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## Impact of Semantic Loss in the Holy Quran with Reference to Yusuf Ali's and Marmaduke Pickthall's Translations of Al-Nur Surah

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### Abstract

This study aims to identify the impact of semantic loss in Ali's and Pickthall's translations by analyzing 15 CSTs from Al-Nur Surah.. It also investigates the causes behind this loss, which refers to the mistranslation in the source text which can lead to partial or complete loss. It also attempts to investigate to what extent Ali and Pickthall have succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence. The comparative textual analysis method was used to answer the research questions. The results show that there are some causes for semantic loss in Ali's and Pickthall's translations. Semantic loss in Ali's translation accounts for 40%, while Pickthall's loss accounts for 53.33%. The results show some causes for semantic loss, including culturally bound terms, and lack of knowledge of Arabic metaphorical expressions. The researchers recommend that translators of the Quran should be knowledgeable of the Quranic terms since the Quran is a genre which has specific beliefs, manners and cultural aspects. Also, the translators should understand the semantic relation between words and choose the adequate translation to avoid semantic loss. Translators should depend on exegesis books to know the reasons of revelation.

Keywords: Arabic /English translation, Cultural Specific Terms, Holy Quran, Semantic loss, Translation

### معرفة أثر الفقد في المعنى في ترجمة يوسف علي وبيكتال في سورة النور

#### الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أثر الخسارة في المعنى في ترجمة علي و بيكتال عن طريق اختيار 15 مصطلحاً ثقافياً من سورة النور وتهدف أيضاً لمعرفة الأسباب المؤدية لهذه الخسارة، و نقصد بالخسارة الدلالية وجود خطأ في الترجمة مما يؤدي الي خسارة في المعنى بشكل كلي أو بشكل جزئي .

وتحاول هذه الدراسة معرفة مدى تحقق التكافؤ الثقافي في ترجمة هذه المصطلحات. لذلك اتبع الباحثان منهجية تحليل النصوص المقارن لترجمتي علي وبيكتال . و تُظهر نتائج الدراسة وجود خسارة في المعنى في كلا الترجمتين ، فعلى سبيل المثال هنالك ما يعادل 40% خسارة في المعنى في ترجمة علي. أما بالنسبة لترجمة بكتال فقد قدرت الخسارة ب 53.33% .

كما تُظهر نتائج الدراسة أن الأسباب المؤدية للخسارة تتمحور في عدم معرفة بعض المصطلحات القرآنية وعدم الدراية الكاملة باللغة المجازية في القرآن الكريم. و في نهاية الدراسة يوصي الباحثان بأن مترجمي القرآن الكريم يجب أن يكونوا على دراية بالمصطلحات القرآنية التي تتضمن أفكار وحقائق تتعلق بالدين الإسلامي ، كما تُوصي المترجمين بالاعتماد على كتب التفسير لمعرفة أسباب النزول لبعض السور القرآنية من أجل إنتاج ترجمة صحيحة.

كلمات مفتاحية: الخسارة الدلالية، القرآن الكريم، المصطلحات الثقافية الخاصة، صعوبات الترجمة.

## **1. Introduction**

Translation is a means of transferring meaning including cultural aspects from one language to another. So, there is a strong relation between culture and translation. Translators should be good cultural mediators to avoid translation distortions. In our globalized world, translation interferes in every aspect of our life as it affects and is affected by many notions. One of the highly-sensitive and correlated notions associated with translation is culture. Culture is the accumulation of many things such as norms, habits, heritage, architecture, literature, history and religion. It could be visible in people's ways of life, clothes, style of speaking and worship rites, and also it could be invisible and rooted in people's minds, like their knowledge and their perspectives on specific things. This clearly echoes what Sapir (1949) said about culture "the inherited embodiment of both material and spiritual elements of people" (p.79). Newmark (1988) for example, defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (p.94), while Rohner (1984) sees it as 'a system of symbolic meanings that shape one's way of thinking'

The translator's job has become more difficult and challenging when he/she deals with religious texts that have a very different system, discourse and more specifically different register from that of every day's life discourse. Culture, as mentioned above, is one of the main challenges in religious translation like the translation of the Holy Quran. Translating the Holy Quran is considered a great challenge as many translators are unable to translate it correctly or appropriately due to so some difficulties such as lexical, linguistic or cultural problems.

