

Chapter One

Introduction

'Any research project begins with a topic, which may be in the form of a question being asked, a problem that needs to be solved, or a field which needs to be reviewed' (Allison and Race 1997/2004: 2-3).

1.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to establish the infrastructure of the present study and to examine in detail the title of the research. It paves the way for an original exploration of polysemy and culture-specific expressions as linguistic and cultural barriers in the process of Qur'ān translation from Arabic into English. To achieve these goals, the current chapter falls into three sections:

1. The first section (1.2) sheds light on the components of the present research. These include: (1.2.1) aims of the research, (1.2.2) research questions, (1.2.3) methodology of the research, (1.2.4) boundaries of the research and (1.2.5) design of the research.

2. The second section (1.3) introduces two central issues, namely (1.3.1) the Qur'ān as a text: its structure and its supreme authority in the lives of Muslims, and (1.3.2) Qur'ān translations which are referred to in the course of the present research. In particular, this section aims to give a clear rationale for using Abdel-Haleem as the primary source of English translations. It also aims to reconcile the two purposes of his translations: as a gloss for non-Arabic readers and as examples of good translation practice.

3. The third section (1.4) aims to throw light on the title of the research and its key terms. To achieve this goal, it falls into four sub-sections: (1.4.1) the linguistic as well as cultural gap between Arabic and English, (1.4.2) polysemy as a semantic notion, (1.4.3) culture-familiar versus culture-specific expressions and (1.4.4) the

interrelatedness between polysemy and culture-specific expressions. The section also highlights the motivations of the research (see 1.4.2.1 and 1.4.2.2).

1.2 Section One: Components of the Current Research

1.2.1 Aims of the Research

Translating the meanings of the Qur'ān, both linguistically and culturally, is a problematic task for two reasons. First, it is difficult for the target text reader to absorb the highly stylistic features represented in the source text. This may be a reason why some scholars look upon the translation of the Qur'ān as 'a traducement, a betrayal and an inferior copy of a prioritized original' (Bassnett, 1998:25) (see 2.7). Another reason for the difficulty of translating the meanings of the Qur'ān is that Qur'ān translators are always advised to try to convey the shades of meanings and the spirit of the text both semantically and culturally. This is justified by Bassnett, who argues that translation as a process involves both a linguistic transfer and 'a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria' (Bassnett 1980/2002: 22). This is a problematic task due to linguistic and cultural differences between Arabic and English (see 1.4.1).

In this context, the current research aims to propose a contextual approach in which both linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target text in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān should be considered. In other words, the central argument postulated is that both problems of polysemy and culture-specific expressions Qur'ān translation should be considered within the wider context of culture-oriented linguistics, or, to use Lyons's words, 'the study of language in relation to culture' (Lyons 1981: 267). In this sense, central to the present study is the pragmatic dimension involved in the treatment of the notion of culture in the Qur'ān. In particular, the present research aims to achieve the following goals:

(a) To investigate the challenges posed by the task of the Arabic-English translation of culture-bound expressions in the Qur'ān;

(b) To help the target text reader to investigate the pragmatic aspects involved in the translation of Qur'ānic polysemous expressions in their situational as well as cultural contexts;

(c) To set the scene for the future translator of the Qur'ān to appreciate the diverse linguistic senses communicated by the Qur'ānic polysemous expression in its various linguistic contexts.

According to Williams and Chesterman (2002: 6), two of the research areas involved in examining the relationship between text analysis and translation are 'source text analysis' and 'comparison of translation(s) and its/their source text'. The former prioritizes the source text analysis and lays emphasis on the challenges facing the translator due to syntactic, semantic, and-/- stylistic aspects (ibid). The latter involves doing a comparative as well as contrastive study between the translation(s) and its-/-their original (ibid: 6-7). In this context, I would emphasize two remarks:

(a) The current research aims to examine the source text challenges facing translators of the Qur'ān in their treatment of polysemy and culture-specific expressions rather than investigating the translation outcomes. In this sense, the present research is located in 'the source text analysis' rather than 'the comparison of English translation(s) and its/their source text' (ibid). It was decided not to do a comparative study of existing English translations of the extracts chosen because of two reasons:

(1) In general, many previous Qur'ān translation studies were done with the goal of doing a comparative study of existing English translations of the extracts chosen (cf. El-Shiekh 1990; Hassanein 1992; Al-Malik 1995; Ereksoussi 2003; Sadiq 2010). These produced interesting insights into surface translation procedures but focused on semantic equivalence. Little attention was given to the pragmatic aspect, crucial to this study.

(2) In particular, previous Qur'ān translations have adopted a similar tendency in their treatment of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān, so a comparative study would shed relatively little light on this question. As for the issue of polysemy in the Qur'ān, the general tendency has been to use the general equivalent

rather than opting for the specific one, which is attributed to the linguistic as well as cultural context in which the polysemous expression is used (see 1.4.2.1). As for the phenomenon of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān, previous Qur'ān translators have opted either to 'foreignize' or to 'domesticate' the target text equivalent. In other words, as Schleiermacher states, 'either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him [i.e. 'foreignization']; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him [i.e. 'domestication']' (Schleiermacher 1813/1992: 42) (see 5.7.2). Yet, the challenges facing Qur'an translators in their treatment of the cultural differences between Arabic and English have not yet been examined, particularly, translation as a medium of cultural interaction, with particular reference to polysemy and culture-specific Qur'ānic expressions (see 3.3.1; 5.3; 5.7).

(b) Due to the cultural differences between Arabic and English (see 1.4.1), the scope of the source text analysis of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in Qur'an translation will not be confined to examining the linguistic aspects involved, as Williams and Chesterman argue (see above). Rather, the analysis will expand to include both aspects of language and culture in the Qur'ān (see 4.6; 4.7; 5.3; 5.7).

1.2.2 Research Questions

According to Matthews and Ross (2010: 57), four types of research questions can mainly be recognized. These types are:

(a) 'Exploratory' research question: the purpose of this type is to explore a certain phenomenon. In other words, this type of research questions seeks to understand a given phenomenon in case a prior knowledge of this phenomenon is limited;

(b) 'Descriptive' research question: this type is mainly concerned with 'quantifying an area, issue or phenomenon' (ibid). In other words, this type of research question seeks to describe the size, number, ratio, time, place, etc. of a specific phenomenon;

(c) 'Explanatory' research question: the purpose of this type is to investigate causes and effects of a given phenomenon (ibid). It raises questions like why did this phenomenon take place? How did this issue happen? What processes are going on?

(d) 'Evaluative' research question: this type of research question seeks to assess the value of a specific methodology or the significance of a given practice in addressing a certain issue or phenomenon. Thus, it raises questions like: What works best? How good is...? How effective is...?. Therefore, add Matthews and Ross, this type of research question offers recommendations on how to improve, change, or develop a specific issue (ibid).

In the light of both the above discussions and the above aims of the research, four research questions are raised in the current research, two of which are 'explanatory' (questions (1) and (3) below), whereas the others are 'evaluative' (questions (2) and (4) below). These are:

(1) How far does the Arabic-English translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān constitute both a lexical and a cultural challenge?

(2) How effective are 'context of situation' and 'context of culture' in narrowing the cultural gap involved in translating culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān?

(3) How far is the Arabic-English translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān a problematic issue?

(4) How effective is the contextual view of meaning in resolving the lexical as well as cultural ambiguity involved in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān?

1.2.3 Methodology of the Research

The present research adopts 'the socio-cultural model' in translation. In the view of Neubert and Shreve, this model looks upon translation as 'an attempt at cross-cultural communication' (Neubert and Shreve 1992: 25). In other words, translation in the 'socio-cultural model' is primarily defined as a process of cultural interaction. In addition, this model examines the source text as 'a product of the history and social structure of a particular culture' (ibid). That is to say, the source text in the socio-cultural model is prioritized. This is because the context in which the source text was originally used is believed to be both 'unique' and historically and socially matchless (ibid). For this reason, it is also believed that in 'the socio-cultural model' translating

some source text expressions may constitute an evident case of 'cultural untranslatability' (see 2.7; 5.6). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the translator to search for strategies which minimize the socio-cultural-loss which may take place during the process of translation (ibid).

The above views do not mean that in the socio-cultural model no attention is paid to the target text. What this trend argues for is that the source text is used 'in a particular situation with a particular purpose for addressees in the source-culture, who have culture-specific knowledge, experience and expectations' (Schäffner 1998: 83). Consequently, the source text performs an intended 'primary' function in the source culture. This particular function should be prioritized, because a better understanding of the implications involved in using source-text expressions requires contextualizing these expressions both linguistically and culturally. In the words of Hatim:

No text can remain in such a state of relative isolation from the facts of socio-cultural life. To be closer to the life world of the language user and to communicate anything meaningful regarding social, cultural or political issues, texts must involve more than organization and mapping procedures or simply the need to uphold conventionally. Texts must be seen as macro-structures through which the language user can take 'stance' on an issue or a set of issues (Hatim 2009: 47).

However, in situations where there is cultural familiarity between the source and target cultures, priority will be given to the 'functional' equivalence in the target culture. This is justified by Nida, who argues that 'cultural similarities usually provide a series of parallelism of content that make the translation proportionally much less difficult than when both languages and cultures are disparate' (Nida 1964/2003: 160-161). At this stage, argue Nida and Reyburn, the translator needs to adapt the source language message to conform to the linguistic as well as cultural 'norms' of the target text (Nida and Reyburn 1981: 1). If it were not for this linguistic and / or cultural adjustment, the source language message is more likely to be distorted (ibid: 2). Similarly, Toury argues that translations are 'facts of target cultures; on occasion facts of a special status, sometimes even constituting identifiable (sub) systems of their own, but of the target culture in any event' (Toury 1995: 29). While, in my opinion, the target text should be prioritized, this trend should not be adopted 'in any event'. I

believe such a claim results in neglecting two essential factors in the process of translation, namely (i) the source text peculiarity, and (ii) the role of the translator as a cultural mediator (see 5.2). Accordingly, a given culture may dominate another, a trend which obviously contradicts the view that translation should be looked upon as a medium of cultural interaction.

1.2.4 Boundaries of the Research

In the view of Jakobson, translation as a process can be divided into three major types (Jakobson 1959 / 2000:114):

- (a) 'Intra-lingual translation' or 'rewording': this is the type of translation in which the source text is interpreted using verbal signs of the same language (ibid). For instance, a source text written in Arabic is paraphrased or summarised in Arabic.
- (b) 'Inter-lingual translation' or 'translation proper': this is the kind of translation in which the source text is transferred using verbal signs from another language(s). For example, a source text in Arabic is translated into English or any other different language.
- (c) 'Inter-semiotic translation' or 'transmutation': this is the type of translation in which a source text is converted to a non-verbal sign system. For example, a source text in English is adjusted to be performed as a film or a play.

