Najjar, 2012: 83).

A simile, according to Abdul Raof (2006: 198), is:

an aesthetic and skillful mode of discourse whose major pragmatic aims are to clarify an opinion or feeling, to bring two significations close to each other, and to compare a given entity with another.

Moreover, there is a consensus that the purpose of simile in Arabic discourse is to illustrate, clarify, and visualize the image to the mind of the receiver, by converting rational images into similar concrete images (Najjar, 2012: 83). Arabic rhetoricians divide the components of simile in Arabic into four components (Najjar, 2012: 83):

1. (المشبه) Likened to
2. (المشبه به) Likened
3. (وجه الشبه) Simile feature
4. (أداة التشبيه) Simile particle

Metonymy (الكناية)

A metonymy denotes "the allusion to someone or something without specifically referring to his or her or its identity" (Abdul Raof, 2006: 233).

According to Ajaaj and Ramadan (2006/2007), in their book *Addirasaat Al-adabya*, metonymy is defined as an expression that goes beyond its literal meaning with the possibility intending the literal meaning because of the absence of the clue.

Synecdoche (المجاز المرسل)

A synecdoche in Arabic rhetoric is referred to as 'al- majaz al-mursal" and defined by Abdul Raof (2006: 217) as "the semantic relationship between the lexical item that is employed with its non-intrinsic meaning and its intrinsic meaning is not based on the non-occurrence of the intrinsic meaning."

To put it more clearly, Ajaaj and Ramadan (2006/2007: 33) define synecdoche as a word that is used differently from its original meaning (not for a similar relation) with a word (clue) that obscures the original meaning.

Metaphor (الاستعارة)

A metaphor in Arabic discourse is referred to as 'al-isti'arah' and regarded by Abdul Raof (2006: 218) as an effective simile, or a semantic link between two entities, whose simile particle has been ellipited. Along similar lines, Ghazala (1995:151) defines metaphor as "a figure of speech which aims at achieving a kind of resemblance between two objects, without stating the similarity in full terms."

There is a consensus among Arabic rhetoricians that a metaphor in Arabic consists of three components that are equivalent to the simile components (Najjar, 2012: 90):

1. (المستعار منه) the borrowed from
2. (المستعار له) the borrowed to
3. (المستعار) the borrowed

Metaphor in Arabic is believed to be classified into many types; however, the main types of Arabic metaphor are 'the explicit metaphor' استعارة تصريحية, where 'the borrowed' is explicitly stated, and 'the implicit metaphor' استعارة مكنية, where 'the borrowed' is omitted and replaced with an element of its features (Ajaaj and Ramadan, 2006/2007:28; Najjar, 2012: 93).

To sum up, simile (التشبيه) and metaphor (الاستعارة) are considered synonymous, whereas metonymy (الكناية) and synecdoche (المجاز المرسل) are synonymous as well in

both English and Arabic discourses. The common feature between the four figures of speech is that they convey a semantic effective meaning that deviates from its literal meaning; thus, they invoke vivid imagination and cause an arousal of feelings. The following highlights these four kinds of figurative language in the Qur'an as it is the core of this study.

1.4.3 Figurative Language of the Qur'an

Figurative language in the Qur'an, the focus of this study, exhibits an unmatched frequency. Since the Qur'an is a 'sea of rhetoric' (Abdul-Raof, 2003:19), it contains a wide variety of figures of speech such as: simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, pun, imagery, isocolon, sarcasm, antithesis, hyperbole, polyptoton, rhetorical questions, cadence, etc. (Abdul-Raof, 2003). The study is concerned with the analysis of the former four figures of speech in Surat al-Kahf, whereas the rest of the Qur'an figures of speech are beyond the scope of this study.

There are two opposite approaches to figurative language in the Qur'an: Az-Zahiria school and the Ta'wil school (Tawfik, 2012: 8). On the one hand, followers of Az-Zahiria school, which was led by Abu Ishaq El-Esfrainy and Ibn Hazm, believed that the verses of the Qur'an convey literal clear, factual meanings (Tawfik, 2012). That is to say, they did not believe in the existence of figurative language in the Qur'an because it implies false or misleading meaning that deviates from the truth. In addition, they focused on the denotative literal meaning instead of the connotative figurative meaning.

On the other hand, the overwhelming majority are followers of Ta'wil school, such as Ibrahim El Hefnaway, who believes in the existence of the figurative nature of the Qur'an language, and bears in mind the multi-meaning words and the contextual meaning of words. As a counterargument to the above views, many Muslim scholars rejected Az-Zahiria school, arguing that utilizing figurative language in the Qur'an does not contradict the truth of this Holy Book, rather it affects readers/listeners more effectively than the actual literal language. They also add that the Qur'an matchless lofty eloquence and unparalleled rhetorical sense are highlighted by using figures of speech. Figurative language, in their viewpoints, increases the degree of interaction and communication between the Qur'an and its receivers due to its vividness, dynamism and subtlety.

In other words, followers of Ta'wil school are concerned with the functions performed by the figurative language to convey the intended message. The following are functions of the Qur'an figurative language that conveys different rhetorical and communicative purposes (Tawfik, 2012).

- i. Creating a certain emotive atmosphere
- ii. Emphasizing a certain expressive meaning
- iii. Conveying an effective divine message
- iv. Adding to the beauty and stylistic effect of the Qur'an
- v. Simplifying abstraction (by explaining abstract concepts)
- vi. Exemplifying to evoke vivid imagination (by citing examples)
- vii. Drawing images of the hereafter

Such figures of speech bridge the gap between listeners/readers of the Qur'an and the intended illocutionary meaning, to instill in their minds the right tone of the verse in question, and to clarify spiritual concepts that are beyond the range of human perception.

Figures of speech in the Qur'an, according to Badawi (2005: 167), are pure tools that make the reader fully comprehend the intended meaning. Generally speaking, metaphors are seen to encompass all other subtypes of figurative language (Badawi, 1992), because they describe the scene to the eye, transfer the sound to the ear, and make the abstract objects concrete and sensible. Specifically, Qur'an metaphors are classified by Badawi (2005) and many other Arabic scholars (Najjar, 2012: 107-110) as the following:

- Abstract (object likened) to concrete metaphor
- Concrete to abstract metaphor
- Concrete to concrete metaphor
- Abstract to abstract metaphor
- Body parts metaphors
- Animalizing metaphors
- Personified metaphor
- Metaphor using images of color
- Metaphors using antonyms

To surmount such challenging figures of speech, translators must fully understand the Qur'an rhetorical perfection, without heavily relying on dictionaries because the figurative sense extends beyond its denotative literal meaning. Since figures of speech have both surface literal and deep figurative meanings, translators of the Qur'an have to recognize and differentiate between both intended meanings to make the figurative language comprehensible in the TL (Tawfik, 2012: 64).

Concluding Remarks

The Qur'an, "the greatest literary masterpiece of mankind" Arberry (1980: 5), is indeed untranslatable due to its matchless rhetorical perfection and unparalleled eloquence. However, the meaning of the Qur'an can be translated, making the translation more or less a commentary, through the above proposed approaches, namely communicative exegetic approach (or facilitative interpretive translation) through lexical expansion procedures. In order to narrow the communication gap, these procedures (footnotes, addition, paraphrasing, etc.) are strongly suggested for Qur'an translations, as will be explained thoroughly in chapter 3.

As can be noticed above, similes, metonymies, synecdoches, and metaphors are linguistic and rhetorical elements that seem to exist in both languages, English and Arabic. Although they are incongruent languages, English and classical Arabic, the language of the revelation, share these four figures of speech in terms of function and rhetorical components.

In terms of translational issues, culture-specific and Qur'an-specific figures of speech are highly challenging, because translators have to communicate not only the surface meaning but also the figurative nature of the verse in question. In doing so, translators succeed in understanding and rendering the illocutionary force, i.e. the figurative purpose, of the figurative language and finding a cultural equivalent. Therefore, a competent translator, as a communicator between the ST and the TT, should not only be fluent in both languages but also become familiar with the culture, history, and beliefs of the people who speak both languages.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to describe and analyze the research methods, throwing light on their data analysis, data collection, and data procedures undertaken. To be more specific, this empirical research aims to investigate the under-researched topic by collecting and analyzing a rich set of valid data to fulfill the study's objective, to fully answer the research questions, to test the research hypotheses, and to prove that the findings could be generalized and can extend beyond small samples.

An eclectic methodology, or mixed methods approach, where both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are inclusive and complementary, is highly considered and recommended (Creswell, 2003; Najjar, 2012: 150). Utilization of this combination of methods enhances the trustworthiness of findings and reduces research limitations. The rationale behind the selection of this combination is that the research results and findings serve as a bridge between the theoretical and the practical aspects of the research. The theoretical part, on the one hand, critically studies the translated figurative verses in terms of analyzing and assessing the approaches employed (see Qualitative data analysis in chapter 3). The practical part, on the other hand, examines the respondents' understanding of selected translations of Surat al-Kahf (see Quantitative data analysis in chapter 3).

The study's approach in analyzing the culture-specific figurative language of Surat al-Kahf is the cultural approach, which will be thoroughly examined in the theoretical framework below. The data gathered for this study will also be succinctly presented, putting emphasis on the rationale behind choosing the material for the qualitative method, and highlighting the questionnaire's sample and design for the quantitative instrument. The procedures of this eclectic methodology for collecting the data will also be examined to describe both qualitative and quantitative procedures.

2.1 Data Analysis: The Cultural Approach

The cultural approach, generally speaking, is a discipline based on adopting qualitative research of the arts, humanities, and social sciences, in particular ethnography and anthropology for data collection (Al-Jabari, 2012: 60). More specifically, the cultural approach is commonly known as the 'cultural turn' because it is a "methodological shift in Translation Studies that gained recognition in the early nineties" (Marinetti, 2011: 26).

This term was proposed by Snell-Hornby (1990) and primarily associated with prominent scholars such as Susan Bassnett (1990), André Lefevere (1992) and later, Lawrence Venuti (1995) (Marinetti, 2011). Moreover, the cultural approach in Translation Studies, as a communicative act in a sociocultural context, emphasizes focusing on the cultural effects of translations (Marinetti, 2011). A translator, according to these scholars, employing the cultural approach is simply recognizing that translation is contextual and that each language contains elements that are derived from and deeply rooted in its culture (Najjar, 2012: 120).

Cultural approaches to translation mainly involve either of the two extremes: SL culture oriented or TL culture oriented. This research highlights the polar cultural strategies (see chapter 1 in domestication vs. foreignization) to surmount the problematic culture-bound verses in Surat al-Kahf and thoroughly analyzes the cultural approaches employed by the selected four Qur'an translators (see chapter 3). The following sheds light on the definition of culture and its significance in translation, as well as explains the 'cultural turn' in Translation Studies:

2.1.1 Culture and 'Cultural Turn'

What is culture? Culture is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary* as "the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society." Although culture has been extensively studied over the years, there is no unanimous definition among anthropologists and socio-cultural scholars. Some anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, and even translation theorists have attempted definitions of culture, but each one represented a different perspective of the controversial concept of culture (Al-Jabari, 2008: 63).

Culture and language, however, are unanimously agreed as interwoven elements, i.e. closely interrelated (Al-Jabari, 2008: 62). That is to say, language could only be understood with reference to culture, because languages are steeped in culture to which they belong. As language is an integral part of culture, figures of speech can effectively mirror and reflect people's culture (faith, attitudes and behavior) who speak that language (Najjar, 2012: 12). Thus, since English and Arabic are mostly incongruent languages, what has a positive connotation in one language may be considered negative in the other language and vice versa.

Cultural-bound terms refer to those which have no equivalents in the target culture, thus causing a 'cultural gap' between languages, and posing a formidable issue for translators in general. Newmark (2003: 95) classified five categories of culture-specific terms, which pose a challenging task during translation due to the cultural gap between SL and TL culture:

- 1) Ecology (e.g. the desert climate of Arabia, where Islam originated)
- 2) Material culture (i.e. clothes, food, transportation)
- 3) Social culture-work and leisure
- 4) Customs, activities, procedures, concepts
- 5) Gestures and habits

In terms of translation scholars, many scholars, such as Newmark (1991), and Nida (2001), have defined culture. Probably the simplest one is Nida's (2001: 13) definition of culture: "the reality of beliefs and practices of a society." However, translation scholars had rarely considered culture while defining the notion of translation. In other words, past translators have focused on translation only from a linguistic point of view disregarding the cultural point of view. On the contrary, in the last three decades, translators have become more aware in exposing the significance of culture in translation (Al-Jabari, 2008). The following will highlight this shift in focus in further details.

The focus since the 1950s has shifted from an independent linguistic discipline towards the relationship between linguistics, culture and translation (Marinetti, 2011). By shifting the focus from linguistics to culture, 'cultural turn' or cultural approach has emerged in translation studies. While drawing on 'Descriptive Translation Studies' (DTS), especially the work of the 'Manipulation School' (Hermans, 1985), and sharing in the target-orientedness of Evan-Zohar's 'Polysystem Theory' and Gideon Toury's 'Norms of Translation', the cultural approach has resulted to expand and enhance the scope of translation studies, and to provide a new perspective thereof (Marinetti, 2011).

The 'cultural turn' in the mid 20th century shifted the focus of viewing translation as an independent linguistic discipline towards the interconnection between linguistics, culture and translation (Sancher, 2009). That is to say, the cultural approach has diverted the focus on mere linguistics towards the relationship between both linguistics and culture in translation.

Translation theorists, such as Bassnett and Lefevere (1990), questioned the widely-accepted theory of descriptive translation studies and defined the cultural turn as the counter theory to descriptive translation studies (DTS). They recognize that translation is not merely a linguistic process that mechanically transfers lexical units across languages, but rather a communicative process that dynamically transfers messages across cultures involved (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990). Therefore, translators, according to these supporters of cultural approach, are seen as cultural mediators rather than mere linguistic ones (Hatim and Mason, 1990).

The cultural turn, "one of the most influential trends in the humanities and social sciences in the last generation" (Jacobs and Spillman, 2005), reflected a movement away from a rigidly prescriptive methodology in translation (i.e. telling translators how to translate) into a descriptive methodology (i.e. analyzing issues and solutions) where the impact of culture is highlighted (Marinetti, 2011). Since cultures are not found in dictionaries, the real cultural knowledge is found in the head of the translator (Nida, 2001: 1). Thus, sound translations depend on the translator's linguistic as well as cultural competence of both languages involved.

2.1.1.1 Domestication vs. Foreignization

Due to the differences in cross-cultural communication, domestication and foreignization are methods which signify Venuti's main contribution to the field of translation. Venuti (1995: 20) defines domestication, a TL-oriented approach, as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home". By contrast, he defines foreignization, an SL-oriented approach, as "an ethno deviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" (22).

Although Venuti favored 'The Translator's Invisibility' by employing foreignization as the best translation technique to cultural differences, the study aims at proving that domestication is the optimal approach to make non-Arab readers of the translation of Qur'an best comprehend the nuances which are alien to them. The foreignization approach, which may take the form of literal translation, is advocated by Venuti (1995) and supported by a number of Qur'an translators, arguing that this approach preserves the sense of the verses and their Qur'an values, so as the TR of a foreignized text will feel that the translator is 'invisible'. However, this approach is

highly criticized, because it is limited to the translation of Anglo-American culture and does not offer specific techniques which can be applied to the analysis of translation strategies.

Recognizing that translation cannot be achieved without taking culture into consideration, Nida's dynamic equivalence resulted. Moreover, to bridge the gap of such cultural-bound terms that have concepts peculiar to the SL, Newmark (1988: 75-78) for instance lists twelve procedures, Baker (1992: 21) identifies five specific procedures, Dickins, Hervey and Higgins (2002: 29) suggest five solutions, and Ghazala (2002) lists sixteen procedures too.

Borrowing, footnotes, cultural substitution, lexical neologism, omission, addition, loan word, and cultural equivalence are among the most extensively used procedures in cultural translations. Some of these cultural procedures, such as literal translation, omission, borrowing and substitution, are heavily criticized and discouraged from being utilized in sensitive sacred texts such as the Qur'an.

In order for the addressees of the Qur'an to clearly identify the concepts for which they stand, the translator should avoid foreignness and exoticism. The disadvantages of such procedures are that they identify concepts which are not identical to the SL, treating foreign cultural concepts as indigenous, thus hindering faithfulness and communication.

Addition, footnotes, definition, and cultural equivalence fill the cultural gap and achieve communicative equivalence in translation. Utilizing multiple procedures are in some cases essential instead of utilizing a single unique procedure throughout the communicative process of translation. Baker (1992: 34) supports Newmark (1988: 84) who recommends that in order to avoid possible miscomprehension while translating, translators should employ a combination of procedures at the same time for optimum communication and maximum comprehension of cultural information.