## **2. Research Problem**

Translating the Holy Quran is not an easy task due to the lack of equivalence such as in the translation of the religious item "تَيْمَمُوا". This word does not have an equivalent in English translation. Specifically, the study tries to highlight the difficulties at the word level which face the two translators when translating the Holy Quran with reference to Al Nur Surah. Mainly, when translators try to translate some cultural specific items to English, mistranslation will occur due to not referring to the interpretations of the Holy Quran and not understanding Arabic linguistics.

## **3. Objectives of the study**

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Investigating semantic loss at the word level in the English interpretations of Al-Nur Surah as translated by Ali and Pickthall.
2. Identifying the types of semantic loss available in the two translations.
3. Examining the causes of semantic loss such as lexical, linguistic, as well as cultural loss.

#### **4. Significance of the study**

The study is of great importance to Translation Studies in general and to English-Arabic translation in particular, specifically, religious translation. This study also tries to achieve the following aims:

1. Investigating how Pickthall and Ali have tried to achieve cultural equivalence when translating Al-Nur Surah.
2. Identifying the impact of semantic loss in the translation of religious texts and how this loss can lead to distortion of meaning.
3. Suggesting proper translation strategies to use when dealing with cultural specific terms in the Holy Quran.

#### **5. Research Questions**

The study is expected to provide answers for the following questions:

1. What are the types of semantic loss reflected in Al-Nur Surah?
2. What are the main causes behind inadequate translations of Al-Nur Surah?
3. What are the appropriate strategies used in translating cultural specific terms in the Holy Quran with reference to Al- Nur Surah?

#### **6. Literature Review**

##### **6.1 The Translation of the Holy Quran**

The Holy Quran is the book of Allah which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to all humanity during 23 years. It consists of 30 parts and one hundred and fourteen surahs starting with "Al-fatiha" and ending with "Al-Nas". Those Qur'anic surahs are of two types: Meccan and Medinan.

Being "the miracle of Islam" (Al-Malik, 1995, p.17), the Quran focuses on different cultural aspects such as: norms, beliefs, habits and ethics. It is considered as a constitution for Muslims in the course of daily life, especially when they encounter problems in life among many other things related to running human life properly.

The need to translate the Holy Quran starts due to the growing number of Muslims in non-Arab communities; those Muslims have the right to understand the Holy Quran in their language. This

encourages scholars and translators to translate the Holy Quran. The translation of the Holy Quran started when some letters were sent by Prophet Mohammed by some of his messengers to non-Muslim rulers calling them to embrace Islam. Those letters usually contained some verses of the Quran and they were translated into the language of the rulers by the messenger who mastered the target language. The first translation of the Quran into English was made by Alexander Ross in 1649 (Haleem, 2005). Nowadays, we can read more than 80 translations of the Holy Quran (Tabrizi & Mahmud, 2013).

### 6.1.1 Difficulties in Translating the Holy Quran

Translating the Holy Quran is not an easy task due to the big differences between Arabic and English. The Holy Quran is full of figurative features such as: metonymy and metaphor. In the Holy Quran, metonymy is used for a purpose, as in:

( "Nuh : 11" و أرسلنا السماء عليكم مدرارا. )

For whom we poured out rain from the skies in abundance. (Yusuf Ali's translation, 2000).

Ali translated the word " السماء " to "skies" to refer to the abundance of rain. On the other hand, Arberry translated this verse to:

" and how we loosed heaven upon them in torrents... "

Arberry used literal translation but he did not express the metonymy found in this verse. Related to metonymy using metaphor in the Holy Quran is one of the main characteristics of Quranic texts to make the expression more powerful, as explained below:

" يا أيها الناس ان كنتم في ريب من البعث..... و ترى الأرض هامدة فإذا أنزلنا عليها الماء اهتزت و ربت و انبتت من كل زوج بهيج." (Al-Haj: 4)

"O mankind! if ye have a doubt about the Resurrection, .... and (further), thou seest the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells, and it puts forth every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs)". (Yusuf Ali's translation, 2000)

In this verse, Allah describes the earth after it rains as if it is a dead person but it will get rebirth after it is watered, so translator must use the communicative translation and avoid using literal translation. Here, the translator will come across difficulties when translating the Holy Quran such as linguistic and cultural difficulties. These differences pose a big challenge to translators, so they must be competent and knowledgeable enough to properly deal with both languages.