The current research is confined to examining the Arabic-English translation of both polysemy and culture-specific references in Qur'ān translation. Therefore, in the light of Jakobson's categories above, the current investigation is located in the area of 'inter-lingual' translation rather than 'intra-lingual' or 'inter-semiotic' type. It is also noteworthy to mention that the present research is an 'inter-disciplinary' one. That is to say, it draws on the correlation between translation, (applied) linguistics and culture. The focus is on the analysis of the Qur'ānic text from a socio-cultural perspective. The goal is to unveil the cultural peculiarity involved in Qur'ān translation. The present research also seeks to establish an 'ethnographic translation' of culture-specific references in the Qur'ān. The term 'ethnographic translation', which was

coined by Casagrande, has both a 'primary' and a 'secondary' goal (Casagrande 1954: 336). As for the former, 'ethnographic translation' is essentially concerned with 'the explicitation either in annotation or in the translation itself, of the cultural context of the message in the source language' (ibid). As for the 'secondary' goal, 'ethnographic translation' is also concerned with 'the specification and explanation of differences in meaning between apparently equivalent elements of messages in the two languages' (ibid). In this sense, this investigation is also located within what Appiah (2000) and Hermans (2003) describe as 'thick translation' (see 2.6.3).

1.3 Section Two: Translations into English of the Qur'ān

This section is intended to achieve two goals: (i) to shed light on the Qur'ān, its structure, its supreme authority in the lives of Muslims, the importance of translating its meanings and (ii) to introduce the different Qur'ān translations/translators referred to in the course of the present research.

1.3.1 The Qur'an: Structure and Supreme Authority

The Qur'an, which is the verbal noun of the root word (qa – ra - 'a - to read), can be defined as 'the book containing the speech of God, revealed to Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islām, in Classical Arabic and transmitted to Muslims by continuous testimony, or tawātur' (Kamali 1991/2003: 16). In the Qur'ān itself: 'wamā arsalnāka illā raḥmatan lil'ālamīn - It was only as a mercy that We sent you [Prophet] to all people Q 21: 107). Thus, Muslims believe that the message of the Qur'ān as revealed to Muḥammad is a universal one. As for the structure of the Qur'ān, writes Netton:

The Qur'ān, often spelled in English as Koran, is Islām's holiest book. The text consists of 114 chapters; each called a sūrā in Arabic, arranged so that the longest ones come first. Each sūrā is classified as Meccan or Medinan according to whether the sūrā was revealed to Muḥammad in Mecca or Medina. Each sūrā is divided into verses, a single one of which is called an āyah (Netton 1992/1997: 206).

Muslims believe in the supremacy of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān itself says: 'inna hādihā al-Qur'āna yahdī lil-latī hiya aqwam wayubashiru al-mu'minīna aladhīna ya'malūna aṣ-

ṣāliḥāti anna lahum ajran kabīrā – This Qur’ān does show the straightest way. It gives the faithful who do right the good news that they will have a great reward (Q 17: 9). In the words of Irving et al (1992: 9):

The Qur’ān is unique. It embodies the word of God – unchanged, unabridged and uncompromised. It does not contain any element that is a product of a human mind. The Qur’ān is unique in almost every respect: in its divine origin, its style and methodology, its chronological descent, its textual arrangement, and its approach to the problems of man and society. It constitutes a divinely-opened window on reality.

Abdel-Haleem (2004/2008: ix) agrees and argues that the supreme status of the Qur’ān ‘stems from the belief that the Qur’ān is the word of God, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad via the archangel Gabriel, and intended for all times and all places’. Similarly, Noldeke (2004: 72) provides some justifications for the significance of translating the meanings of the Qur’ān as follows:

- (1) The Qur’ān is the basis of Islam, it is the holy book of more than a hundred millions of men (ibid);
- (2) The Qur’ān is widely read, explicated, and contemplated in Muslims public worships and schools. Thus, claims Noldeke, the Qur’ān ‘has been truly described as the most widely read book in existence’ (ibid);
- (3) The Qur’ān, as all Muslims believe, was revealed to Muḥammad. Therefore, the Qur’ān can be regarded as ‘the clue to the spiritual development of that most successful of all prophets and religious personalities’ (ibid).

In short, for Muslims, translation of both the linguistic and cultural meanings of the Qur’ān is a highly elevated mission as it is one of the essential means to get this universal message across to people of different languages and cultures.

1.3.2 An Introduction to Qur’ān Translations

In the course of the present research, the following translations of the Qur’ān have been studied: Pickthall’s (1930/1996), Ali’s (1934/1987), Arberry’s (1955/1996), Al-Hilali and Khan’s (1974/2011), Asad’s (1980/2003), Abdel-Haleem’s (2004/2008), *The*

Qur'ān With Sūrah Introductions and Appendices: Saheeh International Translation (Al-Mehri, ed. 2010) and Shakir's (1999/2011) (see 2.7). Amongst previous Qur'ān translations, these are both the most contemporary and the most commonly consulted. The goal has been to examine to what extent previous Qur'ān translations have succeeded in communicating the specific sense involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān and whether these translations have managed to communicate the socio-cultural aspects involved in the translation into English of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. In this sense, it should be clear that the current study aims to examine the challenges involved in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān rather than translation outcomes (see also 1.2.1).

Unless otherwise stated, the translation into English of all Qur'ānic verses referred to in the course of the present research has been cited from Abdel-Haleem (2004/2008). Abdel-Haleem's translation was selected for three reasons. First, Abdel-Haleem has paid great attention to the crucial role played by the context in identifying the various aspects of meaning involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān. In his words:

Key terms are frequently used in the Qur'ān with different meanings for different contexts, a feature known in Arabic as *wujūh al-Qur'ān*. These were recognised from the early days of Qur'ānic exegesis and have been highlighted in many publications (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx-xxxi).

For example, Abdel-Haleem comments on Dawood's misinterpretation - and consequently improper translation - of the term 'Islām' as 'the religion of Islām' in all Qur'ānic contexts despite its contextual variances. He explains that the term 'Islām' in 'He that chooses a religion other than Islām, it will not be accepted of him and in the world to come, he will be one of the lost, Q 3:85' communicates the meaning of 'complete devotion/submission to God, unmixed with worship of any other' rather than 'the religion of the Prophet Muhammad/ the religion of Islām'. Abdel-Haleem further raises the target reader's awareness of the fact that all earlier prophets were described in the Qur'ān as Muslims (cf. Q 2: 128; Q 2: 132; Q 2: 133; Q 2: 136; Q 3:52; Q 3:84; Q 10:72; Q 12: 101; Q 39: 12) (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxiv). Therefore, he argues that

those who insist on translating the word 'Islām' in all Qur'ānic contexts as 'the religion of the Prophet Muhammad' unconsciously 'set up a barrier between Islām and other monotheistic religions' (ibid). Thus, Abdel-Haleem concludes that 'it is important for the translator to recognise when it is appropriate to be consistent in the translation of a repeated term, and when to reflect the context' (ibid: xxxi). This line of thought is clearly in line with Nida and Taber's distinction between 'verbal consistency' and 'contextual consistency', which is central to the current research (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 15) (see 2.6.2).

Another reason for using Abdel-Haleem as the main source of English translations is that Abdel-Haleem has shown a remarkable ability to contextualize the Qur'ānic verse within the cultural background in which the Qur'ānic verse was used. For instance, Abdel-Haleem refers his target readers to Q 2: 282, in which the Qur'ān urges the record of debts in writing: 'call in two men as witnesses. If two men are not there, then call one man and two women out of those you approve as witnesses so that if one of the two women should forget, the other can remind her, Q 2: 282'. Abdel-Haleem raises the issue of discrimination against women, frequently claimed in both the East and the West, because of neglect of the cultural context in which the Qur'ānic verse was revealed (ibid: xxv). That is to say, Abdel-Haleem argues that calling two women rather than one when witnessing in the court should be understood not as discrimination between men and women in Islām, but as a means of protecting people's property (ibid). This interpretation is justified by the cultural context in which this Qur'ānic verse was revealed. The two preceding Qur'ānic verses (Q 2: 280-281) encourage the rich both to donate generously and to give free loans for the sake of God rather than charging interest. However, in case of lending the Qur'ān strongly supports recording the debt in writing in the presence of witnesses. It is worth noting that at the time when this Qur'ānic verse was revealed, women were indeed less involved in money, business matters and calculations, and they were also less educated. Abdel-Haleem further mentions that due to the cultural differences between the time when the Qur'ān was revealed and the present, some modern interpreters argue that Muslim women should nowadays be allowed to give witness alone, or even to play the role of a judge (ibid). Thus, Abdel-Haleem concludes that 'it is important to identify the meaning of Arabic

words as used at the time of the revelation rather than the one(s) they have acquired in modern Arabic' (ibid: xxxi).

The third reason why Abdel-Haleem's translation has been used as the main source of English translations lies in the argument that Abdel-Haleem's translation should not only be seen as a good translation practice at both levels of language and culture (see above), but it should also be looked upon as a gloss for non-Arabic readers. In Abdel-Haleem's words,

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 (ibid: xxxiv)

Abdel-Haleem also emphasizes that, although he endeavoured to minimize explanatory notes as much as possible so that the target reader is not over-burdened, it was sometimes necessary to provide the target reader with short introductions or footnotes to help the target reader understand the linguistic as well as cultural differences between the source and target text-/culture (ibid: xxxiii). Thus, it can be argued that Abdel-Haleem's translation serves two crucial functions which can be reconciled: as a gloss for non-Arabic readers, and as an example of good translation practice.

Qur'ān translations above have generally been referred to in the current study with the purpose of both describing and evaluating the performance of previous Qur'ān translators in their treatment of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. Emphasis has been laid on Abdel-Haleem's translation, as he has shown a deep concern both to the issue of context in Qur'ān translation and to the audience in a different cultural reality.

1.4 Section Three: The Title of the Research

This section aims to introduce both notions of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in Arabic in general, and in the Qur'ān in particular, as envisaged by semanticists, translators and rhetoricians.

1.4.1 Bridging the Gap between Arabic and English

Various aspects of globalization in the contemporary world can easily be observed. For instance, consider the remarkable rise in international trade, or the never-ending flow of electronic texts (Malmkjær and Windle 2011: 2). Other features of globalization may also include, but are not restricted to, the phenomenon of mass migration which, now and again, takes place in some parts of the world, the fear of global warming, and the desire to recognize others' beliefs (Bassnett 2011(a): 94). In this globalized world, which is marked with plurality, diversity and cultural interaction, the function of translation has significantly been reframed. That is to say, no longer is translation regarded simply as a process of transfer between two languages. Rather, translation has increasingly been conceived as 'the branch of knowledge whose central concern is to achieve mediation between cultures and languages' (Cronin 2003: 6).