As a result, Venuti's 'domestication' approach is viewed in this research as the key to success if particularly applied in the translation of culturally bound verses. On the other hand, less success would be achieved if the 'foreignization' approach is applied to Qur'an translation because it may perplex and mislead TL readers, leading to ambiguity and incomprehensibility.

2.2 Data Collection

Two stages of data collection were employed in this study: text sampling and respondent sampling. For both sampling techniques, a 'purposive sampling' method was adopted as opposed to random sampling, as the following explains.

The Holy Qur'an, as the base for this study, was specifically chosen not only because it is a literary Holy book with 'universal significance' (Tawfik, 2012: 47), but also because its classical Arabic is replete with terms specific to Muslim culture thus highly appropriate for the current research. Keeping this in view, chapter 18 was particularly chosen as a source sample for this study, since it is considered relatively not so long and widely used with all the Muslims in a way that the majority of them recite it by heart due to its weekly repetition, according to the Prophet's tradition (see Significance of the study).

For native English speakers, many readers will prefer to look at more than one English translation of Islam's holiest religious text to fully understand the true intended meaning thereof. Due to the large number of English translations of the Qur'an, more than fifty translations, it would be impossible and beyond the scope of this study to assess and analyze all the existing versions. Therefore, only four highly regarded English translations of these versions have been chosen for the purpose of this study. The translations listed below are organized according to date of publication:

1. Mohammad Asad's *The Message of the Qur'an* (1980).
2. Abdallah Yousef Ali's *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary* (1983).
3. Mohammad Al-Hilali and Mohammad Khan's *the Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language* (1997).
4. Mohammad Abdel Haleem's *The Qur'an, A New Translation* (2005).

The following explains the sampled tools adopted for gathering the research's data, of both methodologies, qualitative and quantitative.

2.2.1 Material for Qualitative Methodology

Since the objective of the study is to investigate the challenges encountered, review the strategies adopted, assess the shortcomings of four Qur'an translations, and measure

English speakers' comprehension, the following purposive material for qualitative data collection is highlighted.

The rationale for selecting the above four particular translations to be studied and analyzed stems from the following facts:

- The translations are well-known English versions among Muslims and non-Muslims.
- The translations are well-reputed among academics and non-academics alike.
- The translations are widely used in most mosques and academic libraries.
- The translations are done by Muslim translators who completed scholarly works.
- The translations lack deliberate distortions, free from religious biases, and display a high level of talent, honesty, objectivity and skill.
- The translations are considered recent, belonging to the late 20th and 21st centuries which are regarded as a flourishing age in Qur'an translations.
- The translations are available online for free (retrieved as e-books from: <http://www.islamicbulletin.org>) for easy accessibility.
- The translations are done by translators who employ distinctive translation approaches and procedures to translating the Qur'an, for analysis purposes.
- The translations are done by translators with different linguistic and cultural background knowledge for interesting findings. For example: Asad, an Austrian, Khan, an Afghanistan-Pakistani, and Ali, a British-Indian, who mastered both English and Arabic; whereas Al-Hilali and Abdel-Haleem, native Arabic speakers who mastered English.

2.2.2 Instrument for the Quantitative Methodology

A questionnaire was adopted to examine readers' understanding of four English translations of four selected culture-specific figurative verses. This quantitative instrument is aimed as the main means of collecting reliable and valid data in order to attest the research hypothesis (see Appendix 6).

Ethics approval in research has become one of the main required documents that the researcher has to obtain as a prerequisite before establishing the right to access respondent's information (Sarantakos, 2005; Al-Jabari, 2008: 88). Sarantakos (2005:16) points out that "ethical standards are an integral part of any research design." Therefore, the researcher submitted a proposal to distribute a questionnaire for the purpose of this study, whereby Research Ethics Committee at Effat University granted the approval No. RCI_REC/27.February.2018/10.1-Exp.51.

To ensure the validity (i.e. accuracy and consistency) and reliability (i.e. objectivity and relevance) of the questionnaire (Sarantakos, 2005), 60 copies were distributed directly to the respondents. The researcher, thus, had the opportunity to explain the questionnaire and persuade the respondents to participate.

The questionnaire adopted by this study complements and enhances its purpose to assess the level of understanding of the translated figurative verses, and to suggest an ideal translational approach to follow in future Qur'an translations and to improve existing Qur'an translations.

The questionnaire, designed to rate respondents' understanding, is visually attractive, highly structured and was fully and legibly answered. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire were accurately quantified and precisely analyzed through relevant descriptive and inferential statistical analysis using "Survey Monkey" software.

The questionnaire was both self-administered and group-administered. That is to say, self-administered questionnaire, or one-to-one questionnaire, is distributed via Effat email to individual participants and collected from each respondent at a time. Group administered questionnaire, moreover, is distributed to respondents who are grouped and asked to respond at the same time in order to clarify any concerns or misunderstandings, to increase the rate of response and to collect all the completed responses directly within a short period of time.

2.2.2.1 Questionnaire Sample

Before presenting the questionnaire design in more detail, the research sample is introduced. Since this study's questionnaire probes the comprehensibility of the meaning of English figurative verses, native speakers of both Arabic and English, Muslims and non-Muslims alike were the sample of the study. The research has targeted

only this population that are all educated (with at least Bachelor's Degree) because this guarantees precise reliable results.

This study considered 60 copies filled out by a purposively selected sample of students (both under-graduates and post-graduates) majoring in English translation studies as well as faculty members teaching at the English and Translation Department, where all are from Effat University. The exact demographics of the sample participants are Bachelor female students, the majority of the sample, Master female students, and Ph.D. holders.

This sample increases the possibility of obtaining more inclusive, valid and reliable findings. The type of sample chosen in this research was a convenience (opportunity) sample. Members of the sample were selected from those who met certain practical criteria that match the purpose of the study as well as the convenience of both the researcher and the respondents, such as availability at a certain time, and easy accessibility.

2.2.2.2 Questionnaire Design

Before the questionnaire was distributed to the above purposively selected sample, it was validated and piloted. With the supervisor's assistance, the research was validated to ensure an effective, concise and clear research design. The supervisor's feedback provided beneficial and constructive comments to assess the sampling technique and to minimize the amount of writing respondents had to do. With the help of five Effat students, the questionnaire was piloted² to assess and develop the research instrument.

Moreover, this research aimed to include short extracts for the convenience of the respondents. That is to say, the questionnaire only embraced some short verses extracted from the Surah in question which are independently meaningful and easily understood out of context, in order to facilitate the respondents' task.

² Pilot study serves as a trial run or as a pre-study process in a research study (De Vaus, 1993)

The questions were carefully designed to be clearly formulated, interesting and explicit. Special attention was given to make sure that respondents were approached professionally by fully informing them about the purpose and context of the research, as well as about confidentiality and anonymity. They also were clearly informed about what they were being asked to do and how to answer the given questions.

The questionnaire has both close-ended questions, where respondents were provided with ready-made response options, and open-ended questions where respondents were given a space to answer using their own words under each given figure of speech question.

Regarding the printed hard copies of the questionnaires, the respondents were asked to carefully read each figurative verse (4 extracts taken from Chapter 18), and then answer three questions related to each of the given figurative verses. The first question is designed to find out the most comprehended translation of each verse. The second question is designed to find out the least comprehended translation of each verse. The final question is optional for participants to answer by suggesting the ideal translational solution to the problematic figures of speech.

Regarding the computed soft copies of the questionnaires, the respondents (MA students and Ph.D. holders) were asked to carefully answer the questions accompanied by each of the four figurative verses. Although the questions are the same, their organization was different due to the software limitations. Nonetheless, all questions were sought to be answered objectively and honestly. Therefore, this research design aimed to make it easy and clear for the respondents, to maximize the reliability of the findings and to establish precise consistent results.

2.3 Data Procedures

Qualitative data, taken from the in-depth cultural analysis of the extracts chosen (see Appendices 1-5), is succinctly examined above, and subjectively analyzed in chapter 3. Quantitative data, however, taken from the distributed questionnaire (see Appendix 6), is numerically and objectively analyzed in the discussion chapter, by means of statistical charts.

Therefore, the eclectic research, which includes both qualitative and quantitative approaches, is a product-oriented research. This research will adopt qualitative data collection through cultural analysis of each translation of the Qur'an

figurative verses in light of the strategies adopted. On the other hand, the research attempts to use quantitative data collection through submitting questionnaires and statistically analyzing the most and least comprehensible verses. The following further explains the procedures for analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data.

2.3.1 Procedures for the Qualitative Data

To explain the process of qualitative inquiry, a contrastive-analytic approach was adopted in this research. James (1980) suggests two principal procedures in conducting a contrastive analysis study, namely: description and comparison. Through employing the two principal procedures proposed by James (1980), the data is described and compared to explore the extent to which the analyzed translators were accurate and adequate in providing the intended meaning of the figurative verses in Surat al-Kahf.

Some of the verses that show failure or loss in conveying connotative meaning in translation were identified and extracted, the causes of such loss in translation were derived from the analysis. Monolingual and bilingual dictionaries were consulted to verify the losses in the translation of the connotative meaning, i.e. by comparing the meanings in the translation and the authentic ST meanings as interpreted in the exegesis books, and the Arabic monolingual dictionaries.

Faced with a daunting list of seemingly unrelated similarities and differences, the present research describes raw data—the observed similarities and differences of the strategies adopted of each of the translations—and then makes them cohere into a meaningful argument by means of comparing and contrasting. So, the comparative study is done '*text-by-text*' (i.e. presenting raw data about the figurative language of each extract - the ST and its translations in TT1, TT2, TT3, and TT4), and, afterwards, '*point-by-point*' (i.e. alternating points by critically analyzing the given figurative verse with comparable points in the four TTs), according to James' approach of contrastive analysis methodology (1980).

To assess the quality of the selected TTs objectively, therefore, the qualitative data was gathered through contrastively analyzing the cultural approaches and procedures employed to suggest the ideal one which has the highest potential for conveying the intended meaning.

The following clearly explains further the three-phase qualitative methodology for the study's Cultural Contrastive Analysis of the four TTs of the same ST:

1. The ST (Surat al-Kahf) is briefly explained, focusing on the culture-specific figurative verses, through facilitative interpretation of Tafsir Ibn Kathir; and the strategies adopted in the four translations are highlighted in tables.
2. The equivalent four selected TTs are then contrastively analysed, highlighting their observed shortcomings in terms of adequacy and comprehensibility, by means of evaluating the most effective cultural approaches utilized in translating each of the figures of speech (simile, metonymy, synecdoche and metaphor).
3. The research, then, draws implications and establishes recommendations for effective decision-making in employing the ideal approach for each cultural issue encountered in Qur'an translations.

The study's recommendations will hopefully free future translations from the observed shortcomings in the existing translations and assist future translators to render the meaning of the Qur'an into English as effectively as possible, in terms of readability, comprehensibility and adequacy.

2.3.2 Procedures for the Quantitative Data

To explain the process of quantitative inquiry, the descriptive approach was adopted in this research. A descriptive study, as opposed to experimental study, establishes the relationship between variables (Babbie, 2010). The research's goal in conducting quantitative methodology is to determine the relationship between adequate translations of figurative verses and the degree of readers' understanding of such translations within the selected population. In addition, the research aims at gathering such data using structured research instrument - a questionnaire – to be highly reliable for future replication (i.e. to be repeated in future research but with larger sample sizes) and for generalization purposes.

To assess the quantitative data collected objectively, the research constructs numerical and statistical models arranged in graphs and bar-charts through a computer software. In an attempt to explain what is observed, the research constructs a textual

format to comment on the numerical results in relation to the research questions and hypothesis.

The following further explains precisely the three-phase quantitative methodology for the study's Descriptive Analysis of the questionnaire results:

1. After the pilot testing and all necessary modifications, the questionnaires were administered directly to the purposively selected sample of the study.
2. After the questionnaires were collected, the participants' responses were tabulated and computed, using "Survey Monkey" software.
3. After calculating the exact numbers and percentages of the responses, the results of the study were statistically presented in four bar-charts, and textually interpreted with respect to the research questions (see chapter 3 in the Quantitative data analysis).

Concluding Remarks

This study is an attempt to critically compare and contrast the abovementioned English Qur'an translations through cultural analysis in order to know whether their employed strategies and procedures were accurately and effectively adopted or not, and to propose ways of achieving highly effective future translations of the Qur'an.

Regarding the quantitative approach, on the other hand, both careful sampling and appropriate instrumentation improved the questionnaire's reliability and guaranteed accurate responses. This shows that the data given by the questionnaire is valid and can be generalized to a wider sample.

Since no data can be perfect, the study is based on a limited number of chosen verses to be analyzed, and on a limited number of questions in the study's instrument to be quantified. Such limitations of data collection can be replicated in future research but with a broader text sampling and a larger population. Therefore, the study suggests for future researchers to repeat the adopted hybrid methodology but with more comprehensible data analysis, data collection and data procedures.

Chapter 3: Discussion

So far, the literature on translating figurative language of Qur'an parables was put forward, and the methodology of quantitatively and qualitatively analyzing such data was clarified, here the practical approach of such translation and analysis will be thoroughly discussed in this chapter, being the core of this thesis.

The present chapter puts emphasis on analyzing the quantitative data numerically and statistically, as well as analyzing the qualitative data contrastively and culturally. Equal weight will be given to the study's findings and results of such data collected from the hybrid methodology, as well as the recommendations and suggestions for future translators of literary figurative religious texts in general, and of Qur'an parables in particular to propose a prototype of figurative translation in the Qur'an. Finally, the concluding remark sums up this chapter clearly and sufficiently.

The research's major goal of the quantitative data analysis is to measure the readers' understanding of a number of translated culture-specific figurative verses selected from four English versions of Qur'an translations, through specially-designed charts. Moreover, the study's main objective of the qualitative data analysis is to investigate the challenges encountered, to assess the shortcomings, and mainly to critically propose the ideal translation approaches and strategies to Qur'an translation to be employed specifically in the translation of cultural figurative Qur'an parables.

As mentioned earlier in the literature review, Qur'an translation is merely a means of communicating a spark of the rhetorical perfection, beauty and grandeur of the Qur'an, because "the task is so frustrating and the Qur'an is so linguistically and rhetorically bound that the intricate problems caused become so insurmountable," Abdul Raof (2001:39). Therefore, it should be borne in mind that Qur'an translations, no matter how accurate, usually have flaws and shortcomings.

Therefore, the ultimate goal of Qur'an translation is to communicate the intended meaning and effect as much as possible. In some cases, however, it is vital to point out that the non-Arab TR response to the Qur'an "can never be equivalent to that of the Arab Muslim whose innate sense of Arabic makes the Qur'an have a maximum effect on him/her both emotionally and communicatively" (Tawfik, 2012: 24). The following will shed light on the hybrid analysis of the Qur'an translations.

3.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

In order to realize the study's objectives, the sample translations of Chapter 18, 'Surat al-Kahf', will be systematically examined and contrastively analyzed to highlight the ideal strategy to surmount the figurative verses, thus leading to make recommendations based on the findings and results of this study.

The following is devoted to the contrastive cultural analysis of culture-specific figures of speech in a selected sample of verses in the four parables involved. The main objective here is to highlight the problematic nature of such parabolic verses and to point out the shortcomings and the ideal strategies adopted by the five translators.

As mentioned in the literature review, Arab rhetoricians believe that 'al-majaz' (figurative language) is more effective than 'al-ḥaqiqa' (literal language) (Samarrai, 1974; Najjar, 2012: 82). This emphasizes the importance of Qur'an translators' awareness that figurative language "encompasses a wider range of meaning than the literal language" (Newmark, 1982: 124).

Therefore, the exegetic approach (through lexical expansion procedures) and the facilitative interpretive approach (through involving Islamic authorized exegeses), are amongst the most extensively adopted approaches to produce a communicative translation (Abdul Raof, 2001). This is essential to explicate the 'invisible' deeper meaning of a figurative verse by adding a TL-oriented extra detail contextually taken from the various Islamic interpretations, in order to minimize translation loss (Al-Kharabsheh and Al-Azzam, 2008).

However, translators sometimes inadequately translate such invisible meaning, that is the exact intended meaning, due to lack of exegetic knowledge or incomplete understanding of the semantically and culturally dense, complex and multilayered Qur'an verses (Al-Kharabsheh and Al-Azzam, 2008: 78). Therefore, it is vital to add an exegetic gloss by consulting the various reliable exegesis to make the ST cultural concept more accessible and relevant to the TR, though cannot completely bridge the gap between the source and target cultures.

This particular approach is highly advocated by many scholars, such as Alwazna (2014), Munday (2001), Hoyle (2005) and Pym (2005), who claim that lexical expansion procedures are substantial and referred to as over-translation or translation

gain. These procedures include the following: explication, translation by addition, footnotes or endnotes, bracketed notes or squared notes, paraphrasing, and transliteration accompanied by definition and explanation.