### 6.2 Empirical Studies on Semantic Loss

In his PhD thesis entitled "*Reasons for the Possible Incomprehensibility of Some Verses of Three Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Quran into English*", Al-Jabri (2008) examined the incomprehensibility of the translation of some verses of the Quran for English native speakers. The study also looked at the possible reasons for the failure to transfer the meaning of some verses of the Quran. Al-Jabri selected three translations for his study: Al-Hilali, Yusuf Ali, and Arthur Arberry and extracted some of their translations and put them in a questionnaire. He distributed the questionnaire among well-educated English people attempting to know to what extent the translations were comprehensible for them. For him, "the extent to which the extracts included in the questionnaire were incomprehensible was extremely shocking" (p. 237). He stated that the range of intelligibility of the translations was less than 5% because they were rendered in poor quality English. The main results that generate vagueness were: peculiar style, literal translations for some idioms and fixed expressions, cultural differences, the use of old-fashioned words, transliteration which do not convey any meaning to target readers, unusual orthography; the absence or misuse of punctuation marks and the excessive use of explanations between brackets.

Abdelaal and Rashid (2015) conducted a research entitled *Semantic Loss in the Holy Quran Translation with Special Reference to Surah Al-Waqiaa (Chapter of The Event Inevitable)*. The researchers investigate semantic loss in the translation of Surah Al-Waqiaa by Abdellah Yusuf Ali. In addition, the researchers examined the results behind the causes of loss depending on Baker's typology. They use the descriptive content analysis. The results showed that the causes of semantic loss were due to mistranslations, semantic complexity, vocabulary and culture.

In her study (2018) *Semantic Loss in Two English Translations of Surah Ya- Sin by Two Translators* Aslam investigates the semantic loss of translating Surah Ya-sin. The researcher chooses Yusuf Ali's and Arberry's translations of Surah Ya-sin. She uses the qualitative approach depending on Baker's typology in analyzing the data. The results of the study show that there is a partial loss of Ali's translation and complete loss of Arberry's translation. The main cause of this loss is linguistic deviation.

## **7. Methodology**

This research will employ the descriptive qualitative approach, while the main data instrument used will be the comparative textual analysis. The researchers will make a comparison between Ali's translation and Pickthall's translation of Al-Nur Surah, and investigate the strategies used in the two translations. The researchers will also depend on some specific dictionaries for the Quranic

verses such as: *Ibn Abbas' (1992) and Ibn Katheer's (1999)* to check the appropriateness of religious terms and make their decision regarding the acceptability of the translation of cultural specific terms. In addition, the researchers will consult the head of the Iftaa Committee (IC) at the Islamic University of Gaza to get his opinion on some religious issues.

### 8. Data Analysis

In this chapter, the researchers will start the discussion of some cultural-specific terms (CSTs) by tackling the main themes of Al-Nur Surah. This Surah discusses various themes that carry the same idea of protecting the Islamic society and building good people with good deeds. Besides, it provides rules to show the right way of Islam such as the issue of preventing adultery. Also, it refers to the Ifk incident and how hypocrites accuse Aisha (the prophet's wife) of committing adultery. Also, this Surah contains some verses which advise believing women to down their gaze and wear khimar (head-covering), and that men should down their gaze and not look at women. Calling for the stopping of prostitution, the Surah also points out how Arabs used to send their maidservants into prostitution to make money and exploit their children. The Surah also discusses the issue of taking permission before entering houses or before getting in parents' living room. This discussion will be followed by the translation of verses by the two translators: Ali and Pickthall. The researchers will also explain the definition or the meaning of these CSTs based mainly on two different interpretations: Ibn Abbas (1992) and Ibin Katheer (1999). They also will consult the head of the Iftaa Committee at IUG, Dr. Zeyad Miqdad, to get his opinion on some religious issues.