Arabic and English are two divergent languages at both the linguistic and cultural level. This is due to the fact that both languages descended from two different language families. On the one hand, Standard Arabic, which is the language of the Qur'ān, is one of the South Central Semitic languages (Pereltsvaig 2012: 96). These are about seventy languages, which were-/have been used by about 467 million people across the Middle East, North Africa and the Horn of Africa (ibid: 92). South Central Semitic languages include, in addition to Modern Standard Arabic, three other categories: (i) Arabic Spoken Varieties, (ii) Modern Hebrew and (iii) Samaritan (ibid: 96). On the other hand, English is one of the West-Germanic languages, e.g. German, Dutch and Frisian, which are originally members of the Indo-European family (ibid: 90). Pointing to this linguistic as well as cultural distance between Arabic and English, Faiq argues that:

Misunderstandings are not only the products of linguistic incompatibilities per se but of cultural ones as well. This means that misunderstandings generally occur in particular social structures, particular histories, and prevailing norms of language production and reception. All these can be said to make up the ingredients of the culture and the ideology subsumed within it (Faiq 2004: 1).

In this context, this investigation is an attempt to bridge the linguistic as well as cultural gap involved in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy and culture-specific expressions, with reference to the Qur'ān.

Another striking effect of translation in a globalized world can also be seen in the strong desire to explore translation in its relation to other branches of knowledge. Examples of this trend are *Translation and Technology* (cf. Quah, 2006), *Translation and Medicine* (cf. Fischbach, 1998), *Translation and Literary Criticism* (cf. Rose, 1997), *Translation and Religion* (cf. Long 2005) and translation and culture (cf. Faiq 2004). Within this framework, the present research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, seeking to examine the relationship between (i) translation and religion and (ii) translation and culture. It should also be noted that religion itself is a part of culture. In the words of Tylor: 'culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (Tylor 1871/1903: 1).

Regarding the relationship between translation and religion, Williams and Chesterman argue that issues raised in the context of translating religious texts may fall into two distinct categories. The first category relates to the translators' attempts to bridge the linguistic and/or the cultural gap between the audience for whom religious texts were originally addressed and those for whom religious texts were translated (Williams and Chesterman 2002: 11). In other words, this division is related to the effect of social and cultural changes on translation, both as a process and as a product. The second category lies in the conflict between looking at the religious text as a 'holy' text, which necessitates 'a word-for-word' translation or as a 'missionary' one, to which 'target-oriented translation' is highly recommended (ibid). In this context, the current study is located in the second area above, where the main purpose is to offer a sense-for-sense rather than a word-for-word translation of the

Qur'ān. To achieve this goal, the linguistic as well as cultural context in which polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān were originally used will closely be investigated. The ultimate goal is to reach a better understanding of the hidden layers of meaning involved in transferring these senses to an audience using a different language and experiencing a different cultural reality. Also, I view the purpose of Qur'ān translation to the audience in the West as target oriented, though there are some translations that focus on the faithfulness to the holy text and, of course, some say that the Qur'ān cannot be translated (see 1.5; 2.7).

With respect to the relationship between translation and culture, the current research seeks to examine the viability of adopting a socio-cultural model in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy and cultural references in the Qur'ān. In other words, the ultimate goal is to explore the linguistic as well as cultural aspects involved in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy and culture-specific references in the Qur'ān in the light of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies. Bassnett and Lefevere (1990/1995: 12) summarize this cultural orientation as follows:

Now, the questions have changed. The object of the study has been redefined; what is studied is the text embedded in its network of both source and target cultural signs, and in this way Translation Studies has been able to utilize the linguistic approach and move out beyond it.

In this context, the central argument running throughout the present study is that the lexical ambiguity created by the use of polysemous words and culture-specific expressions is a product, not only of the linguistic differences between Arabic and English, but also of the cultural incongruities between the two languages. Thus, resolving this lexical ambiguity requires expanding the scope of the context to include not only the linguistic context, but also the socio-cultural one.

1.4.2 Polysemy as a Semantic Notion

'The many-layered nature of meaning is something translators must never forget' (Dickins et al. 2002: 66).

A central theme running throughout the present research is the phenomenon of polysemy as a key semantic relation in Arabic and English. Therefore, this section is intended to introduce the notion of polysemy as envisaged by translators, semanticists and rhetoricians in both languages. Arabic and English have a large number of words which extend in their diverse linguistic contexts to communicate two or more distinct meanings or shades of meaning. This linguistic phenomenon is commonly referred to as (polysemy - al-mushtarak al-lafzī). Consider, for instance, some of the multiple meanings of the polysemous English word (*head - ra's*), as illustrated by Nida (1975: 11), in the examples below:

(a) The hat on his *head*, i.e. 'the upper part of the body which contains the brain, eyes, mouth, nose and ears' Oxford Dictionary of English (Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2005: 799);

(b) *Head of the line*, i.e. 'in palmistry: the lower of the two horizontal lines that cross the palm of the hand, linked to the nature and strength of a person's mental faculties' (ibid: 800);

(c) *Head of the firm*, i.e. 'a person in charge of something: a director or leader' (ibid: 799);

(d) *Head of the cabbage*, i.e. 'the upper part of something' (ibid);

(e) The revolt came to a *head*, i.e. the revolt reached its tragic culmination.

Now, consider the various layers of meaning involved in the use of the English word (*head - ra's*) above. Examples (a) and (d) communicate what Nida describes as 'the central meaning from which a number of other meanings are derived' (Nida 1975: 11). This layer of meaning is commonly known as the 'denotative' meaning. Dickins et al. define this type of meaning as 'the conventional range of referential meaning attributed to a linguistic expression' (Dickins et al. 2002: 235). However, examples (b), (c) and (e) communicate another layer of meaning, namely the 'connotative' meaning.

This can be defined as ‘the implicit overtones a linguistic expression carries over and above its denotative meaning’ (ibid: 234). The overall meaning of a given expression, add Dickins et al., is the combination of both the denotative and connotative meaning of the word (ibid). Similarly, Eco discusses both layers of meaning: the ‘denotative’ and the ‘connotative’ type. However, he gives another title to the ‘denotative’ meaning, namely the ‘primary’ meaning. He further draws a clear line of demarcation between denotation and connotation:

The difference between denotation and connotation is not the difference between ‘univocal’ and ‘vague’ signification, or between ‘referential’ and ‘emotional’ communication. What establishes the connotation as such is the connotative code which establishes it; the characteristic of a connotative code is the fact that the further signification conventionally relies on a primary one (Eco 1976: 55).

In light of the examples and insights above, we can now understand Dickins’s argument above that the translator should always be aware of the different layers of meaning involved in the use of polysemous expressions. Similarly, consider the various senses of the Arabic word (*ra’s* - head), as illustrated by Bishr in the examples below (Bishr 1962: 402):

- (a) *ra’s* al-insān – head of the man;
- (b) *ra’s* al-jabal - head of the mountain;
- (c) *ra’s* al-qabīlah - head of the tribe;
- (d) *ra’s* al-ḥikmah – the peak of wisdom;
- (e) *ra’s* an-nakhlah – top of the palm tree.

Likewise, it can easily be observed that the above uses of the Arabic word (*ra’s* - head) communicate distinct realms of meaning. That is to say, examples (a), (b) and (e) communicate the ‘primary’ senses, which are often communicated by the word (*ra’s* - head) in Arabic. However, by extension, example (c) expresses a cultural dimension, whereas example (d) communicates a metaphoric meaning.

Both classical Arab rhetoricians and Qur'ān interpreters have also sought to give a definition to the notion of polysemy. In classical Arabic, polysemy is commonly known as 'al-mushtarak al-lafẓī' (cf. Shāhīn 1980: 27), whereas the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'ān is often designated as 'wujūh al- Qur'ān' (cf. Al-Sayūṭī, 1999: 440-453; Al-Zarkashī, 1988: 133-143). In their attempt to give a definition to the term 'al-mushtarak al-lafẓī – polysemy' in Arabic, classical Arab semanticists have sought to establish distinct categories of Arabic expressions. For instance, Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004, 1910: 65 – bāb al-'asmā' kayfa taqa^c alā al-musamayāt–how nouns apply to the named things) classifies Arabic words into three categories:

(a) Two or more words which are completely different in meaning, e.g. (rajul wa-faras – man and horse);

(b) A single word which communicates distinct meanings in its different linguistic contexts, i.e. al-mushtarak al-lafẓī – polysemy. For instance, the Arabic word (ʿayn – eye) in the three contexts below:

(1.) ʿayn al-mā' – spring of water;

(2.) ʿayn al-māl – net-profit money

(3.) ʿayn as-siḥāb – literally the clouds' eyes, i.e. the rain (ibid)

(c) Two or more words which express similar meanings, i.e. al-mutarādifāt – synonyms. For example, the Arabic words (as-sayf-/- al-muhannad-/- al- ḥusām - the sword).

Similarly, Shāhīn argues that words in Arabic can be divided into three categories (Shāhīn 1980: 27):

(a) Words which express distinct meanings.

Examples of these words in Arabic are: (shajar wa-ṣakhr – trees and rocks);

(b) Words which give 'the same' meaning, i.e. synonyms.

An example of this category in Arabic is: (qa^cada and jalasa - sat down);

(c) Words which extend to give different meanings, senses or shades of meanings in their diverse linguistic contexts, i.e. 'al-mushtarak al-lafẓī - Polysemy'.

Examples of this category in Arabic are: (ʿayn - eye), (wajada - found) and (khāl- maternal uncle).

An important remark should be made with respect to Shahīn’s classification above. Concerning the second category, i.e. synonyms in Arabic, many Arabic synonymous pairs may communicate a similar, but not an identical, meaning. In other words, two Arabic words may semantically be close, but not identical. For example, Al-Dūrri sheds light on the minor semantic difference involved in the use of the two Arabic words (al-ḥamd - praise) and (ash-shukr - thanking). Al-Dūrri argues that (al-ḥamd - praise) is higher in rank than (ash-shukr - thanking). To prove his view, Al-Dūrri cites Muḥammad’s Ḥadīth–Prophetic sayings: ‘Alḥamdu ra’su ash-shukri mā shakara allāha ‘abdun lā yaḥmaduhu’-Praise is the head of thanking, if a slave does not praise Allah, it is certain that he/she does not thank Him) (Al-Dūrri 2006: 197; Al-ṣan‘ānī 1983, 10: 424).

Similarly, Ibn Fāris makes a distinction between (qa‘ada and jalasa- took a seat) in Standard Arabic. In his view, though similar in meaning, this pair is semantically distinct (Ibn Fāris 1910: 66). Arabs say, ‘qāma thumma qa‘ada – he stood up, and then he sat down’, whereas they say, ‘kāna muḍṭajjī‘an fajalas – He lay down, and then he sat down’. This means that ‘qa‘ada –sat down’ is used when it is collocated with the position of (qiyām – standing up), whereas ‘jalasa–sat down’ is often used when it is collocated with a position lower than (al-julūs - sitting down) (ibid). Thus, care should be taken to recognize the minor semantic differences between synonymy and what may be called ‘near-synonymy’ (see 3.2).