Such lexical expansion procedures, in the exegetic approach, spell out contextual information that is only implicitly mentioned in the ST (Munday, 2001: 149). Alwazna believes these procedures are of paramount importance, "as what is understood for the ST reader may not be understood for the TT receiver due to cognitive and cultural differences" (2014: 243). As a result, lexical expansion procedures are often resorted to in order to compensate for translation loss and produce a natural communicative TT, particularly when the TR is not well versed in the source culture.

The following are concrete examples of the Surah's verses that are purposively, as opposed to haphazardly, selected due to their figurative nature, putting more emphasis on the figurative verses that are culturally bound. These verses are briefly explained mainly according to Ibn Kathir's interpretation (*Tafsir*) (Abdul-Rahman, 2009), because it is believed to be the most reliable, informative, accurate and clear of all these considered (Mohammed, 2005). Since the research advocates exegetic and interpretive approaches to produce communicative translation, the below discussed verses will prove or disprove such proposed ideal approaches for rendering figurative culturally-bound verses.

The below-mentioned figures of speech illustrated and contrastively analyzed are arranged according to their number of frequency in Surat al-Kahf, and the number of verses are kept according to their order of the Surah, and the issues encountered for each verse are discussed from the least significant and moving progressively to the most significant. Moreover, the Arabic figure of speech is underlined whereas its English rendering is highlighted in bold for clarification.

3.1.1 Simile

The difficulty of translating similes is compounded by finding the exact resemblance that carries the same rhetorical effect on the TR. The following three examples of similes clearly illustrate the different approaches of each of the five translations, in light of the study's objectives.

Example 1:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>... وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِثُّوا يُعَاثُوا بِمَاءِ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ ... (29)</p>	<p>... and if they beg for water, they will be given water [hot] like molten lead, which will scald their faces</p>	<p>... if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces</p>	<p>... And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces.</p>	<p>... If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten metal, scalding their faces.</p>
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Translation by a simile, and squared note	Translation by a simile	Translation by a simile	Translation by a simile

According to Ibn `Abbas "Al-Muhl is thick water which is similar to the sediment in oil" (Abdul-Rahman, 2009). Ibn Kathir asserts that other interpreters said: "It is everything that is melted" (Abdul-Rahman, 2009). He then continues that the different definitions of Al-Muhl are not contradictory, because Al-Muhl includes all of these unpleasant characteristics; i.e. burning liquid (Abdul-Rahman, 2009).

Although all five translators resort to different equivalent terms, they unanimously employ the same strategy, that is an equivalent simile using the particle 'like' to transfer the function of the ST simile; that is, exemplifying to evoke vivid imagination. However, only Asad opted for a squared note to explicate the contextual rhetorical meaning.

Table 3.1: Components of the TL simile of the given verse

Likened to	Likened	Simile feature	Simile particle
Al-Muhl	Water	Liquidity	Like

In my own personal assessment, the translation of Hilali and Khan, in this particular verse, is the most communicative rendering because they followed Ibn Abbas' interpretation of the likened to 'Al-Muhl' as 'boiling oil'. Besides, they successfully

conveyed the cultural metaphorical passive verb (يغاثوا) in a bracketed note to clarify both its metaphorical and literal meaning (relief and rain respectively), which is paradoxically and satirically used to reveal the opposite of relief; namely, suffering and torture for the disbelievers.

Whereas, Asad, unlike the other translators, is unaware of this contextual cultural meaning, thus fails to communicate the importance of rain to the Arabs as rainy weather in the Arabian Peninsula connotes relief, which is totally irrelevant to the unpleasant rainy environment in the Western world (Tawfik, 2012: 57). Therefore, the other three translators have surmounted, though partially, the cultural discrepancies between the two different cultures, through using the cultural equivalent word 'relief'.

Another perfect example of simile in the Surah in question is the following verse and its four translations:

Example 2:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلِ <u>الْحَيَاةِ</u> <u>الدُّنْيَا كَمَا</u> أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنْ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذُرُّهُ الرِّيحُ وَكَانَ اللهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقْتَدِرًا (45)</p>	<p>18:45 AND PROPOUND unto them the parable of the life of this world: [it is] like the water which We send down from the skies ...</p>	<p>45. Set forth to them the similitude of the life of this world: It is like the rain which we send down from the skies ...</p>	<p>45. And put forward to them the example of the life of this world, it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky ...</p>	<p>45Tell them, too, what the life of this world is like: We send water down from the skies ...</p>
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Translation by a simile, and squared note	Translation by addition	Translation by addition and bracketed note	Translation by addition, word shift

The upshot of the simile here, according to Ibn Kathir (Abdul-Rahman, 2009), is that the parable of the worldly life, resembled to rain, is transient and will eventually cease to exist. More specifically, life is like rainwater, with which the vegetation of the earth mingles, and becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. This resemblance is repeated in Surat Yunus (10:24) and teaches the lesson that "Allah is supreme over all things", as Ali pointed out in his footnote at the end of the verse.

Therefore, this likeness of the concrete universal image of rainwater further clarifies the abstract conceptual image of the worldly life more concisely and with greater emotive force than the literal meaning of transient life.

Moreover, the five translators find no difficulty in translating the universal concrete simile, that functions as simplifying abstraction, by rendering it more or less semantically, which is most appropriately employed by Asad, because he added a squared note respecting the contextual meaning while preserving the rhetorical simile. However, the semantic rendering is least appropriately employed by Abdel-Haleem, because he failed to faithfully render an equivalent structure of simile thus deviating from the figurative image and illocutionary effect as that conveyed in the original text.

Moreover, Asad and Ali most adequately translated the metaphorical phrase *وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا* using the term 'parable' and 'similitude' respectively, unlike Hilali-Khan's literal rendition 'example' or Abdel-Haleem's omission technique. In addition, Hilali-Khan's communicative rendering of the neutral word 'water (rain)' most successfully renders both the denotative and connotative meaning, through adopting a bracketed note; unlike Asad's and Abdel-Haleem's semantic literal rendering, i.e. 'water', on one hand, and Ali's free rendering, i.e. 'rain', on the other.

The following table also shows the four translations choices to overcome another problematic figurative verse:

Example 3:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali & Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ فَقَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي <u>وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا</u> (109)</p>	<p>18:109 SAY: "If all the sea were ink for my Sustainer's words, the sea would indeed be exhausted ere my Sustainer's words are</p>	<p>109. Say: "If the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) the words of my Lord, sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we</p>	<p>109. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ to mankind). "If the sea were ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord would be</p>	<p>Say [Prophet], If the whole ocean were ink for writing the words for my Lord, it would run dry before those words were exhausted' – even if we were to add</p>

Strategy adopted

exhausted! And [thus it would be] if we were to add to it sea upon sea. " ¹⁰⁵ ³	added another ocean like it , for its aid."	finished, even if we brought (another sea) like it for its aid."	another ocean to it.
Omitting the similitude, and a footnote	Translation by addition and a simile	Translation by a simile, and a bracketed note	Translation by omission

The upshot of the above simile, according to Ibn Kathir, is that if the water of the sea were ink for a pen to write down the Words, Wisdom and Signs of Allah, the sea would run dry before it all could be written down (even if We brought like it) means, another sea, then another, and so on, additional seas to be used for writing. The Words of Allah would still never run out. Therefore, no one can comprehend the greatness of Allah, as briefly indicated in Ali's footnote above.

Hilali-Khan's translation most successfully captured this figurative verse, by utilizing the bracketed note procedure to add the extra contextual meaning to sound coherent and comprehensive while remaining faithful to the original text. However, Asad and Abdel-Haleem's translation omitted the particle 'like' in their TTs, distorting the figurative simile. Although Asad's omission strategy was sufficiently justified in his footnote, his use of the archaic poetic term 'ere' might fail to make this verse fully comprehended by the modern readership and his footnotes usually impair the reading flow. In the same vein, Ali's addition strategy is unjustified without a squared note indicating the explicit intended meanings.

As seen from the above three extracts, Qur'an similes should be translated into a structurally equivalent simile (i.e. explicating the simile components), through

³ 105 Lit., "if We were to produce the like of it (i.e., of the sea] in addition". It is to be noted that, as pointed out by Zamakhshari, the term al-baḥr ("the sea") is used here in a generic sense, comprising all the seas that exist: hence, the expression "**the like of it**" has been rendered by me as "**sea upon sea**".

preserving the exact intended meaning of the likened to, the likened, and the particle used in the original text.

3.1.2 Metonymy

The difficulty of translating metonymy is compounded by finding a cultural equivalent that carries the same visual connotations and rhetorical effect. The following four extracts thoroughly illustrate such translational difficulty and the ideal strategy to surmount it, through contrastively analyzing the four translations in question.

Example 1:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
فَلَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسِكَ عَلَى أَثَارِهِمْ إِنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا (6)	18:6 But wouldst thou, perhaps, ³ torment thyself to death with grief over them if they are not willing to believe in this message? ⁴	6. Thou wouldst only, perchance, fret thyself to death , following after them, in grief , (2331) ⁵ if they believe not in this Message.	6. Perhaps, you, would kill yourself (O Muhammad ﷺ) in grief , over their footsteps (for their turning away from you), because they believe not in this narration (the Qur'an).	But [Prophet] are you going to worry yourself to death over them if they do not believe in this message?
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Semantic translation, and a footnote	Semantic translation, and a footnote	Semantic translation, and a bracketed note	Translation by omission

⁴ This rhetorical question is addressed, in the first instance, to the Prophet, who was deeply distressed by the hostility which his message aroused among the pagan Meccans, and suffered agonies of apprehension regarding their spiritual fate. Beyond that, however, it applies to everyone who, having become convinced of the truth of an ethical proposition, is dismayed at the indifference with which his social environment reacts to it.

⁵ He is here consoled and told that he was not to fret himself to death: he was nobly doing his duty; and, as later events showed, the seed of Truth was already germinating, although this was not visible at the time.

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, Allah is telling Mohammad not to feel distressed or sorrowful by the nonbelievers who go astray from the right path. Qatadah said that the meaning of "أسفا" is the feeling of both grief and anger. The overall meaning and historical background of this metonymy is elaborated in Asad's and Ali's footnotes.

This figurative underlined Qur'an phrase is repeated in Surah 29 verse 3, and it mainly indicates a rhetorical question instead of a possibility, as Ali and Hilali & Khan's rendering failed to reveal the question mark to indicate their awareness of this rhetorical question. This metonymy instead functions as creating a certain emotive atmosphere for the readers/listeners.

Moreover, unlike Asad's, Ali's, and Hilali & Khan's structure shift of foregrounding the term "أسفا", Abdel-Haleem strikingly omitted this explicit causative object, thus making his translation flawed. In addition, Hilali & Khan used the modern word 'yourself' instead of Asad's and Ali's rendering 'thysself' that might not be fully comprehended by the contemporary TR. However, Asad's rendering in this particular extract, despite its shortcoming of explicating 'Mohammad' as successfully done in TT3, is personally considered the most successful one in rendering the intended meaning and rhetorical effect through his footnote.

Example 2:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p><u>فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ</u> فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا (11) ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاَهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا (12)</p>	<p>(18:11) And thereupon We veiled their ears in the cave for many a year, (18:12) and then We awakened them:10 [and We did all this] so that We might mark out [to the world]11 which of the two points of view showed a better comprehension of the time-span during which they had remained in this state.12⁶</p>	<p>11. Then We draw (a veil) (2339)⁷ over their ears, for a number of years, in the Cave, (so that they heard not):</p> <p>12. Then We roused them, (2340)⁸ in order to test which of the two parties was best at calculating the term of years they had tarried!</p>	<p>11. Therefore We covered up their (sense of) hearing (causing them, to go in deep sleep) in the Cave for a number of years.</p> <p>12. Then We raised them up (from their sleep), that We might test which of the two parties was best at calculating the time period that they had tarried.</p>	<p>11 We sealed their ears [with sleep] in the cave for years. 12 Then We woke them so that We could make clear which of the two parties was better able to work out how long they had been there.</p>
Strategy adopted	Communicative translation. Footnotes	Semantic translation, footnote, and bracketed notes	Communicative translation, bracketed notes	Semantic translation, squared notes

⁶ So that they were not afraid to speak out openly; and protest the truth of the Unity which they clearly saw in their own minds and hearts.

⁷ i.e. sealed their ears so that they heard nothing. As they were in the cave they saw nothing. So they were completely cut off from the outer world. It was as if they had died, with their knowledge and ideas remaining at the point of time when they entered the Cave.

⁸ Or raised them up from their sleep or whatever condition they had fallen into, so that they began to perceive the things around them, but only with the memories of the time at which they had ceased to be in touch with the world.

According to Abdul-Raof, verse 11 means that Allah has "sealed their ears so they do not hear anything while they were sleeping in the cave" (2001: 31), and verse 12, on the contrary, means that Allah has raised them up from their sleep (Abdul-Rahman, 2009). According to Ibn Kathir, these verses are used in a purely parabolic sense; that is, an illustration of Allah's power to bring about death (or "sleep") and resurrection (or "awakening"); and, secondly, as an allegory of the piety that induces men to abandon a trivial world in order not to impure their faith.

Therefore, the abstract notion of 'sleep' metonymically refers to another abstract notion of 'death'; similarly, the abstract notion of 'waking up' metonymically refers to another abstract notion of 'resurrection', thus functions as conveying an effective divine message, namely Allah has power over death and resurrection.

The issue of these two particular verses is intensified, because the two problematic underlined figures of speech play a pivotal role in understanding the whole context of the first parable, and so rendering it literally will block the communication channel between the ST and the TR. Such verses are difficult to translate, since translators are torn between opting for semantic or communicative strategies, because they want to avoid issues of *ta'wil*, i.e. different interpretations, through strictly following the ST, and at the same time want to communicate the intended message and rhetorical effect through employing lexical expansion procedures.

To keep the rhetorical effect and figurative nature of the original text intact, all the above five translators resorted to intext notes (and footnotes in Asad's translation) to clarify this figurative language more comprehensively and effectively. Noticeably, these two lexical expansion procedures are among the most extensively adopted strategies to increase the degree of communicativeness through clarifying the rhetorical message for the sake of avoiding foreignness.

Asad's translation is most detailed, while Abdel-Haleem's translation is least detailed with contemporary easy style and modern choice of words. The other two translators, however, resort to reasonable notes, though Hilali & Khan's translation seems most comprehensive and communicative by clearly rendering the intended message of the ST without sacrificing the level of complexity or brevity of the ST. Therefore, Hilali & Khan's TT3 is, in my opinion, considered the best in this particular extract.

Example 3:

The meaning of this metonymy, as indicated by Ibn Kathir, is that Allah gave the Men of the Cave strength and patience to go against their people and their city,

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا (14)</p>	<p>(18:14) and endowed their hearts with strength ...</p>	<p>14. We gave strength to their hearts: (2343) ...</p>	<p>14. And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation of their kith and kin and dwellings, etc.) ...</p>	<p>14. We gave strength to their hearts ...</p>
<p><i>Strategy adopted</i></p>	<p>Communicative translation, and paraphrasing</p>	<p>Communicative translation, and footnote</p>	<p>Communicative translation, paraphrasing, and a bracketed note</p>	<p>Communicative translation, and paraphrasing</p>

leaving behind them the life of luxury that they had been living.

This figure of speech is deeply rooted in the culture to which it belongs, to signify an underlying meaning beyond its literal meaning. Thus, the difficulty here is attributed to the fact that the English language can never have the same expressions that convey the same concepts in a similar style to that of the Arabic verse.

Although the primary meaning was conveyed in Asad's, Ali's and Abdel-Haleem's translation, the connotative meaning of the ST rhetorical verb *ربطنا*, in this context, seems to have a slight translation loss in their TTs. However, the connotative intended meaning was most clearly rendered by Hilali & Khan's bracketed note. Moreover, Hilali & Khan's paraphrasing of 'firm and strong' is more elaborate and culturally accurate than the other three translators' renderings of only the term 'strength'.

This loss in translation here is inevitable since English does not have an equivalent term for the ST verb, because it is not lexicalized or naturalized in the English dictionaries. The only solution for such a translational issue is paraphrasing the problematic cultural verb as employed by the above translators, respectively: 'endowed with strength', 'gave strength', 'made firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah

and bestowed upon them patience ...etc.)', and 'gave strength'. This strategy was most successfully adopted by Hilali & Khan's translation.

Example 4:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَاجْبِطْ بِبَمْرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفْيِهِ عَلَى مَا انْفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا (42)</p>	<p>18:42 And [thus it happened:] his fruitful gardens were encompassed [by ruin], and there he was, wringing his hands over all that he had spent on that which now lay waste, with its trellises caved in; ...</p>	<p>42. So his fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with ruin), and he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spent (2382)⁹ on his property, which had (now) tumbled to pieces to its very foundations, ...</p>	<p>42. So his fruits were encircled (with ruin). And he remained clapping his hands with sorrow over what he had spent upon it, while it was all destroyed on its trellises, ... [<i>Tafsir Ibn Kathir</i>]</p>	<p>42And so it was: his fruit was completely destroyed, and there he was, wringing his hands over what he had invested in it, as it drooped on its trellises, ...</p>
Strategy adopted	Literal translation	Communicative translation, and a footnote	Translation by addition, and explication	Literal translation

The overall *tafsir* of this verse, in the second parable of the Surah, is that the rich man's fruits or crops (i.e. wealth, according to other interpreters) were encircled and destroyed. This disbeliever began *yuqallibu* his hands with regret over what he had spent upon it. Qatadah said: "He was clasping his hands together in a gesture of regret and grief for the wealth he had lost" (Ibn Kathir, 68). Thus, the particular verse functions as converting rational images into similar concrete images.