No. of Verse	Cultural Specific Terms	Ali's translation	Pickthall's translation
2	إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ	LAST DAY	LAST DAY
22	وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ	AND THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THEIR HOMES IN ALLAH'S CAUSE	FUGITIVES FOR THE CAUSE_OF ALLAH
23	الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْعَافِيَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ	CHASTE	CARELESS
31	وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُجُوبِهِنَّ	THEY SHOULD DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS	TO DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS
31	أَيْمَانِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ	POSSESS YOUR RIGHT	SLAVES
31	التابعين غير أولي الاربة	MALE SERVANTS FREE OF PHYSICAL NEEDS	MALE ATTENDANCE WHO LACK VIGOR
32	وَأَنْكَحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ	NO TRANSLATION	NO TRANSLATION
36	فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذُنَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيَذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ	MORNINGS AND EVENINGS	MORN AND EVENING

No. of Verse	Cultural Specific Terms	Ali's translation	Pickthall's translation
	وَالْأَصَال		
37	رَجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ	THE PRACTICE OF REGULAR CHARITY - THE DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYES WILL BE TRANSFORMED (IN A WORLD WHOLLY NEW),	PAYING TO THE POOR THEIR DUE - A DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYEBALLS WILL BE OVERTURNED
52	الْفَائِزُونَ	WIN (IN THE END)	VICTORIOUS
57	لِبُئْسِ الْمَصِيرِ	EVIL REFUGE	HAPLESS JOURNEY'S END
58	وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ	WHO HAVE NOT COME OF AGE	WHO HAVE NOT COME TO PUBERTY
60	أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ	COLLECTIVE ACTION	COMMON ERRAND
63	تُصِيبُهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ	TRIAL	GRIEF

Table 1: Cultural Specific Terms (CSTs)

Table 1 above shows how Ali and Pickthall translated the 15 CSTs in Al-Nur Surah. In case of translating "اليوم الآخر", for example, both Ali and Pickthall have opted for the literal translation strategy translating "اليوم الآخر" to "last day". Ibn Abbas (1992) interpreted "last day" to resurrection after death. When asking the head of the Iftaa Committee (IC) at IUG about the meaning of اليوم الآخر, he explained that there will be a life after this day so it is not the last day. The researchers follow the interpretations provided by Ibn Abbas and IC.

In the case of the word "المهاجرين", Ali translated "المهاجرين" to "those who have left their homes" using the definition strategy. On the other hand, Pickthall used literal translation rendering it as "fugitive". Pickthall's translation falls short of conveying the intended meaning which causes semantic loss. According to the Cambridge English Dictionary, "fugitive means a person who is running away or hiding from the police or a dangerous situation". Ibn Katheer (1999) interpreted "المهاجرين" as Muslims who leave homes for the sake of Allah. So, Ali has succeeded in conveying the intended meaning more than Pickthall.

In translating "الغافلات" Ibn Abbas interpreted "الغافلات" as the woman (Aisha) who is chaste and innocent from adultery. Ali translated it to "chaste" using the substitution translation, while Pickthall translated it to "careless". Explaining the meaning of the word "الغافلة", the head of the Iftaa Committee said that "الغافلات" are the women who are innocent from committing adultery, but they are not careless. By using the literal translation Pickthall has not been successful in conveying the intended meaning of the source text item. He should have used both the literal

and definition translation strategies by defining the meaning of "الغافلات" as "the women who are careless and innocent from omitting adultery". Ali's translation has been successful in conveying the meaning, thus achieving cultural equivalence.

For "وليضربن بخمرهن على جيوبهن", the word "khimar خمار" means "veil". Ibn Abbas and Ibn Katheer interpreted "ليضربن بخمرهن على جيوبهن" as "to put their veils upon their necks and bosoms". Both Ali and Pickthall used the literal translation strategy translating it as "veil" which falls short of providing a full mental image of the concept "khimar" to the target reader. The word "khimar" means "head-covering" so women are instructed to wear "khimar" to hide both their hair and bosoms. So, the researchers believe that the most appropriate strategy is by using transliteration plus providing a footnote of the word "Khimar". By using these two strategies, the word 'khimar' will be clearer to the target reader, especially after providing a definition as "a head-cover which women are instructed to wear to hide their hair and bosoms". So, Ali and Pickthall do not understand the exact meaning of khimar, so they failed in choosing the appropriate equivalent which causes semantic loss.