A third Arab semanticist who sought to define al-mushtarak al-lafzī - polysemy in Arabic is Sībāwayhi (d. 180 / 796). Sībāwayhi defines polysemy in Arabic as ‘ittifāq al-lafẓayn wa-khtilāf al-ma‘nayayn – the coincidence of two words and the divergence of the two meanings’ (Sībāwayhi 1983, 1: 24 - bāb al-lafẓ lil-ma‘ānī). Sībāwayhi further gives an example, i.e. the Arabic verb ‘wajada’ which extends to give two distinct meanings in its different linguistic contexts (ibid):

- (a) ‘wajadtu ‘alayhi – I felt grief for him;
- (b) ‘wajadtu ḍālatī – I found what I was searching for.

A further example is given by Al-Khūly, who argues that the Arabic word (faṣl) communicates six distinct meanings in six different linguistic contexts. These are (Al-Khūly 2000:142):

- (a) Qara'tu *al-faṣla* al-khāmisa min-al-kitābi - I have read the fifth *chapter* of the book;
- (b) ar-rabi^cu ajmalu *fuṣlui* as-sanati - Spring is the best *season* in the year;
- (c) innanā al-'āna fī al- *faṣli* al-'awali min-al-^cāmi ad-dirāsiyy - We are now in the first *term* of the year;
- (d) shāhadnā *al-faṣla* ath-thāniya min-al-masraḥiyyati - We watched the second *act* of the play;
- (e) lam yastalim qarāra *al-faṣli* min-al-^camal - He has not yet received his *dismissal* statement;
- (f) innahu laqawlun *faṣl* - indeed, the Qur'ān is a *decisive* statement, Q 86:13.

Moving to the notion of polysemy in the Qur'ān, namely 'wujūh al- Qur'ān', both Al-Sayūṭī and Al-Zarkashī agree that such expressions can be defined as 'al-lafẓ al-mushtarak al-ladhī yusta^cmal fī ^ciddat ma^cānī – the Qur'ānic polysemous expression which extends to express various shades of meanings in its distinct linguistic contexts' (Al-Sayūṭī 1999: 440; Al-Zarkashī 1988: 134). This multiplicity of meaning is closely related with the wide differences in theological exegesis, which is assigned to the polysemous expression as used in its linguistic and cultural context (e.g. 'kalimāt – words' (see 1.4.2.1); 'ad-du^cā' – prayer' (see 3.3.1); 'al-^caẓīm – great' (see 3.3.2.3)). Abdel-Haleem (2004/2008) highlights this issue:

Over the years, a large body of commentaries on the Qur'ān has accumulated, and differences in interpretation can be observed both between the various traditions within Islām and between different periods of history (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxi).

However, it is noteworthy to mention that the current research does not aim to investigate these exegetic differences. Rather, a central goal of the present study is to suggest linguistic as well as cultural tools of textual analysis by which these wide

exegetic differences can be narrowed to only one specific meaning (see 4.5; 4.7). In other words, these tools are suggested with the purpose of helping future translators of the Qur'ān to avoid 'the too broad use of the polysemous term that turns out on a closer inspection to be more inaccurate than it first seemed' (Goddard 1998: 163). For instance, the general Qur'ānic word (*al-hudā – guidance*), argues Al-Dāmaghānī, has seventeen specific shades of meaning in its Qur'ānic contexts. These are (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 473):

(a) (al-bayān – the Right Guidance), as in

(‘ulā’ika ‘alā hudān min rabbihim)

(Such people are following their Lord’s guidance, Q 2: 5);

(b) (al-Islām - The Religion of Islām), as in

(Qul inna hudā allāhi huwa al-hudā)

(Say [Prophet]: God’s guidance is the only true guidance, Q 2: 120);

(c) (al-‘īmān - The Belief), as in

(wa-yazīdu allāhu alladhīna ihtadaw hudā)

(God gives more guidance to those who are guided, Q 19: 76);

(d) (al-dā‘ī – The Guide), as in

(wa-likulli qawmin hādīn)

([earlier] communities each had their guide, Q 13: 7);

(e) (ar-rusul wal-kutub – Prophets and Scriptures), as in

(fa’immā ya’tiyyannakum minnī hudān)

(But when guidance comes from Me, Q 2: 38);

(f) (al-ma^crifah – Knowledge), as in

(wa-^calāmāt wa-bin-najmi hum yahtadūn)

(And landmarks and stars to guide people, Q 16: 16);

(g) (ar-rashād– The Guidance), as in

(ihdinā aṣ-ṣirāṭa al-mustaqīm)

(Guide us to the straight path, Q 1: 6);

(h) (al-‘amr – Prophet’s Orders), as in

(wa-shāqqū ar-rasūla min ba^cdi mā tabayyana lahumul-hudā)

(and opposed the Messenger when they have been shown guidance, Q 47: 32);

(i) (al-Qur’ān – The Qur’ān), as in

(wa-laqaḍ jā’ahum min rabbihimul-hudā)

(even though guidance has come to them from their Lord, Q 53: 23);

(j) (al-Tawrāh – The Torah), as in

(wa-laqaḍ ātaynā Mosā al-hudā)

(We gave Moses guidance, Q 40: 53);

(k) (al-istirjā^c – The Retrieval), as in

(‘ulā’ika ^calayhim ṣalawātun min rabbihim wa-raḥmah wa-‘ulā’ika humul-muhtadūn)

(Those will be given blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is they who are rightly guided, Q 2: 157);

(l) (al-ḥujjah - the True Evidence), as in

(alam tarā ilā al-ladhī ḥājja Ibrāhīma fī rabbihi an ātāhu allāhu al-mulka idh qāla Ibrāhīmu rabbī al-ladhī yuḥyī wa-yumīt qāla anā ‘uḥyī wa-‘umīt qāla Ibrāhīmu fa’inna

allāha ya'tī bish-shamsi minal-mashriqi fa'ti bihā minal-maghribi fabuhita al-ladhī kafar wa-allāhu lā yahdī al-qawma az-zālimīn)

([Prophet], have you not thought about the man who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because God had given him power to rule? When Abraham said, 'It is my Lord who gives life and death.' He said, 'I too give life and death.' So Abraham said, 'God brings the Sun from the east; so bring it from the west.' The disbeliever was dumbfounded: God does not guide those who do evil, Q 2: 258);

(m) (at-tawhīd – Monotheism), as in

(huwa al-ladhī arsala rasūlahu bil-hudā wa-dīni al-ḥaḥiqi)

(It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, Q 61: 9);

(n) (as-sunnah – The Prophetic Actions, Deeds and Statements), as in

('ulā'ika al-ladhīna hada allāhu fabihudāhum iqtadīh)

(Those were the people God guided, [Prophet] follow the guidance they received, Q 6: 90);

(o) (al-iṣlāh – The Reform), as in

(wa'anna allāha lā yahdī kayda al-khā'inīn)

(and that God does not guide the mischief of treacherous, Q 12: 52);

(p) (al-ilhām – The Inspiration), as in

(wal-ladhī qaddara fahadā)

(And who determined all things' destinies and guided them, Q 87: 3);

(q) (at-tawbah – The Repentance), as in

(innā hudnā ilayka)

(We [believers] turn to you [God], Q 7: 156).

It is also worth noting that the wide exegetic differences of a certain sub-meaning are not to be regarded as polysemy for the sake of the current research. Rather, the interpretations which are approved as examples of polysemy in the current study are those which reconcile with the linguistic as well as the cultural context in which the polysemous expression is used (see 4.4; 4.5; 4.6; 4.7). In other words, the ultimate goal is to suggest an integrated approach in which three interrelated dimensions are appreciated: (i) exegesis, (ii) language and (iii) culture.

To sum up, polysemy can be defined as a linguistic situation in which a lexical item extends in its linguistic as well as cultural contexts to convey two or more distinct meanings. The more the translator is aware of these distinct layers of meaning as expressed by exegesis, language and culture, the better his / her translation will be.

1.4.2.1 Why Polysemy in the Qur'ān?

I have two reasons for addressing the issue of polysemy in the Qur'ān. The first reason has to do with the notion of polysemy as a problematic issue in both semantics and translation studies, whereas the second reason relates to the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'ān as a unique stylistic feature. The phenomenon of polysemy has generally been looked upon as a problematic issue in both semantics and translation studies. In the field of semantics, Ullmann argues that the notion of polysemy has often been viewed as a source of ambiguity, 'a defect of language, a major obstacle to communication and even to clear thinking' (Ullmann 1962: 167). Similarly, Ravin and Leacock argue that polysemy 'poses a problem in semantic theory and in semantic applications, such as translation or lexicography' (Ravin and Leacock 2000: 1). Also, Crystal argues that 'the general sense of the term ambiguity is that a word or a sentence may express more than one meaning' (Crystal 1980 / 2008: 22). This lexical as well as cultural ambiguity lies in the idea that, as illustrated above, in its diverse linguistic contexts the polysemous expression extends to represent various senses at two levels: language and culture.

Applying this to Qur'ān translation, Abdel-Haleem notices that the traditional approach in translating Qur'ānic polysemous expressions has been to use the general equivalent and, accordingly, to reduce polysemy as much as possible (Abdel-Haleem

2009, 4: 29) (see 1.2.2 above). This seems to be a common trend in many Qur'ān translations, e.g. Arberry (1955/1996), Ali (1934 / 1987), Pickthall (1930 / 1996), Saheeh International Translation (Al-Mehri (ed.), 2010), Al-Hilālī and Khān (1974/2011), and Shakir (1999 / 2011) (see 1.5). Consequently, the target text reader loses the unique senses communicated by the Qur'ānic polysemous expression in its various contexts, at both the linguistic and cultural level.

There are some likely reasons why translators of the Qur'ān tend to adopt the general equivalent in their translation for the notion of polysemy in the Qur'ān. First, Muslims believe that the Qur'ān itself is a universal book which was revealed for all man-kind. In the Qur'ān itself (Q 21, 107): 'wa mā 'arsalnāka illā raḥmatan lil-^cālamīn - We sent you (the prophet) not, but as a mercy for all creatures'. Al-ṣābūnī comments: 'This Qur'ānic verse indicates that Muḥammad is the messenger, who was sent as a mercy to all people everywhere' (Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 2: 264). Therefore, for all Muslims, the theological message of Islam 'transcends the boundaries of the Arab peninsula and carries a universal message to all mankind' (Abdul-Raof 2005, 162).

Another reason for tending to generalize the polysemous expressions in Qur'ān translation is that one of the stylistic features of the Qur'ān is that 'the Qur'ān repeatedly uses many general expressions (Abdel-Haleem 2009, 4: 29). Abdel-Haleem further gives some examples:

The Qur'ān classifies people, using such plurals as 'al-mu'minūn - the believers', 'al-muttaqūn - those who are mindful of God', 'al-kāfirūn - the disbelievers' and 'aḏ-ḏālimūn - evildoers', and employs conditional sentences with grammatical particles like 'man - whoever', 'mā - whatever', 'ayy - whichever', 'ḥaythumā and-/or aynamā - wherever', and also the indefinite noun (Abdel-Haleem 2009, 4: 29).