Therefore, the intended meaning of the hand gesture is not the surface literal meaning, but rather the deep metonymical meaning, i.e. strong regret and sorrow; which

⁹ "Fruits", "spent", "twisting of the hand" should all be understood in a wide metaphorical sense, as well as the literal sense. He had great income and satisfaction, which were all gone.

is best indicated by Hilali & Khan, who depend on Ibn Kathir's interpretation as explicated in their above squared note, though should be between squared note to refer to the added extra detail, '[with sorrow]'. By means of domestication, Ali's rendering is the closest to the intended image, though none of the above fully provided the TL reader a mental image similar to that conjured up by the SL phrase.

This significance of the culture-specific hand gesture is not fully rendered with all its implications and correct visual image by any of the above translators, because they failed to include all its shades of meaning and its exact metonymical referent. In my point of view, 'clasping and turning his hand [with regret and sorrow]', similar to Qatadah's interpretation, could be the ideal rendering by means of paraphrasing and squared notes. Therefore, this translation loss can be best surmounted through lexical procedures of paraphrasing, squared notes and even footnotes to further elaborate the culture-specific metonymical verse, which is also applicable to other figurative verses.

3.1.3 Synecdoches

The difficulty of translating synecdoches is compounded by finding the exact referent that carries the closest rhetorical effect on the TR. Being a subclass of metonymy, a synecdoche denotes one thing to refer to a related thing. The below five examples show the five translators' choices to overcome such translational difficulty, and how far such choices reflect their awareness of the encountered cultural nuances.

Example 1:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا (1)</p>	<p>18:1 ALL PRAISE is due to God, who has bestowed this divine writ from on high upon His servant, and has not allowed any deviousness to</p>	<p>1. Praise be to Allah, Who hath sent to His servant the Book, and hath allowed therein no</p>	<p>1. All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has sent down to His slave (Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (the Qur'an), and has not placed therein any crookedness.</p>	<p>Praise be to God who sent down the Scripture to His servant and made it unerringly straight</p>

Strategy adopted	obscure meaning: ¹⁰	its Crookedness (2326) ¹¹		
	Paraphrasing, and a footnote	Semantic translation, and a footnote	Communicative translation, and a bracketed note	Semantic translation

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, this first verse of the Surah, Allah praises His Holy Self for revealing His Mighty Book to His Noble messenger Mohammad; which is straight, neither distorted nor twisted, thus no confusion therein to clearly guide to the straight path out of the darkness of ignorance and into the light of faith, as emphasized by the second verse with word "قيما", i.e. straightforward and balanced (see Ali's footnote).

The denotation of the word الكتاب is very clear in the Arabic text, as the Arabic Muslim reader is well aware that this term refers to the Holy Qur'an, because this expression occurs on several occasions in the Qur'an. By contrast, the English reader may not fully understand the exact referent of this figure of speech. Therefore, translators should resort to notes (either intext notes or footnotes) to explicate the referent to avoid different interpretations and maximize communication between the ST and the TR. This is most adequately adopted by Hilali-Khan's translation, 'the Book (the Qur'an)' as well as 'slave (Muhammad, SAWS)' to explicate the exact referents thereof.

¹⁰ 1 Lit., "and has not given it any deviousness". The term 'iwaj signifies "crookedness", "tortuousness" or "deviation" (e.g., from a path), as well as "distortion" or "deviousness" in the abstract sense of these words. The above phrase is meant to establish the direct, unambiguous character of the Qur'an and to stress its freedom from all obscurities and internal contradictions: cf.

¹¹ In the next verse, the word "Straight" (*qayyim*) is used to characterize the Qur'an, in contrast to this word "crooked" (*'iwaj*).

What is striking is the translation of the Arabic ST word الله Allah, which is sometimes rendered as 'God' (as in Asad's and Abdel-Haleem's translations) and other times transliterated as 'Allah' (as in Ali's and Hilali-Khan's translations). The word 'God' only conveys the denotative meaning, excluding the connotation of the great name of Allah Almighty, that implies Oneness of Worship and refers to only One worship-worthy God (Abdelaal, 2018: 77). Therefore, only Ali and Hilali-Khan successfully rendered the noun Allah الله by transliterating it and domesticating its implicit religion-specific meanings to the target culture. However, the other two TTs failed to render such complexity and richness of meaning that exists in the ST word, resulting in loss in translation which could have been avoided by transcribing the SL name of Allah using the TL (Latin) alphabets.

Another point worth mentioning is the metaphorical word 'عوجا' which is translated by Asad using paraphrasing and detailed footnote, by Ali using unjustifiable capitalization technique, by Hilali-Khan using communicative equivalent, and finally by Abdel-Haleem using the opposite expressive meaning, causing serious distortion of the ST structure by his unjustifiable liberties. Therefore, content must always prevail over form by using justifiable procedures as that adopted in Hilali-Khan's translation. This due to the fact that it is impossible to keep intact the Qur'anic structure and word order, hence its stylistic *I'jaz*.

Example 2:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا (...) (21)	18:21 AND IN THIS way ²⁷ have We drawn [people's] attention to their story, so that they might know - whenever they debate among themselves as to what happened to those [Men of the Cave] - that God's promise [of	21. Thus did We make their case known to the people, that they might know that the promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt	21. And thus We made their case known to the people, that they might know that the Promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour.	21 In this way, We brought them to people's attention so that they might know that God's promise [of resurrection] is true and that there is no doubt about the Last Hour.

	resurrection] is true, and that there can be no doubt as to [the coming of] the Last Hour.	about the Hour of Judgment.		
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Translation by addition, and squared notes	Paraphrasing	Literal translation	Squared note

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, several scholars of the Salaf mentioned that the people of that time were skeptical and disbelievers about the Resurrection, and so the parable of Men of the Cave was made known to them as evidence to Allah's promise and the inevitability of resurrection.

The Qur'an underlined expression "وعد الله", in the above context, figuratively refers to 'Allah's promise of resurrection' which is only explicitly indicated by Asad and Abdel-Haleem with the only shortcoming of choosing the word 'God' instead of 'Allah'. Therefore, all four TTs suffer from translation loss which can be overcome through successfully employing lexical expansion procedures as well as conveying the correct intended meaning and effect.

The other ST word "الساعة" is culturally bound, i.e. Qur'an-specific, and figuratively refers to the Day of Judgment and even to the life after death; it also implies everything that will definitely happen in the Hereafter such as resurrection, accountability, rewarding, Jannah (Paradise) and Hellfire (Al Qurtubi, 2004). Although this Islam-specific term is intuitively understood by native Arabic speakers, its underlying shades of meaning may not be well recognized by English speakers.

Therefore, what is noticeable is that Hilali-Khan's literal denotative rendering results in translation loss, whereas Ali's communicative rendering by paraphrasing the term in question minimizes such loss. On the other hand, in my opinion, Asad's and Abdel-Haleem's rendering could be regarded as a mistranslation of the term, since it can be confusing and ambiguous to the TR who may not be well aware of the implied figurative meanings of 'the Last Hour', or the Day of Judgement.

Therefore, resorting to lexical expansion procedures and adopting communicative translation that domesticates the culture-specific and Qur'an-specific terms is of ultimate importance to enhance comprehension to the TR.

Example 3:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهَمَّ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَنْغِثُوا يُعَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ (29)	Verily, for all who sin against themselves [by rejecting Our truth]39 We have readied a fire whose billowing folds will encompass them from all sides ¹²	for the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in:	Verily, We have prepared for the <i>Zalimun</i> (polyt heists and wrong- doers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah).	We have prepared a Fire for the wrongdoers that will envelop them from all sides.
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Paraphrasing, squared note, and a footnote	Semantic translation	Transliteration and bracketed note	Semantic translation

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, "الظالمين", does not literally refer to unjust people, but rather figuratively refers to the wrongdoers and polytheists, who disbelieve in Allah, His Messenger and His Book.

Having known this, Asad's TT includes inadequate TL structure as adopting paraphrasing, squared note, and a footnote to render a lengthy detailed equivalent for

¹² 39 Thus Razi explains the expression az-zalimun (lit., "**the evildoers**") in the above context. 40 The expression suradiq - rendered by me as "billowing folds" - literally denotes an awning or the outer covering of a tent, and alludes here to the billowing "walls of smoke" that will surround the sinners (Zamakhshari): a symbolism meant to stress the inescapability of their suffering in the hereafter (Razi).

the ST word, that its rhetorical beauty is reflected precisely in its brevity. This rendering results in translation loss in economy, thus failing to convey the significance of the figurative verse in question fully, nor render the intended figurative purpose or illocutionary force (Tawfik, 2012: 81). Loss in economy, by prioritizing content over accuracy and form, results from over-translating literary forms (Baker and Saldanha, 2009).

Ali's footnote at the beginning of the verse in question points out that "there is water to quench the heat of thirst: here the only drink will be like molten brass, thick, heavy, burning, sizzling. Before it reaches the mouth of the unfortunates, drops of it will scald their faces as it is poured out." As indicated in the same previously analyzed verse, Ali's footnote inaccurately rendered the rhetorical ST word as "the unfortunates".

Hilali-Khan's rendering in TT3, however, most comprehensively translates the Qur'an synecdoche by using italicized transliteration, though must be corrected as *Zalimeen*, plus bracketed note to encompass all the different implications and shades of meaning of this ST word, thus minimizing translation loss and maximizing communication and comprehension.

Example 4:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى <u>الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا</u> فِيهِ (49)</p>	<p>18:49 And the record [of everyone's deeds] will be laid open; and thou wilt behold the guilty filled with dread at what [they see] therein</p>	<p>49. And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed (before you); and thou wilt see the sinful in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein</p>	<p>And the Book (one's Record) will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the Oneness of Allah, and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allah), and you will see the Mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.), fearful of that which is (recorded) therein.</p>	<p>49 The record of their deeds will be laid open and you will see the guilty, dismayed at what they contain</p>

<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Squared note, and paraphrasing	Bracketed note, and semantic translation	Bracketed notes, and transliteration	Paraphrasing, unjustified addition
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According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, the Book of deeds will be produced which contains a record of everything, major or minor, significant or insignificant, great or small, and you will see the criminals, fearful of their evil deeds and reprehensible actions (p. 80-81).

The context of this particular verse makes the ST word الكتاب connotes a different referent from the same ST word but in verse1 (i.e. referring to the Holy Book). Therefore, the lexical expansion procedure is essential in such verses to translate contextually, avoid incomprehensibility and achieve consistency.

Although none of the above translators exactly followed Ibn Kathir's interpretation of الكتاب and المجرمين, Hilali-Khan, however, rendered the figurative cultural terms most thoroughly, compared to the other three translators, by explicating the intended meaning between brackets while preserving the cultural connotation of the transliterated *Mujrimun*, which should be *Mujrimeen*, in order to introduce this Qur'an-specific concept and familiarize it to the TR. In addition, all the above translators, except for Hilali-Khan, failed to achieve consistency by rendering the same ST term المجرمين in verse 53 of the Surah.

It is worth mentioning, transliteration accompanied by definitions and explanations can bridge the cultural discrepancies, and clarify the ambiguity associated with the various Qur'an-specific synecdoches, namely المجرمين (18:49), للظالمين (18:29, & 18:50), الأَخْسَرِينَ (18:103), and المشركين (2:105 etc.). Although these terms denote criminals, losers, unjust people, and idolaters respectively, they connote the intended meaning of polytheists and disbelievers which must be clearly rendered in the TT by domesticating such foreign concepts to the TR. This is due to the fact that these figurative terms are known to well-versed Muslims but not to ordinary Muslims or non-Muslims who do not have previous cultural knowledge about technical Qur'an lexis.

Example 5:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتَاهُ لَا أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا (60)	18:60 AND LO!, [In the course of his wanderings,] Moses said to his servant : ⁶⁸ "I shall not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas , even if I [have to] spend untold years [in my quest]!" ¹³	60. Behold, Moses said to his attendant , "I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two (2405) ¹⁴ seas or (until) I spend years and years in travel." (2406) ¹⁵	60. And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his boy-servant : "I will not give up (travelling) until I reach the junction of the two seas or (until) I spend years and years in travelling."	60Moses said to his servant , 'I will not rest until I reach the place where the two seas meet , even if it takes me years!'
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Footnote, and communicative translation	Communicative translation and footnotes	Communicative translation	Paraphrasing

According to Asad's detailed footnote, this verse indicates a sudden turn in the discourse, introducing the third parable of Moses and his quest for knowledge (verses 60-82), and introducing an allegory meant to illustrate the fact that spiritual knowledge is inexhaustible. Moreover, according to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, Moses expressed his eagerness to find the man who is far superior to him in wisdom, by telling

¹³ 68 Lit., "young man" (fata)- a term applied, in early Arabic usage, to one's servant (irrespective of his age). According to tradition, it was Joshua, who was to become the leader of the Israelites after the death of Moses.

¹⁴ The most probable geographical location (if any is required in a story that is a parable) is where the two arms of the Red Sea join together, viz, the Gulf of 'Aqabah and the Gulf of Suez. They enclose the Sinai Peninsula, in which Moses and Israelites spent many years in their wanderings. There is also authority (see **Baydawi's note**) for interpreting the two seas as the two great streams of knowledge, which were to meet in the persons of Moses and Khidr.

¹⁵ *ḥuqub* means a long but indefinite space of time. Sometimes it is limited to 80 years.

his boy-servant that he will keep on travelling until he reaches the "junction of the two seas", which many of the early commentators endeavored to identify geographically (ranging from the meeting of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to that of the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean), or a *huqub* passes, i.e. a very long time.

The Arabic ST word *فتاه* postulates different connotations from the TT words 'servant' or 'attendant' as rendered in TT2, and TT4, thus lacking accuracy and rhetorical effectiveness. However, TT3 slightly reduces the loss of the connotative meaning by signifying the referent 'boy-servant'. In contrast, TT1 is seen as the most adequate translation of the culture-specific word through explaining and explicating the Arabic custom in a footnote. The custom of being accompanied by a servant is peculiar to the cultural background of Moses' time; it is the outcome of their long-rooted belief, culture and environment. The TR will not be able to fully comprehend the meaning if not acquainted with this linguistic and cultural peculiarity through a footnote.

Another noteworthy point, the first four translators unanimously employ communicative rendering of the ST phrase *مجمع البحرين*, unlike Abdel-Haleem's strategy who inappropriately opted for paraphrasing to simplify the phrase in question. He also failed to reveal the rhetorical effect of the extreme length of time of the ST culture-specific term *حقبا*, as narrated by Ibn Abbas, Qatadah and Ibn Zayd that it means a lifetime (Abdul-Rahman, 2009).

There are other examples of synecdoches in Surat al-Kahf such as the verses number 46, 53, 55, 59, and 86 which can be also contrastively analyzed in more detail in future research.

3.1.4 Metaphor

Though there are more than 22 metaphors in Surat al-Kahf, only six of them will be thoroughly discussed, in terms of the issues encountered and strategies employed, due to the limited scope of this study. The excluded metaphorical verses are not analyzed in this research because their involved four translations are roughly the same, making contrasting the translators' decisions unreasonable and futile.

To be concise, the below metaphors embody the essence and the core meaning which aim to convey a specific communicative purpose, implicit comparison,

metaphoric personification, or metaphoric collocation that connote meanings which go beyond their literal denotative meanings.

To be more specific, the following table shows the strategies employed by the translators to overcome the problematic cultural figurative verse which implies a metaphoric comparison:

Example 1:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
... وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةَ سَادِسْتُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ. [22]	18:22 ... while others will say, "Five, with their dog as the sixth of them" - idly guessing at something of which they can have no knowledge	... (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, - doubtfully guessing at the unknown; (2359) ¹⁶	... (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen	22 ... others say, 'They were five, and the dog made six' guessing in the dark
Strategy adopted	Paraphrasing	Addition and a footnote	Communicative translation	Literal translation

The meaning of the above verse can be summed up as, according to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, that Allah says that people disputed over the number of the Men of the Cave, where the first two views are invalid, meaning that they spoke without knowledge like a person who aims at an unknown target, which hardly likely to hit it, while the third and final opinion is affirmed to be the correct number "سبعة وثامنهم كلبهم", i.e. seven and eighth being their dog.