Regarding "ما ملكت أيمانهن" Ibn Abbas interpreted it as "the slaves". In the pre-Islamic era, Arabs used to have male servants to do hard jobs while female servants were used for sexual enjoyment. In Arabic, the word يمين means the right hand and it is *Sunna* like eating and drinking. When asking the head of the Iftaa Committee, if the word "يمين" has to do with the right hand, he said that this meaning has nothing to do with the meaning of the literal phrase, adding that "ما ملكت أيمانهن" means "العبيد" or slaves.

Ali's interpretation of "يمين" in "ما ملكت أيمانهن" as "your right hands possess" is not the correct interpretation as explained above by the head of the Iftaa Committee. So Ali translated "يمين" literally as "the right" which is unrelated to the source utterance meaning. He also translated "ملكت" literally into "possess". Ali used a combination of literal translation and addition. However, his translation falls short of achieving cultural equivalence. On the other hand, Pickthall translated "ما ملكت أيمانهن" to "their slaves", thus achieving cultural equivalence. The semantic loss occurred in Ali's translation because Ali was not familiar with this Islamic term.

In the case of "التابعين من غير أولي الإربة من الرجال", Ibn Abbas and Ibn Katheer interpreted it to "people who do not have sexual desire towards women". Ali translated it to "male servants free of physical needs", using the definition strategy. Ali's translation has succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence. On the other hand, Pickthall translated it to "male attendants who lack vigor", using



the definition strategy. The word "vigor" means enthusiasm, according to the Cambridge English Dictionary. So Pickthall has not succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence. In this case, Pickthall mistranslated "التابعين من غير اولى الاربة من الرجال" which causes semantic loss.

In case of the word, "إمائكم" Ibn Abbas (1992) interpreted it as "free people ". Both Ali and Pickthall used the deletion strategy and did not translate this expression.

In translating "الغدو و الأصال" Ali translated it to "Mornings and evenings", while Pickthall translated it into "Morn and evening ". Both translators should have translated "الغدو" to "the period between the al-Fajr prayer and sunrise", and "الأصال" to "the period between Al-Asr prayer and Almaghrb", as there are lots of periods between morning and evening so the translation should have been more specific as explained by the head of IC.

Ali translated "إيتاء الزكاة" to "The practice of regular charity ". Here there is a complete loss in this translation because charity carries the meaning of something preferable but in Islam it is obligatory for Muslims to do the Zakah. On the other hand, Pickthall translated it into "Paying to the poor their due ", which gives some specifications by indicating that Zakah is for the poor, so there is a partial loss in his translation as the translation does not fully convey the intended meaning. There is semantic loss in both Ali's and Pickthall's translations because they do not understand the intended meaning of the term "Zakah "and its meaning in Islam. Ali and Pickthall should have translated "إيتاء الزكاة" to "Zakah" using transliteration and providing an explanatory footnote as " compulsory charity in Islam when income conditions are met", as explained by Ibn Abbas and Ibn Katheer.

Regarding the word "تتقلب فيه القلوب و الأبصار" Ibn Katheer interpreted it to "the day of judgment when people will turn their hearts and eyes as a result of fear". Ali translated it to "the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed", using both literal translation and addition (in a world wholly new). Ali believes there will be a new life after the Day of Judgment. When asking the head of the Iftaa' Committee about the meaning of "يخافون يوما تتقلب فيه القلوب و الأبصار" he said that this has nothing to do with the "a new life after the Day of Judgment". Ali should have translated it to the "Al-Ba'th or Resurrection after the death " حياة البعث بعد الموت ". Pickthall translated it to "a day when hearts and eyeballs will be overturned.", using literal translation. There is a partial loss in the translations of Ali and Pickthall in achieving cultural equivalence and conveying the intended meaning in the source text. This loss occurred due to the lack of background knowledge of some specific Islamic terms as in the case of " the day of judgment ".

In the case of translating the word, "الفائزون" Ibn Katheer (1999) interpreted it to "people who will win in this life and in the Last Day". Ali translated it to "will win in the end", using literal and addition strategies while Pickthall translated it to "victorious.", using literal translation. While Ali succeeded in conveying cultural equivalence, Pickthall did not fully provide the intended meaning.