Therefore, bearing this sense of generality in mind, translators of the Qur'ān may find it safer to resort to the general equivalent rather than the specific one. In the view of Larson, who looked at Bible translation, the source language expression and its target language equivalent may differ in 'form' and/or 'function'. Differences in form relate to 'the physical aspects of a particular thing or event', whereas differences in function refer to differences in 'the significance, the reason for, or the purpose of the thing or

event' (Larson 1984/1998: 180). In each of the two cases, one of the strategies translators sometimes opt for is 'to translate by using a generic term and stating the other meaning components clearly; that is, by paraphrasing' (ibid: 182-183). However, translators of the Qur'ān merely use the general equivalent without informing the target language reader of the probable specific meaning(s) involved and without paraphrasing as well (see 1.4.2.2). For instance, consider the Qur'ānic verse below:

(wa'ammā alladhīna ibyaḍḍat wujūhuhum faḥi raḥmatil-lāhi hum fihā khālidūn)

(Those with brightened faces will be in God's Grace, there to remain, Q 3:107).

The argument that the polysemous expression 'raḥmah – mercy' in this specific context expands to communicate the meaning of 'jannah – Paradise' is supported by both Muḥammad's sayings and Qur'ān interpreters. Muḥammad said, 'iḥtajjat al-jannatu wan-nār faqālat an-nāru: fiyya al-jabbārūna wal-mutakabbirūn wa-qālat al-jannatu: fiyya ḍu^cafā'u an-nāsi wa-masākīnuhum faqaḍā allāhu baynahumā: innaki al-jannatu raḥmatī arḥamu biki man ashā'u wa-'innaki an-nāru ^cadhābī 'u^cadhdhibu biki man ashā'u walikilayyikumā ^calayya mil'uhā – Paradise and Hell-fire disputed together, and Hell-fire said: In me are the mighty and the haughty. Paradise said: In me are the weak and the poor. So Allah judged between them, [saying]: You are Paradise, My mercy; through you I show mercy to those I wish. And you are Hell-fire, My punishment; through you I punish those I wish, and it is incumbent upon Me that each of you shall have its fill' (Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies 1980/1981: 144-145). In addition, a large number of interpreters argue that the polysemous expression 'raḥmah' in this context expresses the specific meaning of 'jannah – Paradise' (cf. Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 336; Al-Rāzī 1995, 4: 190; Ibn Ḥātim 1999, 3: 730; Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 1: 216). Yet, translators of the Qur'ān insist on using the general equivalent, i.e. mercy / grace, with no mention of the specific sense involved. Below are some samples of how some Qur'ān translators treat the expression:

Ali: 'Those whose faces will be white, they will be in the (light of) God's mercy (Ali 1934/1987: 150);

Pickthall: 'As for those whose faces have been whitened, Lo! In the mercy of Allah they dwell forever' (Pickthall 1930/1996: 57);

Arberry: 'As for those whose faces are whitened, they shall be in God's mercy, therein dwelling forever (Arberry 1955/1996: 87);

Asad: 'As for those with faces shining, they shall be within God's grace, therein to abide' (Asad 2003: 83);

Saheeh International Translation: 'As for those whose faces will turn white, [they will be] within the mercy of God. They will abide therein eternally' (Saheeh International Translation, Al-Mehri, A., ed. 2010: 68);

Ali: 'And those with bright faces shall be under God's grace and enjoy it forever' (Ali 1993/1994: 62).

Few translators have succeeded in revealing the specific sense involved in using the Qur'ānic polysemy 'rahmah' in the Qur'ānic context above to the target reader. Two of these who successfully accomplished this task are Al-Hilali and Khan. In their translation, both the general and the specific equivalent were provided to the audience:

'And for those whose faces will become white, they will be in Allāh's mercy (Paradise), therein they shall dwell forever' (Al-Hilālī and Khān 1974/2011: 69). In short, it can be argued that due to adopting the general equivalent in translating the Qur'ān, most of the previous Qur'ān translations have failed to communicate the specific meaning involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān.

The third reason for the tendency to generalise polysemy in the Qur'ān seems to lie in the idea that the Qur'ānic polysemous expression is often interpreted differently in different exegeses, so again the translator of the Qur'ān may feel more secure in adopting the general equivalent. For example, consider the Qur'ānic expression 'kalimāt – words' in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(fatalaqqā ādamu min rabbihi kalimātin fatāba ʿalayhi innahu huwa at-tawwābu ar-rahīm)

(Then Adam received some words from his Lord and He accepted his repentance: He is the Ever Relenting, the Most Merciful, Q 2: 37).

According to Ibn Kathīr (1983, 1: 74-75), the polysemous expression ‘kalimāt – words’ in the Qur’ānic verse above has many probable interpretations:

(a) The words which taught Adam how to repent are ‘rabbanā ḡalamnā anfusanā wa-in lam taghfir lanā wa-tarḡamnā lanakūnanna min-al-khāsirīn – They [Adam and Eve] replied, ‘Our Lord, we have wronged our souls: if you do not forgive us and have mercy, we shall be lost, Q 7: 23);

(b) Ibn ʿabbās interprets the words which God taught to Adam as ‘ʿalima sha’n al- Ḥajj – he learned how to do pilgrimage’;

(c) Mujāhid says, ‘qāla Adam, ‘yā Rabb khaḡīʿatī al-latī akḡʿatu shay’un katabtuhu ʿalayya qabla an takhluqanī aw shay’un ibtadaʿtuhu min qibal nafsī qāla bal shay’un katabtuhu ʿalayka qabla an akhluqak qāla fa-kamā katabtuhu ʿalayya fa-ghfir lī - Adam said, ‘O God, is the sin I committed something You had written before You created me or is it something I committed by myself? God replied, ‘It was something I had written before I created you’. Adam replied, ‘The same as you had written on me, I pray to you to forgive me’.

The above different interpretations given to the polysemous expression ‘kalimāt – words’ seem to be the reason why Abdel-Haleem both generalizes the equivalent and provides the target reader with a general footnote in which the target reader is informed that ‘kalimāt’ in this Qur’ānic context refer to ‘the words teaching Adam how to repent’ (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 7).

A fourth reason for the tendency to generalise polysemy in the Qur’ān seems to lie in the idea that neither the Qur’ānic dictionaries nor the general ones are always helpful for the translator of the Qur’ān in tracing all possible senses involved in using the polysemous expression. Most dictionaries do not help the translator perceive these

diverse senses in various linguistic contexts. Enani points to this problem and argues that ‘translators of the Qur’ān are usually at a loss in their search for dictionaries that may help to perceive the minor semantic differences involved in the translation of polysemy in the Qur’ān (Enani 1990: 14).

Moving to the latter issue, i.e. polysemy as one of the stylistic features of the Qur’ān, Drāz offers a unique description of the phenomenon:

You tend to think you have gathered its meaning in full. Yet, if you were to read it again at a later time, you will find that you see in it a new meaning that differs from the one you had gathered the first time. The same may happen time and again, so that the same sentence or the same word may have several correct; or potentially correct interpretations. It is comparable to a diamond, each side of which gives a different ray. If you were to take a total view of it, you have an amazing spectrum, comprising all the colours of a rainbow. You feel unable to decide what to take and what to leave out. If you were to let another person look at it, he may see in it more than you do (Drāz 1969/2001: 100).

In this sense, one of the central goals of the present study is to communicate the highly stylistic senses involved in using the Qur’ānic polysemous expressions, not only to the audience in a different culture, but to native speakers of Arabic as well.

1.4.2.2 Motivations for Researching Polysemy in the Qur’ān

The noted Qur’ān scholar Abdel-Haleem¹ (2009) argues that the Qur’ānic expression (faḍl – bounty) in ‘al-Jum^cah Sūrah – The Day of Congregation Chapter: Q 62’ extends in its context at both levels of language and culture to express two distinct shades of meaning. These are:

(a) (an-nubuwah – Propethood), as in

(dhālika faḍlul-lāhi yu’tīhi man yashā’ wal-lāhu dhūl-faḍlil-^caẓīm)

¹ This argument was raised in a class on ‘al-Jum^cah Sūrah – The Day of Congregation Chapter: Q 62’, delivered by Abdel-Haleem at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in November 2009.

(Such is God's favour that He grants it to whoever He will; God's favour is immense), Q 62:4;

(b) (ar-rizq – sustenance), as in

(fa'idhā quḍiyat aṣ-ṣalātu fantashirū fī al-arḍi wa-btaghū min faḍli-lāhi wadhkurū al-lāha kathīran la^ḥallakum tufliḥūn)

(Then when the prayer has ended, disperse in the land and seek out God's bounty. Remember God often so that you may prosper, Q 62: 10).

Abdel-Haleem further justifies the above view adopting a contextual view of meaning. This contextual approach entails an acknowledgement of both the linguistic and the socio-cultural context in which the Qur'ānic expression (faḍl – bounty) is used. With regard to the former, namely the linguistic context, Abdel-Haleem adopted an 'inter-textual' approach, by linking the Qur'ānic verse to what precedes and to other Qur'ānic chapters as well. For instance, Abdel-Haleem offered two tools of analysis. These are:

(a) The 'anaphoric' reference (see 3.3.1), i.e. the two previous Qur'ānic verses, i.e. (Q 62: 2-3), in which the reader is informed of the Prophets and their sublime message in life, namely the faithful transfer of the divine message to all human-beings:

(huwa al-ladhī ba^ḥatha fil-ummiyyina rasūlan minhum yatlu^ḥ ^ḥalayhim āyātihi wa-yuzakkihim wa-yu^ḥallimuhumul-kitāba wal-ḥikmata wa-'in kānū min qablu lafī ḍalālin mubīn wa-'ākharīna minhum lammā yalḥaqū bihim wa-huwa al-^ḥazīzul-ḥakīm)

(It is He who raised a messenger, among the people who had no Scripture, to recite His revelations to them, to make them grow spiritually and teach them the Scripture and wisdom – before that they were clearly astray – to them and others yet to join them), Q 62: 2-3;

(b) The 'intertextual' interpretation (see 3.3.1), i.e. referring the reader to (Q 4: 54), where there is a reference to the father of Prophets, i.e. Abraham and his family who were given the Scripture and wisdom:

(am yaḥsudūna an-nāsa ʿalā mā ātāhum allāhu min faḍlihi faqad ātaynā āla Ibrāhīma al-kitāba wal- ḥikmata wa-ātaynāhum mulkan ʿaẓīmā)

(Do they envy [other] people for the bounty God has granted them? We gave the descendants of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom – and We gave them a great kingdom), Q 4: 54.