This metaphorical ST adverb رَجْمًا is taken from the custom of the Men of the Cave period, and it literally means to kill by stoning or to pelt, but metaphorically implies

¹⁶ The controversy in later ages raged about the numbers of the Sleepers: were they three or five or seven? People answered not from knowledge, but from conjecture. The point was immaterial: the real point was the spiritual lesson.

to idly guess; and the ST noun بالغيب allegorically implies, according to Asad, "all that is beyond the reach of a created being's perception".

This implicit metaphoric meaning is the intended one that is more effective and emotive than its denotative literal meaning. Though the cultural flavor of the text is lost in all four translations, this translation loss is unavoidable due to the cultural difference between the SL and the TL.

The below table clarifies the components of the abstract-to-abstract metaphor:

Table 3.2: Components of the TL metaphor.

The borrowed from	The borrowed to	The borrowed
Stoning	The unknown or unseen	Idly guessing

The beauty of this metaphorical phrase is reflected precisely in its brevity, which is lost in Asad's lengthy translation by adopting the paraphrasing strategy to unnecessarily elaborate on it. Whereas Ali's translation by addition is inadequate and unnecessary, resulting in translation loss in economy as well as cultural loss; however, his footnote compensates for this loss. Abdel-Haleem's odd literal rendering may confuse target readers, because the complete layers of meanings of the ST rhetorical phrase are not fully conveyed. Therefore, Hilali-Khan's and Ali's communicative rendering, though failed to fully bridge the cultural gap, is in my opinion regarded as the most adequate translations, compared to the others.

Example 2:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّلُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا	(18:31) theirs shall be gardens of perpetual bliss - [gardens] through which running waters flow - wherein they will	31. For them will be Gardens of Eternity ; beneath them rivers will flow ; they will be adorned therein with bracelets of	31. These! For them will be ' <i>Adn</i> (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them, therein they will be	31 they will have Gardens of lasting bliss graced with flowing streams. There they will be adorned with

<p>عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا (31)</p>	<p>be adorned with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of silk and brocade, [and] wherein upon couches they will recline:41 how excellent a recompense, and how goodly a place to rest!¹⁷</p>	<p>gold, and they will wear green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade: They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good the recompense! How beautiful a couch to recline on! (2374)¹⁸</p>	<p>adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent <i>Murtafaqa</i> (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!</p>	<p>bracelets of gold. There they will wear green garments of fine silk and brocade. There they will be comfortably seated on soft chairs. What a blessed reward! What a pleasant resting place!</p>
<p>Strategy adopted</p>	<p>Semantic translation, and a footnote</p>	<p>Semantic translation</p>	<p>Transliteration plus bracketed notes</p>	<p>Literal translation</p>

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, the above verse describes the joys of paradise, where rivers flow beneath them, meaning, from beneath its rooms and dwellings, and where its cloths are *sundus* and *istabraq*. *Sundus* refers to a fine garment, like a shirt and the like, and *istabraq* is thick and shiny velvet. They will be *muttaki'in* therein on the *ara'ik*, which implies lying down with one's legs crossed on a bed under a canopy, in a place called *murtafaqa*, meaning a place to dwell and rest, in contrast to the evil *murtafaqa* in verse 29 of the same Surah.

¹⁷ 41 Like all other Qur'an descriptions of happenings in the hereafter, the above reference to the "adornment" of the believers with gold and jewels and silk and their "reclining upon couches (ara'ik)" is obviously an allegory - in this case, an allegory of the splendor, the ever-fresh life (symbolized by "green garments"), and the restful fulfilment that awaits them in result of the many acts of self-denial which their faith had imposed on them during their earthly life.

¹⁸ This picture is in parallel contrast to the picture of Misery in the last verse.

Generally, Arabic and English share in terms of meaning and structure the ground of this often-repeated metaphoric collocation تجري الأنهار which personifies the inanimate object 'rivers'. Therefore, this lexicalized metaphor is a universal image which can be clearly understood regardless of TR linguistic and cultural background, thus posing no difficulty in translation. That is why Asad and Abdel-Haleem translated 'rivers' into 'waters' and 'streams' respectively, and they imply different connotative meanings from the intended meaning. Besides, Asad's rendering of 'running waters flow', despite the fact that it is so well-established that it can be found in dictionaries, can be considered redundant unlike Hilali-Khan's accurate rendering.

Moreover, Hilali-Khan's translation communicatively renders the cultural nuances through adopting transliteration accompanied by a bracketed note, since transliteration alone does not elucidate the meaning to the English reader. To be more satisfied, for example, they rendered the Qur'an-specific term 'Adn along with its loan word between brackets '(Eden)' as well as bracketing its definition '(everlasting Gardens)' to further ensure comprehension, whereas the other three translators seem to disregard the proper noun عدن and only render its definition, thus resulting in distortion of transferring the exact intended meaning to the TR.

To be consistent with their strategies, Hilali & Khan also rendered the Qur'an-specific term *Murtafaqa* using transliteration plus definition between brackets to alleviate the degree of cultural remoteness or awkwardness. However, their equivalence of the word الأرائك signifies different connotations from the TT term 'thrones', making Asad's rendering of his TT term 'couches' relatively the closest cultural equivalent, though partly, compared to the other three translators. In contrast to the other translators, however, Asad seems to be wavering between rendering the culturally-bound terms semantically and communicatively explaining its rhetorical meaning in his footnote.

Since Hilali is a native Arabic speaker, and his co-translator mastered Arabic, they seem to be fully aware, compared to the other three translators, of the cultural background of the visual image drawn in the given verse, by preserving, as much as possible, the spirit of the image in question. They also kept all the dimensions of meanings of the above cultural concrete terms, which signify abstractions, i.e. symbolizing the joys of paradise, intact as much as possible.

Example 3:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
كَلْنَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكْلَهَا وَلَمْ تُظَلِّمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلَالَهُمَا نَهْرًا (33)	(18:33) Each of the two gardens yielded its produce and never failed therein in any way, for We had caused a stream to gush forth in the midst of each of them	33. Each of those gardens brought forth its produce and failed not in the least therein: in the midst of them We caused a river to flow .	33. Each of those two gardens brought forth its produce, and failed not in the least therein, and We caused a river to gush forth in the midst of them.	33both gardens yielded fruit and did not fail in any way; We made a stream flow through them
Strategy adopted	Communicative translation	Semantic translation	Communicative translation	Semantic translation

The context of the above verse is the second parable of the rich and poor man.

The rich man had two gardens, each garden yielded its produce where nothing at all was diminishing, and rivers were flowing through them here and there (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*).

The metaphorical ST verb فجرنا is problematic, resulting in a lexical gap because it is peculiar to the Arabic language and not lexicalized in the English dictionary. Its closest cultural equivalent, however, is Asad's and Hilali-Khan's rendering of the phrasal verb 'gush forth', unlike the other two translators' rendering of the surface meaning, disregarding the deeper figurative intended meaning.

In terms of contrastive cultural analysis, Hilali-Khan's translation is in my opinion regarded as the most communicative translation, since they rendered the metaphorical phrase faithfully, without adding or changing any meaning: "a river to gush forth in the midst of them". In contrast to Asad's inadequate TT term "stream" and mistranslation of the ST word خلالهما as "in the midst of each of them" which draws a totally different image and spirit from the original text that is most accurately depicted by Hilali-Khan.

Therefore, although Asad's inaccurate translation can be easily comprehensible to the TR, the rendered meaning is completely different from the original meaning. This is

considered a distortion of Qur'an translation, especially if the TR is not aware of the original intended meaning due to lack of previous knowledge.

Example 4:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذَكَرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي أَدَانِهِمْ وُقْرًا ... (57)</p>	<p>18:57 And who could be more wicked than he to whom his Sustainer's messages are conveyed and who thereupon turns away from them, forgetting all [the evil] that his hands may have wrought?⁶²¹⁹ Behold, over their hearts have We laid veils which prevent them from grasping the truth, and into</p>	<p>57. And who doth more wrong than one who is reminded of the Signs of his Lord, but turns away from them, forgetting the (deeds) which his hands (2401)²⁰ have sent forth? veils over their hearts lest they should understand this, and over their ears, deafness, [...]</p>	<p>57. And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, but turns away from them forgetting what (deeds) his hands have sent forth. Truly, We have set veils over their hearts lest they should understand this (the Qur'an), and</p>	<p>57Who could be more wrong than the person who is reminded of his Lord's messages and turns his back on them, ignoring what his hands are storing up for him [in the Hereafter]? have put covers over their hearts, so they cannot understand the Qur'an, and We</p>

¹⁹ I.e. persevering in his unrighteous behavior (Razi).

²⁰ Considering the power of sin, and how it gets hold of the hearts of men, it is the height of folly and injustice on their part to turn away from warnings which are given expressly for their good. But a stage of callousness is reached, when, by their own choice, they have rendered themselves impervious to Allah's Grace. At that stage, a veil is put over their hearts and they are left alone for a time, that they may commune with themselves and perhaps repent and seek Allah's Mercy again. And if they do not, it is their loss.

	their ears, deafness; [...]		in their ears, deafness. [...]	put heaviness in their ears [...]
<i>Strategy adopted</i>	Footnote, squared note	Bracketed note	Bracketed note	Squared note, literal translation

The meaning suggested by the above three metaphors can be summed up as follows: Allah has sealed the hearts of the disbelieves who turn away from His messages forgetting their deeds. *Akinnah* means coverings so that they will not understand this Qur'an and its clear messages and that they will be deaf, in an abstract way, to guidance.

The first concrete-to-abstract ST metaphor *ما قدمت يداه* is most adequately rendered by Asad who did not only add a squared note to explicate the implicit meaning but also added a footnote depending on Razi's interpretation to further clarify the exact intended meaning. On the other hand, Abdel-Haleem has distorted the intended meaning altogether, the metaphor he added "turns his back on them" does not exist in the ST, and "ignoring what his hands are storing up for him [in the Hereafter]" gives a totally different rhetorical image. By so doing, his rendering is neither semantically equivalent nor culturally accurate. In addition, Hilali & Khan failed to add the question mark to indicate the Qur'an rhetorical question.

Another tendency of failure to convey the exact connotative meaning occurred in translating the Qur'an-specific term *آيات*. Unlike the other three translators, however, Hilali & Khan successfully rendered this culture-specific term using their consistent strategy, transliteration plus bracketed note to clarify the definitions of this technical Qur'an word. In other words, the ST word *آيات* has more implications than the TT equivalents 'messages' or 'Signs', though they may sound denotatively equivalent.

The second concrete-to-abstract ST metaphor *على قلوبهم أكنة* is most accurately rendered by Hilali & Khan who, though similar to TT2, shifted the word order for naturalness unlike TT1, and explicated the implied object in the ST phrase *يَفْقَهُوْهُ* as "understand this (the Qur'an)". This implied meaning is only made explicit by Hilali & Khan and Abdel-Haleem who added the TT term 'the Qur'an' inconsistently to his squared note strategy. Abdel-Haleem, moreover, depends on the surface literal meaning that can be easily understood, though not accurately enough, through adopting the

simple choice of words, thus losing the complex rhetorical nature of the multilayered ST Text.

The third abstract-to-abstract ST metaphor *وَفِي أَدَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا*, where both terms are abstract notions (deafness and astray from guidance), is most appropriately rendered by Hilali & Khan, as well, who added the preposition 'in', as opposed to the prepositions 'into' or 'over' in TT1 and TT2, that best collocates with 'deafness'. However, the exact implicit meaning in the metaphor is absent in all four translations, because none of the translators explicated the intended meaning, at least between squared note, e.g. [to guidance], in order to ease interaction between the ST and TR.

Example 5:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقُضَ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا (77)	18:77) And they saw in that (village] a wall which was on the point of tumbling down , and [the sage] rebuilt it [whereupon Moses] said: "Hadst thou so wished, surely thou couldst [at least] have obtained some payment for it?"	77. They found there a wall on the point of falling down , but he set it up straight. (Moses) said: "If thou hadst wished, surely thou couldst have exacted some recompense for it!" (2420) ²¹	77. Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he (Khidr) set it up straight. [Musa (Moses)] said: If you had wished, surely, you could have taken wages for it!"	77. they saw a wall there on the point of falling down and the man repaired it. Moses said, 'But if you had wished you could have taken payment for doing that.'
Strategy adopted	Paraphrasing	Paraphrasing	Communicative translation	Paraphrasing

The upshot of the context of this metaphoric personification is that: Moses and Al-Khidr asked people for food, but they refused to welcome them. Then they found

²¹ As they were refused hospitality, they should, as self-respecting men, have shaken the dust of the town off their feet, or shown their indignation in some way. Instead of that, Khidr actually goes and does a benevolent act. He rebuilds for them a falling wall, and never asks for any compensation for it.

there a wall about to collapse and the sage man (Al-Khidr) set it up straight, i.e. fixed it so it was standing upright properly.

The above image can be universally understood, i.e. the message behind this metaphor can be easily fathomed by TR. Thus, paraphrasing strategy, as adopted in TT1, TT2, and TT4, should be avoided, because it results in lack of accuracy and rhetorical effectiveness. However, TT3 best conveys the expressive effective nature and evocative of feelings without sacrificing the brevity which reflects the rhetorical beauty and complexity of the sensitive ST.

Unlike Asad's, Ali's, and Abdel-Haleem's translations which are more or less a paraphrase, and thus lack both accuracy and communicativeness, Hilali-Khan's translation successfully rendered the rhetorical personification of the inanimate concrete object 'a wall' (*literally* means a wall wants to collapse). This is due to the fact that the literal translation of the personified metaphor, in this context, is natural common in English, and that many scholars, such as Nida (1964: 220), recommends translating metaphors as non-metaphors because "the extensions of meaning which occur in the source language have no parallel in the receptor language." This approach, i.e. translating the implicit comparison without rendering an equivalent metaphor, is best adopted when the source and target cultures are incongruent, thus the particular metaphorical associations of meaning in the SL have no absolute equivalence in the TL.

Example 6:

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجًا فِي بَعْضٍ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا (99)	18:99 AND ON that Day ¹⁰¹ 22 We shall [call forth all mankind and] leave them to surge like waves [that	99. On that day We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another: (2445) ²³	99. And on that Day [i.e. the Day Ya'juj and Ma'juj (Gog and Magog) will come out] , We shall	99 On that Day , We shall let them surge against each other like

²² 101 i.e. on the Day of Judgment alluded to in the preceding verse

²³ And so we pass on to the Last Days before the Great Summons comes from Allah.

All human barriers will be swept away. There will be **tumultuous rushes**. The Trumpet will be blown, and the Judgment will be set on foot.

	dash] against one another; and the trumpet judgment] will be blown, and We shall gather them all together.	the trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together.	leave them to surge like waves on one another, and the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together	waves and then the Trumpet will be blown, and We shall gather them all together.
Strategy adopted	Footnote, squared note and translation by a simile	Translation by a simile	Squared note and translation by a simile	Translation shift

According to *Ibn Kathir's Tafsir*, the meaning of the above verse is summed up as that Allah shall leave some mankind on that day when the barrier will be breached and these people (Ya'juj and Ma'juj) will come out surging over mankind to destroy their wealth and property. All of this will happen before the Day of Resurrection and after the Dajjal, and *As-Sur* (the trumpet) will be blown. *As-Sur*, as explained in the Hadiths, is a horn that is blown into by (the angel) Israfil. Then, Allah shall collect them (mankind) all together for reckoning.

The ST metaphoric verb *يُجْرُجُ* does not have a one-to-one equivalence in English, since it literally and metaphorically refers to wave-like movement that is not lexicalized in the English dictionaries. As a result, all the above translators tend to adopt the strategy of a TL simile to depict the implicit resemblance of the problematic ST verb, thus preserving the metaphorical nature of the verse without appearing alien or strange to the TR.

TT2 and TT3 are most cohesively and coherently rendered without compromising the ST form, readability or comprehensibility. TT4, on the other hand, seems ambiguous and does not conform to the ST structure in this context. In addition, the exact reference of the implicit TT term 'that Day' is accurately done in TT3, unlike TT1 which misunderstood the context of the given verse, thus mistranslating the context-specific term *يَوْمَئِذٍ*. The other Qur'an-specific term *الصُّورِ* is best rendered in TT1, because of the squared note that enhanced clarification for the TR, though the noun 'trumpet' must be capitalized to imply the one and only trumpet of judgment.

There are numerous other accounts of figurative culture-specific, Qur'an-specific terms and phrases that pose challenges in translation and inevitably cause translation loss if not rendered through adopting lexical expansion procedures and the communicative approach to domesticate the nuances of the SL culture to the TR. Such SL terms and phrases of the particular Surah are: *waseed* (at the entrance), *dakka'* (make it flat), *azka* food (purest), *thamara* (fruit), *nutfah* (offspring), *husban* (mighty rain), *fisq* (disobeying), *`adudan* (assistants), *mawbiq* (destruction), etc. These Islamic technical expressions are difficult to render into other languages, because they are deeply rooted in Arabic culture.