Regarding the word "بئس المصير" Ibn Katheer interpreted it to "bad destination or bad result". Ali translated it to "evil refuge" using the literal translation strategy. Ali succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence. On the other hand, Pickthall translated it to "hapless journey's end", which did not fully convey the intended meaning.

In case of "لم يبلغوا الحلم" and according to the Al-Ma`any Dictionary, the lexical item "الحلم" means "sexual maturity". Ali translated it to "come of age" using the literal translation strategy , while Pickthall translated it to "puberty" using the substitution strategy. Pickthall has succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence while Ali has partially succeeded in conveying the intended meaning.

Ibn Abbas interpreted "أمر جامع" as "Friday Khutba" and Ibn Katheer interpreted it as "Friday prayer, meeting or Shura". Pickthall translated it to "common errand" using literal translation while Ali translated it to "a matter requiring collective actions" using the definition strategy.

When asking the head of the IC, he said "أمر جامع" means "Shura or a meeting involving Muslims such as: "Friday prayer." Ali has succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence, while Pickthall has not succeeded in doing so since he does not convey the intended meaning which causes semantic loss.

Regarding the religious term "فتنة", Ibn Abbas interpreted it as "calamity". In his translation Ali translated it to "trial" using the substitution strategy while Pickthall translated it to "grief" meaning "sorrow". According to the Al-Ma`any Dictionary "فتنة" means "calamity" which is a synonym of the word "trial". Ali has succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence while Pickthall has partially conveyed the meaning.

## **9.Results**

**The First research question was: "What are the types of semantic loss reflected in Al-Nur Surah?"**

To answer this question, the researchers make a list of the types of semantic loss as seen in Table 2. They conclude that partial and complete loss in Ali's and Pickthall's translations are due to the shift of meaning or the translator not choosing the appropriate equivalent, as explained below.

## Impact of Semantic Loss in the Holy Quran

with Reference to Yusuf Ali's and Marmaduke

Pickthall's Translations of Al-Nur Surah

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VERSE NUMBER	CSI	ALI'S TRANSLATION	TYPE OF LOSS	PICKTHALL'S TRANSLATION	TYPE OF LOSS
2	اليوم الآخر	LAST DAY	COMPLETE LOSS	LAST DAY	COMPLETE LOSS
22	المهاجرين	AND THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT THEIR HOMES IN ALLAH'S CAUSE	NO LOSS	FUGITIVES FOR THE CAUSE OF ALLAH	COMPLETE LOSS
23	العافلات	CHASTE	NO LOSS	CARELESS	PARTIAL LOSS
31	وَلْيَضُرَّيْنَ بِخُمْرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ خَبْرِيهِنَّ	THEY SHOULD DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS	PARTIAL LOSS	TO DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS	PARTIAL LOSS
31	ما ملكت أيمانهن	POSSESS YOUR RIGHT	COMPLETE LOSS	SLAVES	NO LOSS
31	التابعين غير اولي الاربة	MALE SERVANTS FREE OF PHYSICAL NEEDS	NO LOSS	MALE ATTENDANCE WHO LACK VIGOR	PARTIAL LOSS
32	إمائكم	NO TRANSLATION	COMPLETE LOSS	NO TRANSLATION	COMPLETE LOSS
36	الغدو و الاصال	MORNINGS AND EVENINGS	PARTIAL LOSS	MORN AND EVENING	PARTIAL LOSS
37	إيتاء الزكاة	THE PRACTICE OF REGULAR CHARITY	COMPLETE LOSS	PAYING TO THE POOR THEIR DUE	PARTIAL LOSS
37	يخافون يوما تتقلب فيه القلوب و الأبصار	THE DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYES WILL BE TRANSFORMED (IN A WORLD WHOLLY NEW),	PARTIAL LOSS	A DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYEBALLS WILL BE OVERTURNED	PARTIAL LOSS
52	الفائزون	WIN (IN THE END)	NO LOSS	VICTORIOUS	PARTIAL LOSS
57	لبئس المصير	EVIL REFUGE	NO LOSS	HAPLESS JOURNEY'S END	PARTIAL LOSS
58	لم يبلغوا الحلم	WHO HAVE NOT COME OF AGE	PARTIAL LOSS	WHO HAVE NOT COME TO PUBERTY	NO LOSS
62	أمر جامع	COLLECTIVE ACTION	NO LOSS	COMMON ERRAND	PARTIAL LOSS
63	فتنة	TRIAL	NO LOSS	GRIEF	PARTIAL LOSS