Moving to the cultural context, Abdel-Haleem argues that interpreting the Qurʾānic term ‘faḍl’ in the second example above, (i.e. Q 62:10 as ar-rizq – sustenance), is justified by the cultural scene depicted in the last three Qurʾānic verses of the chapter, (Q 62: 9-11), in which believers are ordered to leave off their trading once the call for the prayer on the day of al-Jumʿah – (Friday prayer) is made. Believers can do whatever trade they want before al-Jumʿah prayer, but the moment they hear the adhān (the call for prayer), they are commanded to hurry towards the reminder of God. Believers are encouraged to do so because this is better for them. This cultural setting is complemented with the cultural scene when the Jumʿah ends, in which believers are recommended to disperse within the land, seek God’s bounty and remember God often so that they may prosper.

It is noteworthy to mention that Al-Rāzī interprets (faʿidhā quḍiyat aṣ-ṣalātu fantashirū fil-arḍi wa-btaghū min faḍlil-lāhi - Then when the prayer has ended, disperse in the land and seek out God’s bounty) arguing that ‘the imperative form in this Qurʾānic verse implies that dispersing in land is allowed not during al- Jumʿah, but after performing it. This means that after the prayer, believers are allowed to seek God’s bounty, which is ‘rizq - sustenance’ (Al-Rāzī 1995, 15: 10). Al-Rāzī further justifies this interpretation giving intertextual evidence. He states that the counterpart to this Qurʾānic verse is: (laysa ʿalaykum junāhun an tabtaghū faḍlan min rabbikum – it is no offence to seek some bounty from your Lord [during Ḥajj – pilgrimage], Q 2: 198 (ibid).

Similarly, Ibn Kathīr comments on (wadhkurū allāha kathīran la ʿalakum tufliḥūn – And remember God often so that you may prosper) arguing that ‘believers should often remember God during their trade, in both buying and selling, giving and taking. They should often remember God and prioritize the hereafter over the material life’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 2: 321). Abdel-Haleem, therefore, concludes that identifying the

shade of meaning inherent in the use of Qur'ānic polysemous term (faḍl) in this chapter (Q 62) requires contextualising the Qur'ānic expression both linguistically and culturally.

Motivated by academic curiosity, I have conducted an investigation on the shades of meaning involved in using the term (faḍl – bounty) throughout the whole of the Qur'ānic text. Five tafsīrs – exegeses were consulted: Ibn Kathīr (1983), Mujāhid (1931) and Al-Rāzī (1995), Ibn al-ʿImād (1977) and Al-Dāmaghānī (1983). The first three exegeses were selected because of their remarkable focus on both language and culture of the Qur'ānic text, whereas Ibn al-ʿImād (1977) and Al-Dāmaghānī (1983) were selected because their main subject is the notion of polysemy in the Qur'ān. This semantic exploration has shown that the Qur'ānic expression (faḍl) extends in its Qur'ānic context to express seven distinct shades of meaning. These are:

(a) (al-Islām – the religion of Islām), as in

(qul bifāḍlil-lāhi wa-biraḥmatihi fa-bidhālika fa-lyafraḥū huwa khayrun mim mā yajmaʿūn)

(Say [Prophet], In God's grace and mercy let them rejoice: these are better than all they accumulate, Q 10:58).

Ibn Kathīr comments that God's Grace in this Qur'ānic verse lies in the revelation of the Qur'ān upon Muḥammad's heart, the divine guidance and the religion of truth, i.e. the religion of Islām (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 2: 363). For these, Ibn Kathīr, further elaborates, Muslims should rejoice because these are better than wreckage of life, i.e. pleasures of life never last (ibid);

(b) (an-nubuwwah – Prohethood), as in

(wa-'anzala allāhu ʿalayka al-kitāba wal-ḥikmata wa-ʿallamaka mā lam takun taʿlamu wa-kāna faḍlul-lāhi ʿalayka ʿaẓīmā)

(God has sent down the Scripture and Wisdom to you [Prophet] and taught you what you did not know. God's bounty to you is great indeed, Q 4: 113).

Ibn Kathīr interprets the Qur’ānic expression (faḍl) in this context as ‘the infinite and divine support granted to Muḥammad, Muḥammad’s infallibility and the divine revelation sent down to Muḥammad, i.e. the Qur’ān and the wisdom (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 475). Ibn Kathīr further comments on (wa-^calamaka mā lam takun ta^clamu - and taught you what you did not know) arguing that this is a reference to Muḥammad’s illiteracy before the divine revelation. This is justified, in Ibn Kathīr’s commentary, by the clear intertextual meaning in the below Qur’ānic verse (ibid):

(wa-kadhālika awḥaynā ilayka rūḥan min amrinā mā kunta tadrī māl-kitābu wa-lal-imānu wa-lākin ja^calnāhu nūran nahdī bihi man nashā’u min ^cibādinā wa-’innaka latahdī ilā ṣirātin mustaqīm)

(So We [God] revealed a spirit to you [Prophet] by our command: you knew neither the Scripture nor the faith, but We made it a light, guiding with it whoever We will of Our servants. You [Prophet] give guidance to the straight path, Q 42:52).

(c) (ar-rizq fil-jannah – Sustenance in paradise), as in

(yastabshirūna bini^cmatin min-al-lāhi wa-faḍl wa-anna allāha lā yuḍī^cu ajral-mu’minīn)

(Rejoicing in God’s blessing and favour, and that God will not let the reward of the believers be lost, Q 3: 171).

According to Ibn Kathīr, the verb (yastabshirūna) in this Qur’ānic verse expresses the meaning that those who have been killed in God’s way have rejoiced for what they have been rewarded, i.e. admittance to paradise and God’s Grace (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 368).

(d) (ar-rizq fid-dunyā – Sustenance in life), as in

(yā ayyuhā al-ladhīna āmanū idhā nūdiya liṣ-ṣalāti min yawmil-jum^cati fas^caw ilā dhikril-lāhi wa-dharū al-bay^c dhālikum khayrun lakum in kuntum ta^clamūn. Fa-’idhā quḍiyat aṣ-

ṣalātu fa-ntashirū fil-arḍi wa-btaghū min faḍli-lāhi wa-dhkurul-lāha kathīran la^ḥallakum tufliḥūn)

(Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry towards the reminder of God and leave off your trading – that is better for you, if only you knew - then when the prayer has ended, disperse in the land and seek out God’s bounty. Remember God often so that you may prosper), Q 62: 9-10.

According to Al-Rāzī, (wa-btaghū min faḍli-lāhi - and seek out God’s bounty) is an imperative form meaning that trade and transactions are allowed after al-Jum^ḥah – Friday prayer, not during the prayer (Al-Rāzī 1995, 15: 10). This, Al-Rāzī elaborates, is evidenced by the anaphoric reference (wa-dharū al-bay^ḥ – and leave off your trading Q 62: 9) (ibid). Similarly, Mujāhid makes two important remarks (Mujāhid 1931, 2: 673).

(i) The polysemous expression (fas^ḥaw – hurry) in this Qur’ānic context expands to express both the denotational and metaphoric meaning of (as-sa^ḥy – hurrying) (see 3.3.3.1). That is to say, (as-sa^ḥy – hurrying) in this context extends to express three meanings: (1) proceeding to the mosque on foot, which is the ‘primary’ meaning; (2) (as-sa^ḥy bin-niyyah war-raghbah – proceeding by intention and desire, and (3) as-sa^ḥy bil-qulūb – proceeding by hearts);

(ii) It was narrated by Fuḍālah that b. al-Ḥasan, having contemplated the shade of meaning inherent in the two Qur’ānic verses above (Q 62: 9-10), hated buying and selling on Friday starting from the sunrise until al-jum^ḥah – Friday prayer is performed. This emphasizes the idea that the shade of meaning implied in the use of the Qur’ānic polysemous expression (faḍl – bounty) in the above Qur’ānic verses is (rizq);

(e) (al-khalaf fil-māl – Compensation for Money), as in

(ash-shayṭānu ya^ḥidukumul-faqrā wa-ya^ḥmurukum bil-faḥshā’i wal-lāhu ya^ḥidukum maghfiratan minhu wa-faḍlā wal-lāhu wāsi^ḥun ^ḥalīm)

(Satan threatens you [people] with the prospect of poverty and commands you to do the foul deeds; God promises you His forgiveness and His abundance Q 2: 268).

According to Al-Rāzī, (al-maghfirah – forgiveness) in this context is a reference to the reward granted from God to the believers in the hereafter, while (al- faḍl – abundance) is a reference to the reward granted from God to believers who spend their money in Allah’s cause (Al-Rāzī 1995, 4: 70). Al-Rāzī, further justifies his view: Muḥammad said (ibid):

(innal-malak yunādī kulla laylah: al-lāhuma iḥṭī kulla munfiqin khalafā wa-kulla mumsikin talafā)

(Every night the angel proclaims: May allāh compensate those who spend their money in allāh’s cause and May allāh ruin those who are tight-fisted with damage).

(f) (al-jannah – Paradise), as in

(wa-bashshir al-mu’minīna bi-’anna lahum minal-lāhi faḍlan kabīrā)

([Prophet] Give the believers the good news that great bounty waits them from God), Q 33:47. Al-Rāzī comments that (bi’anna lahum minal-lāhi faḍlan kabīrā - great bounty waits them from God Q 33:47) is parallel to (a^cadda allāhu lahum maghfiratan wa-ajran ^caẓīmā – [for believers] God has prepared forgiveness and a rich reward, Q 33:35) (Al-Rāzī 1995, 13:219). Al-Rāzī, further adds that (^caẓīm – great) and (kabīr – big) are close in meaning and both words emphasize the idea that the reward granted to believers, i.e. admittance to paradise is incomparable’ (ibid). Similarly, Ibn al-^cImad states that the Qur’ānic term (al-jannah - paradise) was mentioned in the Qur’ān under various titles. Some of these are (Ibn al-^cImad 1977: 187):

(1.) (al-faḍl – bounty, see Q 33:47);

(2.) (dar as-salām – the Home of peace, see Q 10:25);

(3.) (al-khuld – the Garden of Eternity, see Q 25: 15);

(4.) (jannāt an-na^cīm – the Gardens of pleasure, see Q 31:8);

(e) (al- ḥusnā – the reward of paradise, see Q 18:88);

(5.) (ẓillan ẓalīlā – cool and refreshing shade, see Q 4:57);

(6.) (rahmah – mercy, see Q 3: 107);

(7.) (al-fawz al-^caẓīm – supreme attainment, see Q 9: 89);

(8.) (dār al-maqāmah – the Everlasting Home, see Q 35:35).

(g) (al-minnah – Grace / Favour), as in

(wa-lawlā faḍlul-lāhi ^calaykum wa-rahmatuhu lat-tabatūmush-shayṭāna illā qalīlā)

(If it were not for God’s bounty and mercy towards you, you would almost all have followed Satan), Q 4: 83.