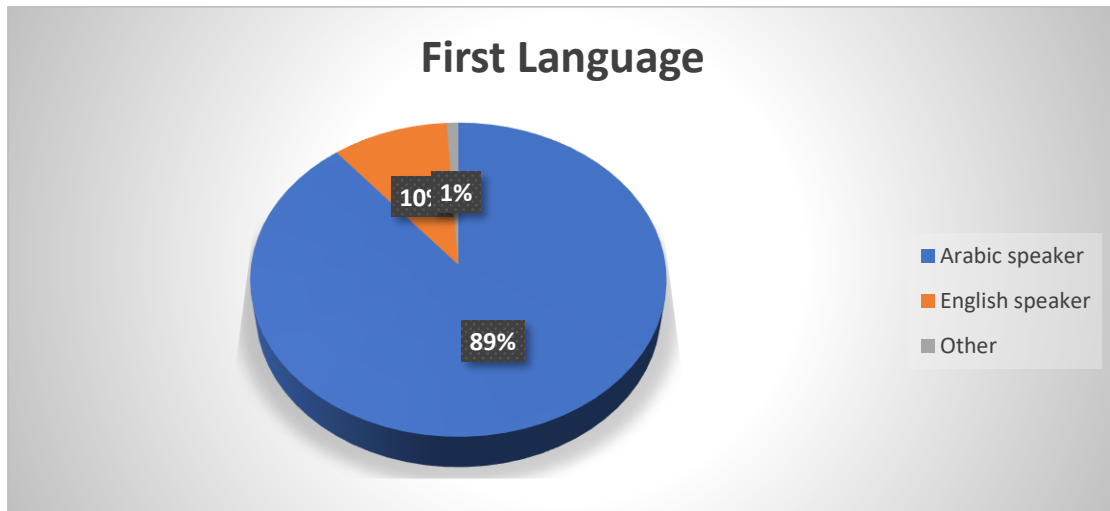
As seen from the above contrastive cultural analysis, the difficulty of translating Qur'an figures of speech is compounded by finding a cultural equivalent with the relatively same connotations, implications and all shades of meaning while explicating the cultural references.

3.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

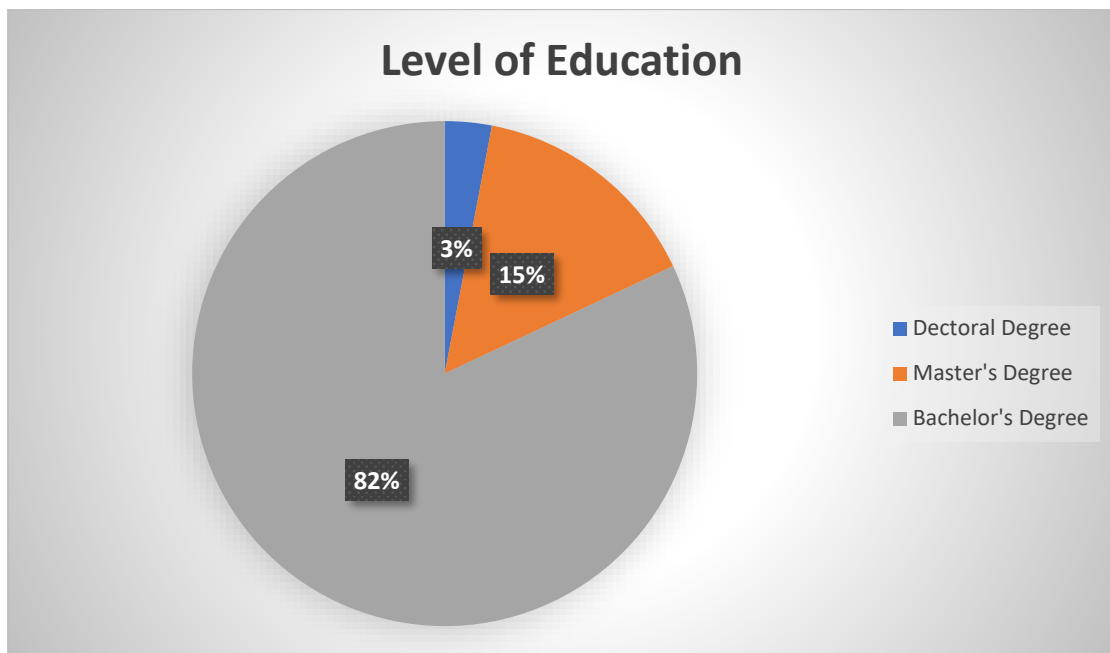
As mentioned in the introduction, this research hypothesizes and argues that target English readers can best interpret and comprehend the Qur'an parables correctly through rendering, at least, similar cultural sense and emotive effect as that relayed to the original Arabic readers, to formulate relatively similar interpretations in both languages.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 6) adopted in this research, as a means of collecting reliable and accurate data, tests the reader's comprehension, by finding out the most and least comprehensible Qur'an translations, in order to deduce the reasons for the incomprehensibility of the meaning of the selected four translations (see Appendices 2-5) of the Surah (see Appendix 1) and to propose the ideal strategies to overcome such challenges. To this end, see the following graphs and charts. The following graphs clearly illustrate the questionnaire sample:

Graph 3.1: Respondents' first language.



Graph 3.2: Respondents' level of education.



The above two graphs illustrate that the majority of respondents are Arabic speakers and bachelor students. Nonetheless, since all respondents are from Effat University, they usually have good background knowledge of English to be able to answer the questionnaire appropriately.

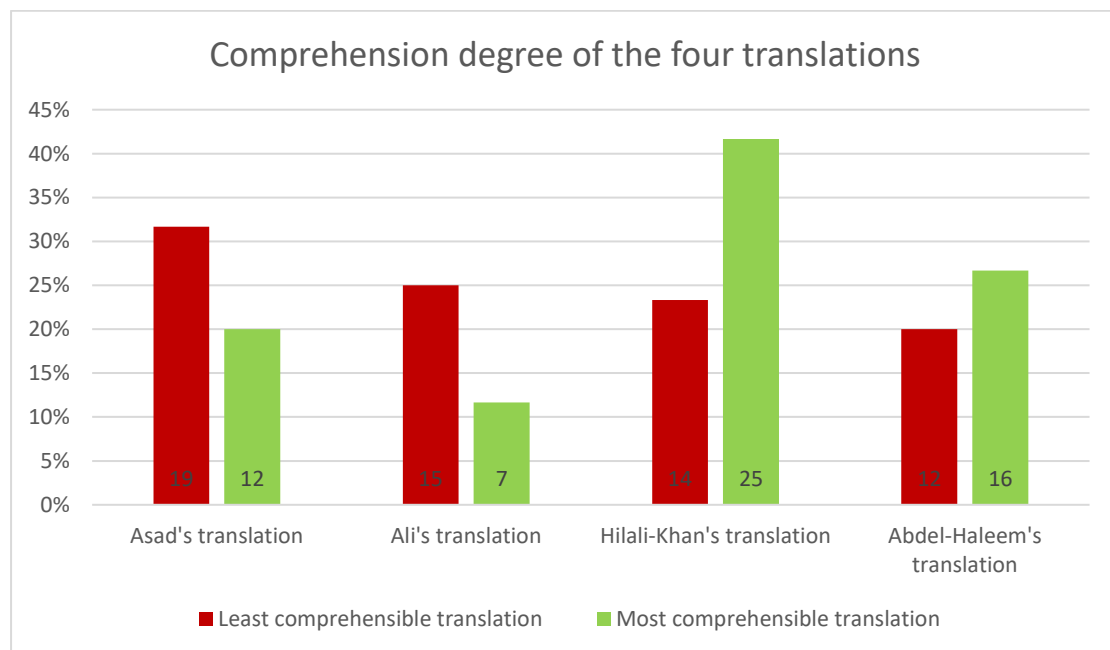
To fulfill the study's objective, the following four charts statistically analyze the rate of the respondents' overall comprehension, then the research will descriptively examine the results of the questionnaire, by comparing the four translations selected,

namely Asad's, Ali's, Hilali-Khan's, and Abdel-Haleem's translations (see chapter 2). Afterwards the research will objectively offer suggestions for a successful translation for each extract analyzed. This proposed successful rendering is freed from literal translation and vagueness to bridge the cultural gap, minimize translation loss and maximize comprehension.

Table 3.2: Simile question of the questionnaire (see Appendix 6)

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
<p>وَإِنْ يَسْتَعْجِلُوا يُعَاثِرُوا بِمَاءِ <u>كَالْمُهْلِ</u> يَنْشَوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا (29)</p>	<p>... and if they beg for water, they will be given water [hot] like molten lead, which will scald their faces</p>	<p>... if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces</p>	<p>... And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces.</p>	<p>... If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten metal, scalding their faces.</p>

Chart 3.1: The respondents' answers of the extracted Qur'an simile.



The above chart shows the most comprehensible and thus accurate translation, according to the respondents of the questionnaire, is Hilali-Khan's translations by 42% (or exactly 25 respondents) unlike Ali's translation which only 12% of the participants claimed to have clearly understood the message thereof. Whereas the least comprehended translations among the other two, as seen above, are Asad's and Ali's translation by 32% (or 19 respondents) and 25 % (or 15 respondents) respectively.

As illustrated in the above chart, the participants best understood Hilali-Khan's rendering 'like boiling oil' of the ST simile 'كالمهل', that is most culturally accurate according to authoritative Islamic interpretations. Therefore, the below ideal translation, proposed by the researcher, is closest to Hilali-Khan's translation (i.e. rendering the same translated simile). Example 1 of 'Simile' under Qualitative data analysis discussed the strategies adopted in the four translations in detail.

The research suggests an ideal translation that can be best comprehensible, culturally accurate and communicative of the verse 29:

ST: وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ (29)

Suggested TT: And if they beg for help [relief of rainwater], they will be granted [burning] water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces ...

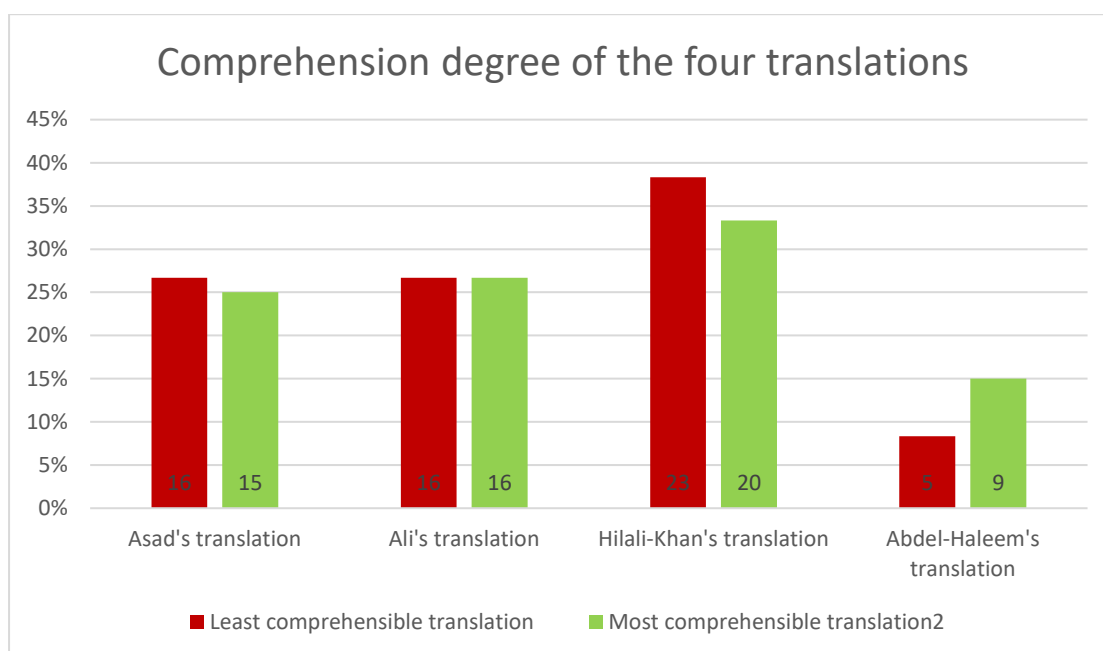
Through the contrastive analysis in the below qualitative data analysis, none of the five translators added the cultural nuances (that is, the implicit cultural equivalent 'relief of rainwater' of the ST verb 'يستغيثوا') nor added the implicit satirical effect of granting 'burning' water. This rendering can only be achieved by adequately employing lexical expansion procedure (i.e. explication through squared notes) to domesticate the culturally foreignizing concepts for the TR, and thus communicate the ST with the TR.

Table 3.2: Metonymy question of the questionnaire.

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
وَأَحْيَطُ بِئَمْرِهِ فَاصْبِرْ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا ... (42)	18:42 And [thus it happened:] his fruitful gardens were	42. So his fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with	42. So his fruits were encircled (with ruin). And he remained	42And so it was: his fruit was completely

encompassed [by ruin], and there he was, wringing his hands over all that he had spent on that [...]	ruin), and he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spent [...]	clapping his hands with sorrow over what he had spent upon it, [...]	destroyed, and there he was, wringing his hands over what he had invested in it, [...]
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Chart 3.2: The respondents' answers of the extracted Qur'an metonymy.



The above chart shows the most comprehended translation, according to the questionnaire's participants, is Hilai-Khan's translations (by 20 respondents). Whereas, strikingly, the least comprehended translation among the other three, as seen above, is also Hilai-Khan's translations (by 23 respondents). Thus, this calls into question the reliability of the questionnaire in obtaining accurate results. What can also be noticeable is that the other three translations have relatively similar percentages (similar height of columns) of the least and most comprehended translations

These two conflicting views may be due to the fact that the particular extracted verse translated by the five translators, especially by Hilali & Khan, of the metonymical ST phrase **يقطب كفيه** (e.g. "clapping his hands with sorrow", "wringing his hands", etc.) are not culturally accurate nor rhetorically effective. However, Hilali & Khan are the

only ones who added the explicit metonymical meaning 'with sorrow', thus making their translation most comprehensible, though not accurate.

This proves that the translator's task is not confined to transferring the surface meaning but also the deep figurative meaning, in order to bridge the gap between ST and TR, particularly when target readers belong to a different cultural background from source readers.

Although none of the respondents suggested an alternative translation, the following TT is the research's proposed translation that is supposedly completely comprehensible:

ST: (42) وَأَجْبَطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنْفَقَ فِيهَا

Suggested TT: And [thus] his fruits [and wealth] were encompassed [by ruin], and there he was, **clasping and turning his hands** [with regret] over all that he had spent on it ...

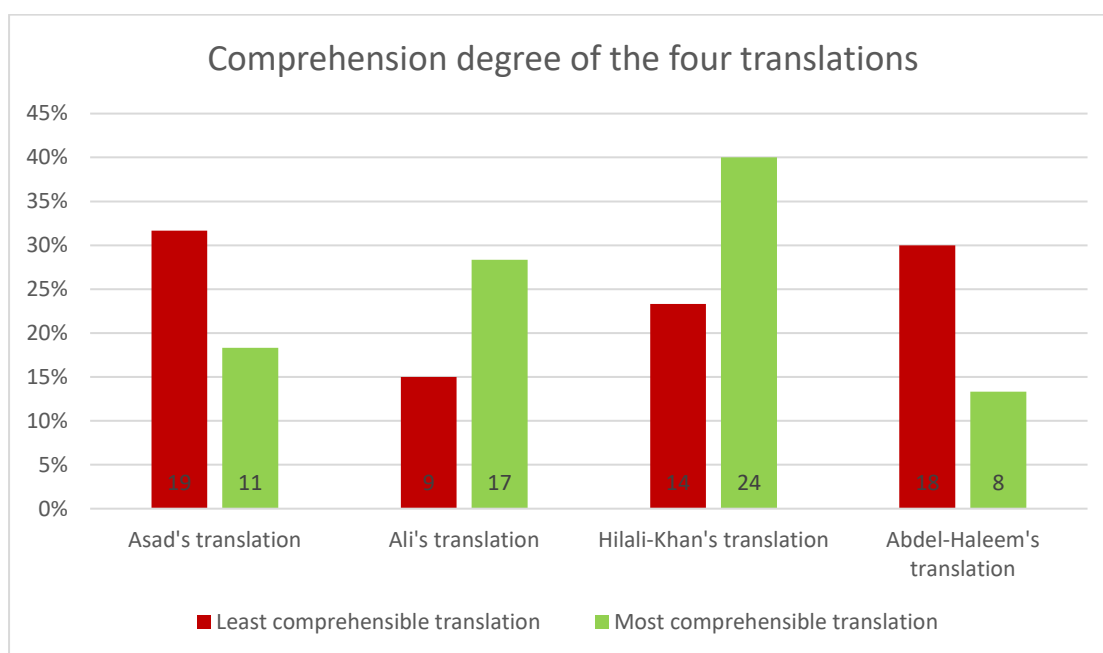
Therefore, the squared notes and the closest cultural equivalent 'clasping and turning' of the ST culture-specific verb *يُقَلِّبُ* explicate the intended meaning and fill, though partially, the cultural gap in order to make the reader fully aware of the cultural subtitles and correctly visualize the rhetorical mental image in the same way as that visualized by the original reader.