**Table 2: Types of Semantic Loss in Ali's and Pickthall's Translations**

## Impact of Semantic Loss in the Holy Quran

with Reference to Yusuf Ali's and Marmaduke

Pickthall's Translations of Al-Nur Surah

Mohammed Saleem El Haj Ahmed

Haneen Nabil El Halabi

CSIs	Ali's Translation	Level of loss	Pickthall's Translation	Level of loss
اليوم الآخر	LAST DAY	1	LAST DAY	1
المهاجرين	WHO HAVE LEFT THEIR HOMES IN ALLAH'S CAUSE	0	FUGITIVES FOR THE CAUSE OF ALLAH	1
الغافلات	CHASTE	0	CARELESS	0.5
وليضربن بخمرهن على جيوبهن	THAT THEY SHOULD DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS	0.5	THAT THEY SHOULD DRAW THEIR VEILS OVER THEIR BOSOMS	0.5
ما ملكت أيمانهن	POSSESS YOUR RIGHT	1	SLAVES	0
التابعين غير أولي الارية	MALE SERVANTS FREE OF PHYSICAL NEEDS	0	MALE ATTENDANCE WHO LACK VIGOR	0.5
إيمانكم	NO TRANSLATION	1	NO TRANSLATION	1
الغدو و الأصال	MORNINGS AND EVENINGS	0.5	MORN AND EVENING	0.5
إيتاء الزكاة	THE PRACTICE OF REGULAR CHARITY	1	PAYING TO THE POOR THEIR DUE	0.5
يخافون يوما تتقلب فيه القلوب و الأبصار	THE DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYES WILL BE TRANSFORMED (IN A WORLD WHOLLY NEW),	0.5	A DAY WHEN HEARTS AND EYEBALLS WILL BE OVERTURNED	0.5
الفائزون	WIN (IN THE END)	0	VICTORIOUS	0.5
لبئس المصير	EVIL REFUGE	0	Hapless journey's end	0.5
الخلم	COME OF AGE	0.5	PUBERTY	0
أمر جامع	COLLECTIVE ACTION	0	COMMON ERRAND	0.5
فتنة	TRIAL	0	GRIEF	0.5
<b>15</b>				
		<b>6</b>		<b>8</b>
		<b>40.00 %</b>		<b>53.33 %</b>

**Table 3: Percentage of Semantic Loss in Ali's and Pickthall's Translations**

**The Second Question: What are the main causes behind inadequate translations of Al Nur Surah?**

**1. Culturally Bound Terms**

Culture plays an important role in translation, especially when translating Islamic religious terms such as "إقامة الصلاة" and "ما ملكت أيمانهن". These cultural specific items are difficult to translate as they do not have full equivalents in the TT. If the translator is not familiar with these terms and does not choose the appropriate translation strategy, then a culture gap may occur, as shown in the discussion above.

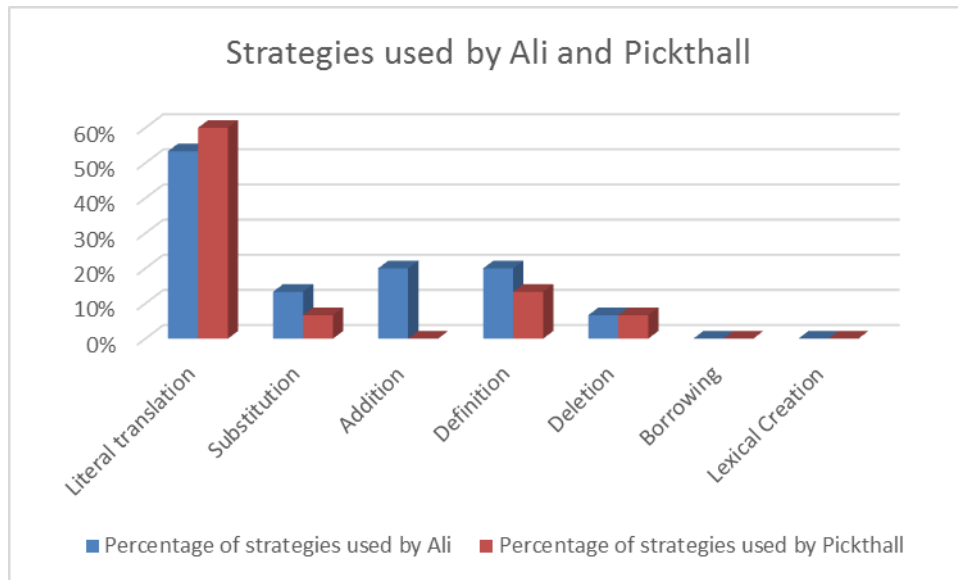
**2. Some Cultural Terms do not Exist Nowadays**