In the view of Al-Rāzī, the Qur’ānic expression (faḍl) in this context has two probable shades of meaning. These are (Al-Rāzī 1995, 5: 209):

(1) (faḍl) in this context may mean the revelation of the Qur’ān and sending Muḥammad as a Prophet. That is to say, if it were not for the revelation of the Qur’ān and sending Muḥammad as a Prophet, a large number of people would follow Satan and disbelieve in God. The few remaining would be those people who believed in God even before sending Muḥammad as a Prophet, e.g. Warāqah b. Nawfal.

(2) Narrated by Abū Muslim, (faḍl) in this context means God’s permanent support granted to believers at times of hardships. In other words, if it were not for the permanent and consecutive divine support bestowed upon believers, a lot of them would follow Satan and leave off religion, except for the very few. These are believers of deep insights, strong intentions and powerful stamina, who strongly believe that the route to truth is the availability of evidence, i.e. consecutive winning does not mean triumph and frequent loss does not mean defeat. For them, the only path to truth is providing strong evidence.

The above investigation resulted in formulating the main argument running throughout the present research: appreciating the shades of meaning implied in the use of Qur’ānic polysemous expressions requires an examination of the correlation between polysemy, context and culture. It is essential for the translator of the Qur’ān

to explore the Qur'ānic polysemous expression as a semantic unit within the wider context of culture (see 4.7). Consider the examples below:

(1) The Semantic Aspect

Consider the Qur'ānic polysemous term (*al-jihād- strife/ fight*). In its Qur'ānic context, the word has been expanded to express various aspects of (jihād) in Allah's way. These are:

(a) Jihād through speech/ strife through speech: (al-jihād bil-qawl), as in

(wa-jāhidhum bihī jihādan kabīrā)

([Muḥammad] Strive hard against them [disbelievers] with this Qur'ān, Q 25: 52);

(b) Jihād through weapons/ fighting with weapons: (al-jihād bis-silāh), as in

(wa-faḍḍalla Allāhu al-mujāhidīna ^ʿala al-qā^ʿidīna ajran ^ʿaẓīmā)

(Those who strive are favoured with a tremendous reward above those who stay at home), Q4: 95;

(c) Jihād through money-giving/ strife through giving money for charity: (al-jihād bil-māl), as in

(faḍḍalla Allāhu al-mujāhidīna bi-amwālihim wa-anfusihim ^ʿala al-qā^ʿidīna darajah)

(Allah has raised those who commit themselves and their possessions to a rank above those who stay at home), Q4: 95;

(d) Jihād through deeds / strife through deeds: (al-jihād bil-^ʿamal), as in

(wa-man jāhada fa-innama yujāhidu linafsihi)

(Those who strive do so for their own benefit, Q29: 7).

Considering the examples above, it is evidently observed that the Qur'ānic polysemous word (al-Jihād) extends in its linguistic context to express both meanings of *strife* and *fighting*. That is to say, the shades of meaning involved in translating the Qur'ānic polysemous expression (al-Jihād) should not be confined to fighting infidels. It is also essential to remark that (al-Jihād bis-silāh - Jihād through weapons) in the Qur'ān is a

case of self-defence, i.e. a counter attack, which is conditioned by being attacked. In the Qur'ān itself:

(wa-qātilū fī sabīlil-lāhi al-ladhīna yuqātilūnakum wa-lā ta^ḥtadū inna allāha lā yuḥibul-mu^ḥtadīn)

(Fight in God's cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits: God does not love those who overstep the limits, Q 2: 190). Therefore, Abdel-Haleem adds an informative footnote to the reader:

The Arabic command (lā ta^ḥtadū – do not overstep the limits) is so general that commentators have agreed that it includes prohibition of starting hostilities, fighting non-combatants, disproportionate response to aggression, etc (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 21).

Identifying the diverse senses involved in the translation of the Qur'ānic polysemous expression (al-Jihād), and keeping in mind that different parts of the Qur'ān explain one another, are very important tools towards both an optimal understanding of the Qur'ān and an adequate transfer of polysemous expressions in the Qur'ān. This also helps to correct the misconception which may sometimes takes place in understanding the meaning of (al-Jihād) in Islam. It is worth noting that English language dictionaries reflect how the word *Jihād* has been absorbed into English. Caution should therefore be used when citing them as guides to the original Arabic term (see above). For instance, consider how Reader's Digest Universal Dictionary defines the term al-Jihād (Crystal et al. 1987: 827):

Jihad:

1. A Muslim Holy Wars against infidels;
2. A Crusade (Arabic Jihād).

There are two problems with the above definition:

(i) It limits the meaning of Jihād in Islam within the circle of fighting. This, consequently, leads to the misconception that Jihād in Islam is closely related to terrorism, which is not the case, as explained above.

(ii) It does not mention the other beautiful senses involved in translating the Qur'ānic polysemous expression (al-Jihād), as used in the Qur'ān. It is interesting to note that

Oxford Dictionary of English, (Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2005: 932), includes some of these senses:

Jihad:

1. (Among Muslims): A war or struggle against unbelievers;
2. (In Islam): The spiritual struggle within oneself against sin; in Muslim thought, struggle on behalf of God and Islam.

In short, it is clear that the pervasive view of Jihād in Western media relates to one of the layers of meaning associated with Jihād in the Qur’ān. However, it should be noted that the semantic space of Jihād in Islam expands to cover many other layers of meaning: Jihād through speech - al-jihād bil-qawl, Jihād through money-giving - al-jihād bi al-māl, Jihād al-nafs – striving against one’s forbidden desires and Jihād through deeds - al-jihād bil-‘amal. It should also be noted that Jihād through weapons - fighting with weapons in Islam is conditioned by the self-defence against the disbelievers (see 5.3.2).

(2) The Socio-cultural Aspect

Consider, for instance, the translation of the Qur’ānic expression (it-taqū al-lāha – be mindful of God) in the Qur’ānic verse below:

(.....wa-‘tul-buyūta min abwābihā wat-taqū Allāha la‘allakum tuflihūn)

(So enter your houses by their [main] doors and obey God so that you may prosper), Q 2: 189.

The Qur’ānic expression (at-taqwā – piety / fear of God) is a general Qur’ānic term which involves doing whatever right, avoiding whatever wrong, and always being mindful of God. Al-Hilali and Khan comments: ‘the pious believers of Islamic monotheism who fear Allāh much abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allāh has forbidden, they love Allāh much and perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained’ (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 15). However, it is worth noting that the Qur’ānic expression (it-taqū – obey) in this cultural context extends to communicate the specific meaning of (aṭī‘ū – obey). This is justified by Abdel-Haleem, who emphasizes the idea that ‘it was the custom of Arabs, on their return from the

pilgrimage, to enter their houses by the back door, considering this to be an act of piety' (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 21). Accordingly, Abdel-Haleem argues that without informing the target reader of this social custom, the whole of the verse will be ambiguous (ibid). Similarly, Al-Dāmaghānī interprets the polysemous term (al-taqwā) in this context as obedience, not piety (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983, 494). Thus, I agree with Abdel-Haleem that 'ignoring the feature of wujūh al-Qur'ān [polysemy in the Qur'ān] and forcing upon a word one single meaning for the sake of consistency results in denial of the context and misrepresentation of the material' (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxxi).

1.4.3 Culture-Familiar versus Culture-Specific Expressions

Another central issue addressed in the current research is the phenomenon of culture-specific references in Qur'ān Translation. To shed light on what is meant by culture-specific expressions, a comparison between culture-familiar expressions and culture-specific ones will first be made. This paves the way for the reader to consider the implications involved in using both types of expressions.

In the view of Larson and Dickins², two types of cultural expressions in the field of translation studies can be identified: (i) culture-familiar and (ii) culture-specific expressions (Larson 1984/1998: 169-191). The former constitute those expressions to which a lexical equivalent in the target language is available. For instance, the borrowed English word 'cafe', whose origin dates back to early 19th century from French 'café', is translated into Arabic as 'maqhā' (Oxford Dictionary of English: Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2005: 243). However, examining the issue from a cultural perspective, various cultural differences come to the fore. Four aspects of comparison can be identified: (i) the (common) exterior design, (ii) types of drinks served; (iii) customers' practices in both cultures and (iv) times of work (see below):

² This division of cultural expressions into 'culture-familiar' and 'culture-sensitive' expressions was proposed by Dickins, J. (2011) in a lecture entitled 'Translation and Culture', delivered on the study day of the department of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Leeds.



'Cafe' in English



'maqhā' in Arabic

Figure 1.1 'Cafe' in English and Arabic³

On comparing 'maqhā' in Arabic and 'cafe' in English, various cultural differences can be assigned. First, the exterior design in both cultures is different (see above). Both are also different in the types of drinks served to customers. For instance, alcoholic drinks are allowed in some English cafes, whereas they are both religiously prohibited and socially not accepted in Arab cafes. Customers' practices may also differ, e.g. in English cafes a customer can eat and drink, whereas it is not common in Arab cafes to have a meal. Regular times of work also differ in both cultures. Arab cafes are usually still open till late night times, whereas English ones usually close earlier. This may be related to social habits, e.g. preferring to sleep early or to weather conditions. In short, the words 'maqhā' in Arabic and 'cafe' in English are lexically equivalent, but culturally distinct.

Another example of culture-familiar expressions would be the Arabic word 'ṣawm', to which the lexical equivalent in English is 'fasting'. However, from a cultural perspective two aspects of cultural differences can be identified: (i) time(s) of fasting in both cultures, and (ii) manner of practising fasting in both cultures. Fasting is one of the pillars of belief in both Islam and Christianity. On the one hand, Muslims fast in the month of Ramaḍān, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar (cf. Q 2: 183). Fasting in the month of Ramaḍān is a duty imposed on all Muslims except those who are ill or who are on a journey (see Q 2: 184). On the other hand, according to Luth, in the early church, i.e. from the first to the end of the third century, fasting in

³ [<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=cafe>]

Christianity was practised on both Wednesdays and Fridays. From the fourth century on, Christians started to observe Lent, which is a period of fasting as a preparation for the Easter. This period of fasting lasts forty days. Another time of fasting in Eastern Orthodox Christianity is before Christmas. This period is commonly known as 'advent' in the West (ibid). In the East, fasting is also practised before the feasts of Peter and Paul and the dormition of the mother of God (Luth 2000:237). Thus, it can safely be concluded that the time(s) of fasting in both cultures is different.

A second aspect of cultural difference between 'al-ṣawm' in Arabic and 'fasting' in English is related to the manner by which this practice is performed in both cultures. On the one hand, 'ṣawm' in Islam starts when the white streak of dawn can be distinguished from the black one, generally about an hour and half before dawn (see Q 2:187). From this time till sunset, i.e. al-Maghrib prayer in Islam, Muslims are to refrain from eating, drinking, practising sex and all aspects of unaccepted behaviour. On the other hand, fasting in Christianity is practised differently, i.e. in Orthodox practice, on fast days Christians are allowed to eat and drink all except meat, fish, dairy products (including eggs), wine, and oil (ibid). To sum up, 'fasting' can be regarded as a lexical, but not a cultural equivalent to 'al-ṣawm' in Arabic.