Table 3.3: Synecdoche question of the questionnaire.

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
وَوُضِعَ <u>الْكِتَابُ</u> فَتَرَى <u>الْمُجْرِمِينَ</u> مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ (49)	18:49 And the record everyone's deeds] will be laid open; and thou wilt behold the guilty filled with dread at what [they see] therein	49. And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed (before you); and thou wilt see the sinful in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein	And the Book (one's Record) will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the Oneness of Allah, and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allah), and you will see the Mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.) ,	49 The record of their deeds will be laid open and you will see the guilty , dismayed at what they contain

		fearful of that which is (recorded) therein.	
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Chart 3.3: The respondents' answers of the extracted Qur'an synecdoche.



The above chart shows the most comprehended translation, according to the respondents of the questionnaire, is Hilali-Khan's translations by 40% (or 24 respondents). Whereas, the least comprehended translations among the other two, as seen above, is Asad's followed by Abdel-Haleem's translation (32% and 30% respectively).

Unlike Hilali-Khan's intelligible translation and successful strategy of elaborating on the intended contextual meaning between brackets, the most probable reason for the incomprehensibility of Asad's translation might be because of his use of archaic words, such as 'thou wilt behold'. On the other hand, the possible reason for the incomprehensibility of Abdel-Haleem's translation is his non-contextual rendering that makes his TT ambiguous and misleading. Consequently, a reader who has no or little previous knowledge of the Qur'an or Islam is likely to fail to clearly understand the translated verse.

Although none of the participants suggested an alternative translation, the following is the study's proposed translation through employing the suggested ideal lexical expansion strategies and communicative approach:

ST: (49) وَوَضِعَ الْكِتَابَ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ

Suggested TT: And **the Book [of one's Deeds]** will be placed, and you will see **the *Mujrimeen* [criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.]**, fearful of what is [recorded] therein.

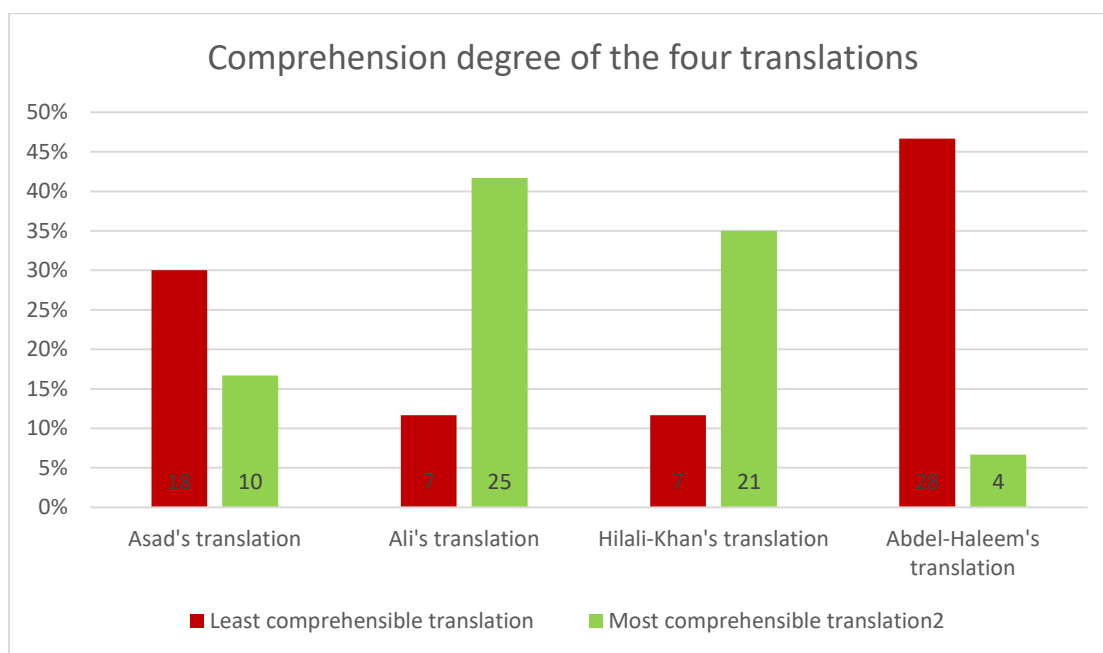
This translation is closely similar to Hilali-Khan's because of their successful strategy and communicative approach, which is thoroughly discussed above in example 4 under Synecdoche.

Table 3.4: Metaphor question of the questionnaire.

Figurative Verse	Asad	Ali	Hilali-Khan	Abdel-Haleem
... وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةَ سَادِسْتُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ. [22]	18:22 ... while others will say, "Five, with their dog as the sixth of them" - idly guessing at something of which they can have no knowledge	... (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, - doubtfully guessing at the unknown; (2359) ²⁴	... (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen	22 ... others say, 'They were five, and the dog made six' guessing in the dark

²⁴ The controversy in later ages raged about the numbers of the Sleepers: were they three of five or seven? People answered nor from knowledge, but from conjecture. The point was immaterial: the real point was the spiritual lesson.

Chart 3.4: The respondents' answers of the extracted Qur'an metaphor.



The above chart shows the most comprehended translations, according to the respondents of the questionnaire, are of Ali's followed by Hilali-Khan's translations (42% and 35% respectively). Whereas the least comprehended translations among the other two, as seen above, are of Abdel-Haleem's followed by Asad's translation (47% and 30% respectively).

Unlike Ali's and Hilali-Khan's culturally equivalent rendering, Asad's lengthy translation of the brief rhetorical ST phrase *رجما بالغيب* makes his translation structurally inaccurate and thus fairly incomprehensible, whereas Abdel-Haleem's mistranslation of the culture-specific ST phrase results in possible misunderstanding and thus misinterpreting the involved verse, because of the translator's lack of accuracy, metaphorical effectiveness, and communicativeness.

As suggested by one participant, Ali's rendering 'guessing at the unknown' is indeed the most accurate rendering of the ST metaphorical phrase, though closely

similar to Hilali-Khan's rendering 'guessing at the unseen'. Therefore, the following is an ideal translation suggested by the researcher that most resembles Ali's translation:

ST: ... وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ. [22]

Suggested TT: ... (others) say, **idly guessing at the unknown**, they were five, the dog being the sixth.

In conclusion, the TR, who might not be acquainted with the source culture and may not be conscious of the various dimensions of meaning involved, will be confused or misguided in understanding the culture-specific figurative verse in question, unless aided by extra supplementary details to make the TL more cognitively comprehensible to the TR. Due to cultural discrepancies between English and Arabic, therefore, the translated text should be accompanied by communicative clues, through lexical expansion procedures, as Pym (2005) argues, when the TR does not share cultural and contextual assumptions.

3.3 Findings and Results

As a result of the above quantitative and qualitative analysis, the following distinguishes the analyzed four translations separately and then contrastively, in light of the study's objective.

Asad's TT1

As noticed from the above analysis, this highly eloquent translation contains useful, though sometimes unreliable background information about Qur'an contexts and even provide exhaustive footnotes on various Qur'an themes, according to Khaleel Mohammad (2005). On some occasions, Asad employs archaic language to reflect and reserve, though partly, the complexity and formal tone of the ST.

Footnotes, squared notes and paraphrasing are among the most extensively adopted strategies of Asad's translation. These successful strategies are appropriately adopted by him when the SL term is culturally remote from the TR, and his footnotes tend to explain allusions, cultural references, and historical background. On the other hand, his extensive use of square brackets and detailed footnotes are sometimes

unnecessary and often too long, in some cases exceeding a page, which interrupts the smooth flow of reading the actual translation.

Since there are many allegories in the main four parables of the Surah, the allegorical verses are explicitly highlighted only in Asad's translation (e.g. see verses 9 and 68).

Ali's TT2

As for Ali's translation, he most often rules out literal translation and opts for semantic or communicative approach. Though he avoids glosses within the translated text, he offers a short introduction to each Surah and brief footnotes almost for each verse to elaborate on the overall intended message in his footnotes.

As seen from the above tables, his bracketed notes are kept to an absolute minimum, supplied only when there is absolute need. Mohammed (2005) points out that while Ali's translation still remains in publication, it has lost influence because of its dated language and the appearance of more recent works whose publication and distribution the Saudi government has also sought to subsidize. In the preface to his book, he asserts that the aim of his translation is to convey a glimpse of the rhetorical perfection and uniqueness of the Qur'an. To achieve such an aim, Ali points out that he explored Western culture without losing sight of his Eastern heritage, and so he wrote:

I have collected books and materials for it. I have visited places, undertaken journeys notes, sought the society of men in order to equip myself for the task. Sometimes I considered it too stupendous for me – the double task of understanding the original, and reproducing its nobility, its beauty, its poetry, its grandeur, and its sweet practical reasonable application to everyday experience. (1946: x)

Hilali & Khan's TT3

This eloquent vivid translation keeps scrupulously and meticulously close to the original by preserving similar stylistic form, rhetorical content and closest cultural reference, in order to give the TR an impression and spirit of the original text. Remarkably succeeding in recapturing some of the majesty and rhetorical force of the

original, TT3 is in my opinion, comparatively, as the most fluent, comprehensible and communicative translation.

Explanatory bracketed notes, transliteration accompanied by bracketed note, explication, paraphrasing and addition are among the most frequently adopted lexical expansion procedures in TT3 to achieve a better understanding and produce accurate meanings of figurative verses. To clarify the ambiguity that might result from transliteration, they resort to bracketing to further clarify the term in question, though might distract readers and disrupt the flow and fluency of style. The adopted Qur'an exegeses (i.e. the added contextual information) are taken from *Tafsirs* of Al-Qurtubi, Al-Tabari, and mainly from Ibn Kathir's.

Although their work lacks exhaustive explanatory footnotes and commentaries, it is free of instances of mistranslation and loose expressions. However, although some readers are distracted by the extensive notes in the body of the TT, rather than in footnotes accompanying the translation, this translation is certainly commendable for maximally conveying the cultural message with the closest rhetorical force, enhancing comprehension and interaction between the TR and the ST. This may stem from the fact that they have previous knowledge of the Qur'an and Arab culture having lived in the Arab world.

Abdel-Haleem's TT4

As mentioned in his book, Abdel-Haleem relied on a number of early Qur'an translators, during his translation, mainly on Asad's translations, which is noticeable since TT1 and TT4 are roughly similar in the choice of words. Unlike Asad's communicative translation, Abdel-Haleem prefers a literal rendering, using a simple modern choice of words without resorting to footnotes or intext notes, which obviously restrict its usefulness for an uninitiated reader and promote research of the actual TT. Notes and commentaries are kept to an absolute minimum in order "not to burden" the TR, thus "only short introductions to the suras have been supplied" (2005: xxxv).

This new translation of the Qur'an is written in contemporary language, suggesting that Abdel-Haleem's main focus is attempting to render the Qur'an accessible to a contemporary readership, though prioritizing readability over accuracy

and adequacy. In the preface to his book, he stresses his intention is to clarify and simplify the TT by avoiding archaic language that obscures meaning, in order to make his translation "accessible to everyone who speaks English" (xxix); he also adds:

In preparing this translation the intention was to produce easily readable, clear contemporary English, as free as possible from the Arabism and archaism that marked some previous translations, while remaining true to the original Arabic text. (xxxvi)

This new translation of the Qur'an is written in contemporary English that remains faithful to the meaning and spirit of the original. Abdel Haleem includes notes that explain geographical and historical allusions. His introduction refers to the history of the Qur'an and examines its structure and stylistic features. Abdel-Haleem (xxix) clarifies the aim of his translation:

to go further than previous works in accuracy, clarity, flow, and currency of language. It is written in modern, easy style, avoiding where possible the use of cryptic language or archaisms that tend to obscure meaning. The intention is to make the Qur'an accessible to everyone who speaks English, Muslims or otherwise.

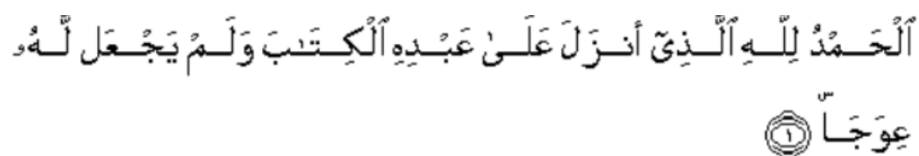
As analyzed above in a number of occurrences, Abdel-Haleem's translation is full of transpositions (shifting word order), unpardonable omissions (omitting sensitive details), unaccountable liberties (without bracketing the added supplementary details) and unjustifiable mistranslations (faulty rendering of the cultural intended meaning), which cause serious alteration and distortion of the intended message of the ST.

This stems from the fact that his literal rendering produced an easily readable style at the expense of the intended meaning. By the same token, the technical culture-specific lexical terms were translated literally, rendering the surface meaning and ignoring the implicit cultural references, which make some of the translated verses inaccurate and ambiguous to the English reader. In other words, the translator failed to achieve the primary goal of translating the Qur'an which is delivering the intended meaning and effect as accurately and intelligibly as possible.

In terms of generally contrasting the four translations, the findings suggest that the four selected English versions of the Qur'an seem to have fallen short, at least on one occasion, of conveying the exact intended meaning and effect of Qur'an similes, metonymies, synecdoches, and metaphors. Although the study suggests Hilali-Khan's TT3 as the most successful among the other three translations, it cannot be claimed to be perfectly rendered, because they merely produce an improved TT that transfers the intended meaning and rhetorical effect more successfully than the other analyzed translations.

As can be noticed, Asad's, Ali's and Abdel-Haleem's translations (i.e. TT1, TT2, and TT4) do not accompany the original Arabic text. This can be considered an advantage since it allows Muslims to take these English versions anywhere without having Wudu', or ablution, nor having to worry about ritual protections for the sacred Arabic text. Moreover, TT1 and TT2, unlike the other two translations, accompany commentaries with their translation.

Ideally, therefore, the research suggests publishing a translation of the meaning of the Qur'an while accompanying it with the original Arabic text, brief commentaries, and, if possible, the transliteration of each verse of the Qur'an (such as illustrated in the below image). This image shows a recently published book of Ali's translation, Arabic text and transliteration, while excluding the commentaries. Along similar lines, the book would ideally accompany an electronic link for a user-friendly e-book of the same version in order to provide the TR the freedom to choose which text to include and which to exclude to facilitate maximum comprehension without impairing the smooth flow of reading, depending on the readership preferences.



1. Alhamdu lillahi allathee anzala AAala AAabdihi alkitaba walam yajAAal lahu AAiwajan

1. Praise be to Allah, Who hath sent to His Servant the Book, and hath allowed therein no Crookedness:

To sum up the study's results, the translations of the meaning of the Qur'an, however accurate or adequate, convey merely part of the uniqueness and grandeur of the Qur'an; and fulfill only faintly the main goal of Qur'an translation. The primary aim of translating the Qur'an is to reproduce a similar intended meaning, because it is impossible to render an identical meaning, and "an analogous effect" (Tawfik, 2012: 44) so that target receivers understand the TT in a similar way, because of the impossibility of having the exact same way as the source receivers understood the ST. Achieving such an aim will be further elaborated on in the following.

3.4 Recommendations and Suggestions

Due to the pressing need for an accurate and clear Qur'an translation, academic research and constant revisions must be carried out in this domain. Muslim researchers who are knowledgeable about the Qur'an and have mastery of both English and classical Arabic should concentrate on studying existing translations, and attempt to tackle their shortcomings and limitations, to produce a reliable translation that is semantically clear, culturally accurate and easily intelligible.

This also requires finding competent translators and valid strategies for the process of translation. Since this thesis aims to contribute to overcoming the weaknesses of the four translations out of more than 50 translations, the following suggests some well-grounded strategies and approaches to improve the above highlighted shortcomings and failures in the analyzed four renditions.

Facilitative interpretive translation and communicative exegetic translation are two main approaches that are suggested to be the most appropriately adequate for Qur'an parables in particular, by means of domesticating the implicit figurative meaning through authorized exegesis and lexical expansion procedures. The following will highlight these procedures in further detail.

First, transliteration accompanied by explanation or definition is an effective lexical expansion procedure to avoid incomprehensibility as the TR may not be well versed in the SL terms (Alwazna, 2014). This technique is employed in either of the three cases (Alwazna, 2014):

1. If the SL term has already been 'culturally borrowed' by the TL, i.e. lexicalized in the TL dictionary, e.g. Allah

2. If the meaning of the SL term is fully understood from the context.
3. If accompanied by definition and/or explanation.