For example, cultural terms such as "ما ملكت أيمانهن" and "إيمانكم" do not exist nowadays as Islam has completely eliminated slavery from Islamic society though this phenomenon did exist in the pre-Islamic era and during the early years of the Islamic Caliphate.

**The Third Question: What are the appropriate strategies used in translating cultural specific terms in the Holy Quran with reference to Al Nur Surah?**

Name of strategy	No. of strategy used by "Ali"	Percentage of strategies used by Ali	No. of strategy used by "Pickthall"	Percentage of strategies used by Pickthall
Literal translation	8	%53	9	%60
Substitution	2	%13	1	7%
Addition	3	%20	0	0%
Definition	3	%20	2	%13
Deletion	1	7%	1	7%
Borrowing	0	0%	0	0%
Lexical Creation	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 4: Strategies used by Ali and Pickthall**



**Figure 1: Strategies used by Ali and Pickthall**

Foreignization Strategies	Foreignization strategies used by Ali	Foreignization strategies used by Pickthall
Literal translation	8	9
Borrowing	0	0
Total	8	9
Percentage	53.33%	60 %

**Table 5: Foreignization strategies used by Ali and Pickthall**

Domestication Strategies	Domestication strategies used by Ali	Domestication strategies used by Pickthall
Substitution	2	1
Addition	3	0
Definition	3	2
Deletion	1	1
Lexical Creation	0	0
Total	9	4
Percentage	60%	26.67%

**Table 6: Domestication strategies used by Ali and Pickthall**

As shown in Tables 5 & 6 above there is a difference in using foreignization strategies as Pickthall used more foreignization strategies than Ali did. For example, in using foreignization strategies

Pickthall used 9 strategies accounting for 60%, while Ali used 8 foreignization strategies accounting for 53.3%. The researchers counted all the foreignization strategies and then divided them on the whole number of the 15 CSIs as in: Pickthall  $(9/15) * 100 = 60\%$  and in Ali  $(8/15) * 100 = 53.35\%$ . There is also a difference between the two translators in using domestication strategies. For example, Ali used 9 domestication strategies accounting for 60 % while Pickthall used 4 strategies accounting for 26.67%

The researchers counted the domestication strategies and then divided them on the 15 CSIs. For example,  $(9/15) * 100 = 60$  while in Pickthall  $(4/15) * 100 = 26.67\%$ . By using more domestication strategies Ali tries to be closer to the target reader as much as he can. So his translation was target-text oriented. However, Pickthall does not follow the same technique as he opts for more foreignization strategies than domestication strategies. He used 9 foreignization strategies (60%) and 4 domestication strategies (26.67%). So Pickthall's translation was source-text oriented. However, this mixture of foreignization and domestication strategies has worked in favour of the two translators as their translations have succeeded in conveying the intended meaning and achieving cultural equivalence.

## **10. Conclusion**

Translating the Holy Quran has increased over the last few years. Scholars carried out many studies to investigate how translations were rendered and what strategies were used in these translations. The researchers found that there are cases of complete and partial loss in the two translations which are a result of lack of knowledge with regard to some Quranic terms in addition to mistranslation of rhetoric devices. These results corroborate with the results of previous studies, for example Aslam's (2018), Hana's and ILhem's (2016) and Al-Jabri's (2008) which all show that there are cases of complete or partial loss in the translation of the Holy Quran as the translations cannot show a full equivalence. These results are logical because no translation can catch the glory and beauty of the Holy Quran since it has its own discourse and specific style. Also, equivalence is unachievable in the translation of the Holy Quran because the meaning of Quranic words is above the level of words and sentences.



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