Ideally, the transliteration technique should be exercised by adding a definition or explanation to the transliterated term, in order to familiarize readers with its meaning and cultural concept implied by the term concerned. This supplementary detail can be best placed between squared notes after the transliterated term.

Second, squared notes, as opposed to bracketed notes, indicate the translator's words to explicate the contextual implicit meaning. Many expressions in the Qur'an have a figurative meaning which extends beyond their lexical meaning, thus creating different linguistic and extra-linguistic gaps in translation. Therefore, Qur'an translators must consider verses within their contexts rather than in isolation in order to reproduce the intended pragmatic and aesthetic rhetorical effect and tone. In other words, the translator has to be aware of the fact that the meaning of a given word changes depending on the context; hence, the importance of adopting squared notes to explicate the contextual meaning.

Finally, footnotes are of prime importance, though should not be exaggerated; rather they should be only resorted to in case other strategies are invalid or insufficient enough. For example, the research suggests this strategy should be adopted the first time a problematic technical term appears and this particular footnote is referred to every time the term reappears throughout the given Surah. Footnotes should provide the TR with cultural background information about the Arabian Peninsula, Prophet Mohammad, Islam, Arabs' customs, traditions, etc.

Other than placing the extra contextual details either within the body of the TT, or in footnotes, Qur'an translators tend to, in some cases, place the supplementary TL-oriented detail in both places to further ensure TR comprehension. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier and discussed above, the literal translation strategy should be avoided in most cases, because it often results in an awkward and unnatural style and may result in transferring entirely different meaning from the meaning of the original text; thus, this distorts and deviates from the intended meaning and fails to achieve the main aim of Qur'an translation.

To be more specific, the TL message should mirror as closely as possible the SL's intended message to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap between the two languages.

In light of the findings of this study's hybrid approach, the researcher suggests the following recommendations and actionable advice for future translators:

3.4.1 Translator of the Qur'an

Since the Qur'an translator is a mediator between the ST and TR (Tawfik: 16-18), s/he should strive for equivalent meaning and effect, as much as possible, to reproduce, though faintly, this matchless text with universal significance. Hence, it can be said, as indicated in Abdul Rauf's (2001) work, that there are certain criteria that must be present in the translator of the Qur'an, such criteria stress that Qur'an translators should:

- a) have a sound linguistic competence in both languages;
- b) have an advanced knowledge of classical Arabic syntax and rhetoric;
- c) study and refer to the major authorized Qur'an exegeses, namely linguistic; intertextual, jurisprudence, and historical exegeses (Abdul-Raof, 2013);
- d) be honest, objective and free from any religious bias or prejudice;
- e) be fully aware of both SL and TL cultures;
- f) rely not only on bilingual dictionaries, but also consult reliable Muslim interpreters and scholars;
- g) produce a sense-for-sense translation without sacrificing the communicative value of the original for the sake of lexical accuracy;
- h) understand the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships of the complex ST;
- i) take into account the discourse, ST message, and the target readership;
- j) achieve consistency through adopting the same strategy for each problematic term or phrase encountered; and
- k) provide the TR with a detailed introduction, squared notes, and footnotes.

The translator has to fulfill all the above in order to communicate the ST to the TR, to make correct decisions during the translation process, and to provide an accurate meaning of a given problematic figurative verse. Therefore, it would be best if more than one competent translator, as in the case of Hilali & Khan, join together to help each other interpret the meaning of the Qur'an, translate the meaning into English according to the interpretation of the most authoritative Muslim exegetes, and then find a natural sounding and easily comprehensible English text.

Concluding Remarks

Quantitative data analysis statistically discussed the extent to which respondents claimed to comprehend the translations in question, and descriptively discussed to what extent the hypothesis underlining this questionnaire is accurate. After looking at the answers of the respondents, this research suggested a translation for each of the four figurative verses extracted from Surat al-Kahf.

Qualitative data analysis, on the other hand, contrastively and culturally discussed the peerless Qur'an rhetorical divine beauty and its imperfect four translations, highlighting few instances of translation losses. This indicates that almost all the sampled renditions of the Qur'an suffer from shortcomings and limitations, involving either translational linguistic loss, cultural loss and/or loss in economy.

As can be noticed from the qualitative analysis, some translators are more faithful to the original, while others are looser with their rendering of the ST into English. In the researcher's point of view, the translator has to flexibly move from one approach and procedure to the other, rather than opting for one extreme option over the other, to achieve maximum communication depending on the translational issue involved. Thus, the ideal translation is the one that strikes a balance between the two extremes of domestication and foreignization as well as fidelity and fluency as much as possible depending on the translational situation at hand.

Due to cultural discrepancies, cultural figurative items have equivalence between languages to differing degrees. Sometimes English share the same corresponding Qur'an figurative language, because the figure of speech is universal thus posing no issue in translation. Usually, figures of speech share the same conceptual value, while different lexical expressions are used in both language, thus resulting in slight translation loss. More often, however, Qur'an figures of speech neither share the same conceptual value nor are they lexicalized in the TL, thus posing a huge challenge for translators to find the closest equivalence. This stems from the fact that western European culture of the English-speaking community finds it difficult to grasp the parabolic senses or the figurative language that is extensively used in the Noble Qur'an, especially the four parables in Surat al-Kahf.

This study takes the view that a literal approach often leads to a stilted translation, because the literal meaning lacks the communicative value, particularly when dealing with figures of speech. However, as noticed above, figures of speech with universal significance do not pose any translational issues, since they have adequate TL equivalence that can be clearly understood by the TR due to their commonly-accepted semantic meaning.

Figurative meaning is far more comprehensive and effective than literal or denotative meanings; an ideal translation, therefore, would be one that preserves both the surface as well as the underlying meaning of the message of the verses, semantically, syntactically and culturally. This can be successfully achieved by adopting facilitative interpretive and communicative exegetic approaches through lexical expansion procedures. Advantages of employing these procedures are to bridge the cultural gap of culturally-bound terms, to domesticate the complex meaning of the Qur'an-specific expressions, to interpret the cultural connotations, and thus to familiarize readership with the ST culture.

Conclusion

Suffice it to say, the study presents, examines and analyzes the challenges encountered and the strategies adopted to surmount the problematic Qur'an figurative language into English. In terms of the research's objectives, the study attempts to assess the shortcomings of four selected Qur'an translations (through a contrastive cultural analysis in a qualitative data analysis), and to measure readers' comprehension (through a specially-designed questionnaire and a quantitative data analysis to rate the respondents' understanding). The main aim of the adopted hybrid methodology, therefore, is to propose ideal approaches and procedures for surmounting such challenging cultural figurative items in the English translations of Surat al-Kahf.

Needless to say, Qur'an translation aims to give the opportunity to non-Arab Muslims and non-Muslims alike to comprehend the precise divine messages of the Qur'an, to reflect upon it and take guidance from it, to capture both the heart and mind of addressees and to evoke, as much as possible, an emotive response from the illocutionary force found in the ST rhetorical language. Therefore, the ultimate goal of Qur'an translation is to preserve, as closely as possible, the intended (figurative) message and (rhetorical) effect as that relayed on the Arabic receiver, by taking cultural consideration into account.

Given that Qur'an translation is of sensitive nature and replete with cultural issues, translators should exert every effort to use the optimal strategy. Communicative exegetic approach (or facilitative interpretive approach) is the research's proposed ideal approach to adopt while translating the meaning of the Qur'an, through lexical expansion procedures (i.e. explication, footnotes, addition, transliteration plus bracketed notes, and paraphrasing), in order to explain cultural nuances, elaborate implicit meanings, and domesticate cultural concepts that are alien to the TR.

These procedures must be adopted to render the underlying meaning through involving the various interpretations of the Noble Qur'an offered by authorized exeges, in an objective approach that is free from any religious biases. In addition, these procedures are particularly adopted when target readers lack cultural and contextual knowledge, and when the readability and comprehensibility of the translation are more important than accurately preserving the original wording. By utilizing lexical expansion procedures, the translator of the Noble Qur'an explicates

cultural implicatures, signifies additional phrases, paraphrases, adds exegetic extra details, and explains or defines the transliterated terms.

In so doing, translators increase readability, enhance comprehensibility of the TR, bridge cultural discrepancies, minimize translation loss, maximize communication between the ST and the TR, and equip the TR with the contextual intended information necessary to make the correct interpretation. The most successful in adopting these approaches, thus the most successful translation in rendering the meaning of the Qur'an, is Hilali and Khan's translation. However, all the four Qur'an translations suffer from inherent limitations and shortcomings and inevitable translation loss, because the Noble Qur'an is superior to any other language, hence it is the eternal miracle of Muslims.

As explicated above, this product-oriented research deduced through the analysis of the collected qualitative and quantitative data that translators of Qur'an parables must be aware that they are cultural mediators rather than mere linguistic ones, because the translation process occurs between cultures rather than simply between languages. Qur'an translators should also bear in mind that translation loss is inevitable, because any translator of any language will fail to render the lofty language of the Noble Qur'an

Therefore, it is impossible to replicate the Noble Qur'an's unique literary form, match its linguistic and cultural nature, the superior eloquence and sound, the frequency of rhetorical devices, the level of content and informativeness, or equal the Noble Qur'an's conciseness and flexibility. So, when the Noble Qur'an is translated into another TL, although the general meaning becomes apparent, the actual miracle is lost.

Along similar lines, many prominent scholars stress that the Noble Qur'an is in many respects untranslatable and assert that no translation of the meaning of the Noble Qur'an will ever substitute the original Arabic text, hence the inimitability of the Noble Qur'an. Since only the meaning of the Noble Qur'an can be translated into other languages, Asad's, Ali's, Hilali-Khan's and Abdel-Haleem's translations are critically studied to discuss their strategies adopted in translating the Qur'an figures of speech, namely similes, metonymies, synecdoches and metaphors.

Studying the weaknesses of these four translators does not mean that this research is an attempt to devalue their translations. Despite great efforts made to

produce these translations, they still suffer from few linguistic and cultural translation shortcomings.

The Noble Qur'an, being the absolute Word of Allah, is very sensitive and extremely difficult to render its meanings and messages. Therefore, translators must be very careful in rendering the accurate intended meaning without altering anything; because a small mistake, or vague rendering might be disastrous as it may mislead many, leading to different interpretations.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study's theoretical and practical framework indeed widens the scope of understanding the strategies adopted to translate figurative language in Qur'an parables. In spite of all the concepts covered by the research, there are several limitations. As stated in the introductory section, the study has been confined only to strategies that surmount figurative languages which are culture-specific. The study is also limited to only Surat Al-Kahf. Due to the large number of English translations of the Noble Qur'an, it would be beyond the scope of this study to analyze all the existing versions. Therefore, only four of these versions have been chosen for the purpose of this study (see appendices).

Qur'an translation is considered "on the margins of the translation studies discipline" (Moir, 2009: 30). There is scarcity in studying the linguistic and rhetorical aspects of the meaning of the Noble Qur'an and their relation to translation studies, thus this field is in need of greater examination in translation studies.

Suggestions for Future Research

Due to the limitations stated above, several subsequent studies can be implemented to cover the areas which are not included in this research. One possible suggestion for future research would be the investigation of other problematic translational difficulties of the Noble Qur'an. An application of this study on the rest of the Noble Qur'an could also be explored in future research. Other versions of English translations of the Noble Qur'an are undoubtedly as important to be analyzed and examined through a quantitative and qualitative analysis that the nature of this research cannot pursue. The scope of this study, however, would not allow for such a comprehensive research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Informed Consent Form for Participation in Research

I consent to my participation in the research project entitled "*Translating Qur'an Parables in Surat al-Kahf: Contrastive Cultural Analysis of Figurative Language in the Noble Qur'an*". The purpose of the research project has been explained to me.

I understand that my participation in this project will involve being tested once. During my participation, I will be asked to provide detailed information about my understandability of the English versions of the Qur'an culture-specific figurative language, and my suggestions for an ideal rendering.

I understand that some of what I say during this study may be used in the analysis and writing of the final report (i.e. published research results).

I understand my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved at all times, and that the comments and responses to questions that I give will be reported in general (i.e. without reference to me). I will not suffer any negative consequences as a result of my participation in this research project.

I understand the interview transcripts will be safely stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the principle investigator. Computer documents and software that contain confidential records about research participants will be stored in a password-protected folder on the chief investigator's computer accessible only to her. Backup copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in her office.

I understand that I am free to withdraw and discontinue participation at any time.

I understand if I have any concerns about this research I can contact the chair of the Research Ethics Institutional Review Committee (REIRC) at Effat University.

Signed by:

.....

Date

Date: 20/2/2018

Dear Participant,

As part of my **MA thesis** in Translation Studies program at Effat University, this survey sheds light on the understandability of the English versions of the Qur'an culture-specific figurative language. It will evaluate your opinions and suggestions to arrive at a comprehensive quantitative data collection for my study, titled "Translating Qur'an Parables in Surat al-Kahf: Contrastive Cultural Analysis of Figurative Language in the Noble Qur'an".

Your voluntary participation will be highly appreciated, and you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes and all information provided will be confidential and anonymous. Besides, the information is solely used for the purpose of this study. A copy of the findings will be filed by my MTS supervisor Dr. Areeg Mohamed.

Your participation is highly valued and appreciated as it will help collect the information needed for thorough findings and results of my research. Thus, it would eventually benefit future translators of the Qur'an to produce an ideal intelligible book edition of the translation of the intended meaning of the Qur'an, that comprehensively conveys the linguistic, semantic as well as the cultural nuances.

For further details please contact:

Nadeen Al-wazani

MTS Student at Effat University

Email: naalwazani@effat.edu.sa

Phone Number: 0566142686

Are you an?

Arabic speaker	English speaker	Other
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What is your level of education?

Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctor's Degree
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Kindly read the **underlined translated figurative verses** carefully and answer the following for each extract:

- ✓ Select **the most comprehensive translation** (a, b, c, d), of the underlined figures of speech, that fully and intelligibly renders the message.
- ☒ Select **the least comprehensive translation** (a, b, c, d), of the underlined figures of speech, that fails to render the message adequately.
- ❖ **Suggest an ideal translation** (if possible) that respects the TL norms and conveys the SL cultural nuances

A. Simile:

(29) إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِثُّوا يُعَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ... (29)

- a) We have readied a fire whose billowing folds will encompass them from all sides; and if they beg for water, they will be given water [hot] **like molten lead**, which will scald their faces [...] (Asad's translation)
- b) We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in: if they implore relief they will be granted water **like melted brass**, that will scald their faces [...] (Ali's translation)
- c) Verily, We have prepared for the *Zalimun* (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water, etc.) they will be granted water **like boiling oil**, that will scald their faces [...] (Hilali-Khan's translation)

- d) We have prepared a Fire for the wrongdoers that will envelop them from all sides. If they call for relief, they will be relieved with water **like molten metal**, scalding their faces [...] (Abdel-Halem's translation)

Your suggestion: -----
-----.

B. Metonymy

(42) وَأُحِيطَ بِتَمْرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى مَا أَنْفَقَ فِيهَا ...

- a) And [thus it happened:] his fruitful gardens were encompassed [by ruin], and there he was, **wringing his hands over** all that he had spent on that [...] (Asad's translation)
- b) So his fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with ruin), and he remained **twisting and turning his hands over** what he had spent on his property, [...] (Ali's translation)
- c) So his fruits were encircled (with ruin). And he remained **clapping his hands with sorrow** over what he had spent upon it, [...] (Hilali-Khan's translation)
- d) And so it was: his fruit was completely destroyed, and there he was, **wringing his hands** over what he had invested in it, [...] (Abdel-Haleem's translation)

Your suggestion: -----
-----.

C. Synecdoche

(49) وَوَضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ ...

- a) 18:49 And **the record [of everyone's deeds]** will be laid open; and thou wilt behold **the guilty filled** with dread at what [they see] therein; [...] (Asad's translation)
- b) **49.** And **the Book (of Deeds)** will be placed (before you); and thou wilt see **the sinful** in great terror because of what is (recorded) therein; [...] (Ali's translation)
- c) **49.** And the **Book (one's Record)** will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the Oneness of Allah, and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the Oneness of

Allah), and you will see **the Mujrimun (criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.)**, fearful of that which is (recorded) therein. [...] (Hilali-Khan's translation)

- d) 49The **record of their deeds** will be laid open and you will see **the guilty**, dismayed at what they contain, [...] (Abdel-Haleem's translation)

Your suggestion: -----
-----.

D. Metaphor

(22) وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ

- a) others will say, "Five, with their dog as the sixth of them" - **idly guessing at something of which they can have no knowledge.** (Asad's translation)
- b) (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, - **doubtfully guessing at the unknown.** (Ali's translation)
- c) (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, **guessing at the unseen.** (Hilali-Khan's translation)
- d) others say, 'They were five, and the dog made six' **guessing in the dark.** (Abdel-Haleem's translation)

Your suggestion: -----
-----.

Thank you for participating