Culture-familiar expressions do not generally present a translation problem simply because the same notion is shared in the source as well as target language and a ready lexical equivalent exists (cf. Larson 1984/1998:169). In contrast, culture-sensitive expressions are distinguished from culture-familiar expressions in two essential aspects:

(a) Culture-sensitive expressions 'refer to concepts that are closely associated with a certain language and culture' (Palumbo 2009:33). This seems the reason why these expressions are usually termed as 'specific', 'sensitive' and/or 'bound'.

(b) These expressions communicate a meaning which is 'totally unknown in the target culture' (Baker 1992/2011:18). That is to say, the concept itself is not lexicalized in the target language and it consequently represents a lexical gap. For example, consider the Qur'ānic verb (yuzāhir) or its verbal noun (ḏihār) in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(mā ja^cala allāhu lirajulin min qalbayn fī jawfihi wa-mā ja^cala azwājakum al-lā^tī tuzāhirūna minhunna ummahātikum)

(Allah has not made for any man two hearts in his one body: nor has He made your wives whom you divorce by *zihār* your mothers), Q 33:4.

The verb (*yu^zāhir*) in the above verse is a lexical void, i.e. no lexical equivalent in the target language is available. Therefore, in translating this Qur'ānic expression, Ali resorts to the strategy of 'borrowing' (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958/1995: 31-32). Ali also explains the meaning of the term in an informative footnote:

This was an evil Arab custom, by which the husband selfishly deprived his wife of her conjugal rights and yet kept her to himself like a slave without her being free to re-marry. He pronounced words importing that she was like his mother. After that she could not demand conjugal rights but was not free from his control and could not contract another marriage. See also Q 58:1-5, where this is condemned in the strongest terms and punishment is promised for it. A man sometimes said such words in a fit of anger: they did not affect him, but they degraded her position (Ali 1934/1987: 1103).

[*z*]ihār was an old pagan custom in which the husband, in a rage which is difficult to control, uttered these words to his wife: (*antī ^calayya ka^zahri ummī – you are to me as the back of my mother*). The word (*zahr – back*) in this context implicitly evokes the sense of approaching the wife. Therefore, the implied meaning here is that divorce has taken place. However, the husband has no responsibilities for conjugal duties and the wife, at the same time, is not free to leave her husband's house or to marry again (cf. Abdul-Raof 2001:151). Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH – 1307 AM) was asked about a man who said to his wife: (*antī ^calayya mithla ummī wa-ukhtī – you are to me as my mother and my sister*), what is the *ḥukm – legal judgement*? Ibn Taymiyyah replied, 'if the man intends that his wife is as dignified as his mother and sister, there is no punishment. However, if he means that his wife is to him as his mother and his sister in sexual intercourse, then this is *zihār*. Accordingly, the man must not approach his wife and a *kaffārah – atonement* is legally imposed on him. This *kaffārah – penalty* is described in:

(wal-ladhīna yuzāhirūna min nisā'ihim thumma ya^cūdūna limā qālū fa-taḥrīru raqabatin min qabli an yatamāssā dhalikum tū^caẓūna bihi wa-allāhu bimā ta^cmalūna khabīr. fa-man lam yajid fa-ṣiyāmu shahrayni mutatābi^cayni min qabli an yatamāssā fa-man lam yastaṭi^c fa-iṭ^cāmi sittīna miskīnan dhālika litu'minū bil-lāhi wa-rasūlihi wa-tilka ḥudūdul-lāhi wa-lilkāfirīna ^cadhābun alīm)

(And those who pronounce *ẓihār* from their wives and then [wish to] go back on what they said - then [there must be] the freeing of a slave before they touch one another. That is what you are admonished thereby; And Allah is acquainted with what you do. And he who does not find a slave, then a fast for two months consecutively before they touch one another; and he who is unable – then the feeding of sixty poor persons. That is for you to believe [completely] in Allah and His Messenger; and those are the limits [set by] Allah. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment), Q 58:3-4 (Ibn Taymiyyah 1998, 34:7).

In short, it can safely be argued that the culture-specific expression (*ẓihār*) presents a challenge to the translator as it is both a lexical void and a culture-specific expression.

1.4.4 Polysemy and Culture-Specific Expressions

At this point, the interrelatedness between polysemy and culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation should be emphasized. First, as illustrated earlier, both issues of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān share a point of intersection: understanding the Qur'ān in its cultural context. In other words, the key to decode both the intended meaning involved in translating Qur'ānic polysemy and the cultural ambiguity involved in translating culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān is to perceive language and culture of the Qur'ān as one entity. Saeed emphasizes the crucial importance of the socio-cultural context in which the Qur'ān was revealed in understanding both the general and culture-specific expressions of the Qur'ān (Saeed 1998/2008: 11-12). On the one hand, he argues that 'in framing the terms of the new religion taking shape in Mecca and Medina, the cultural context of Hijāz was a point of departure for both the Qur'an and the Prophet' (Saeed 1998 / 2008: 11). On the other hand, narrowing his discussion to the issue of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān, Saeed further claims that:

The Qur'an contains its own culturally specific language appropriate to the worldview of its first recipients, which includes the symbols, metaphors, terms and expressions that were used in Hijāz. Even in describing the Islamic concept of Paradise, the Qur'an uses language that is closely associated with the local culture and popular imagination: flowing rivers, fruit, trees and gardens (ibid: 12).

Thus, it can safely be argued that both polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'an share one final destination: Qur'ānic expressions in their socio-cultural context.

Another aspect of interrelatedness between polysemy in the Qur'an lies in the idea that some Qur'ānic polysemous expressions are culture-specific (see 4.7.2.1). In this sense, investigating culture-specific expressions in Qur'an translation should also be seen as a development of the research conducted on the notion of polysemy in the Qur'an. The ultimate goal beyond both researches has been to encompass the cultural context in which the Qur'an was revealed.

A third aspect of interrelatedness between polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'an lies in the idea that the role of the translator in dealing with both issues is similar. That is to say, an effective communication of both polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'an requires viewing the translator as the one who undertakes both a linguistic and cultural act 'at both levels at once' (Enani 1995: 174), or in the words of Katan 'a cultural mediator' (Katan 1999/2004: 16) (see 5.2). However, it should also be noted that the translator may sometimes be subjective and keen on presenting a specific view and/or interpretation.

1.5 Design of the Research

The current research falls into six chapters. Each chapter is divided into sub-sections. Details of the chapters are as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter has highlighted motivations for the research and introduced the two research problems. Justifications for the interrelatedness between polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'an have also been provided. In this sense, the

chapter has also tracked the development which has taken place throughout the research. The chapter has also shed light on aims and goals of the research, formulated the research questions and proposed the methodology by which the research problems will be examined.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework and Historical Background

This chapter aims to establish a theoretical framework for the current research. It locates the present research within both Holmes's 'map' of Translation Studies (1988) and Van Doorslaer's 'map' of Translation Studies (2007). The chapter also highlights theories of context in translation studies and related fields, such as anthropology and linguistics. In addition, it discusses the issue of 'equivalence' in translation, with particular emphasis on theories of 'function' in translation. Furthermore, the chapter raises the issue of Qur'ān translatability and argues for the possibility and significance of communicating the meanings of the Qur'ān to the audience in a different cultural reality.

Chapter Three: Polysemy in Arabic and English

This chapter introduces the notion of polysemy as one of the lexical relations in Arabic and English. It also presents a review of related literature in both languages. In addition, the chapter investigates causes and effects of polysemy in Arabic and English. Furthermore, it makes a comparison between polysemy in both languages from a semantic as well as a cultural perspective.

Chapter Four: Polysemy, Context and Culture

This chapter argues for the correlation between polysemy, context and culture. To justify this argument, the chapter illustrates for the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'ān at both the cultural and the linguistic level. The chapter also proposes some linguistic and cultural tools of analyzing polysemy in the Qur'ān. In addition, the chapter accounts for the relationship between language and culture and sheds light on the notion of context in language.

Chapter Five: Culture-Specific Expressions in Qur'ān Translation

This chapter presents an 'ethnographic translation' of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. In the light of Newmark (1988) and Katan (1999/2004), the chapter also categorises cultural references in the Qur'ān and illustrates for each category. The ultimate goal is to examine culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān from a socio-cultural perspective.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter presents a review of the study. It also provides answers to the research questions. In addition, the chapter introduces the findings of the research in terms of the nature of translation, the characteristics of the translator and the methods and strategies which have proved to be useful in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. Furthermore, the chapter proposes some topics for future research.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Historical background

'Any research makes use of a theoretical model of the object being studied, either explicitly or implicitly' (Williams and Chesterman 2002: 48).

2.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, two central issues have been addressed: (i) the research problem, and (ii) the suggested model of analysis. The research problem relates to the translation into English of (i) polysemy and (ii) culture-specific references in the Qur'ān. The suggested model of analysis is the 'socio-cultural model' in translation studies, which appreciates both the source text sensitivity and the target text functionality. This type of analysis involves two fundamental procedures: (i) contextualising the source text at both the linguistic and the cultural level, and (ii) searching for the closest 'dynamic' equivalent in the target culture (Nida 1964/2003: 159).

In this context, the current chapter aims to establish a theoretical framework for the present research. This involves two central issues:

- (a) Theories of context as envisaged both in translation studies and in related disciplines, e.g. anthropology and linguistics (see 2.5);
- (b) 'Functional' theories of translation, as developed by Nida (1964/2003), Newmark (1981/1988), and Koller (1995) (see 2.6).

In addition, due to the linguistic as well as cultural 'distance' between Arabic and English, some Qur'ānic expressions resist translation at both the lexical and the cultural level. Therefore, a third dimension to be attached to the above theoretical framework is the issue of translating religious texts (see 2.7). These three issues will be the focus of the current chapter and serve as a theoretical and historical background for the present research.

2.2 Holmes's 'Map' of Translation Studies

First of all, the present study must be located within its discipline using both the Holmes's / Toury's 'map' of translation studies (1988) and the Van Doorslaer's 'map' of translation studies (2007).

2.2.1 Why Holmes's 'Map' of Translation Studies?

On 21-26 August 1972, in the translation section of the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics, which was organised in Copenhagen, the translator and theorist James S. Holmes presented a highly influential paper under the title of 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies', not widely disseminated until 1988 (Holmes 1988:66). The significance of this paper lies in two basic remarks:

(a) Holmes's paper is described as 'the founding statement for the field' (Gentzler 1993: 93). Snell Hornby (2006: 40) agrees and argues that the conclusions in Holmes's paper obviously show that Holmes was 'deeply committed to securing an independent academic status for the field'.

(b) In the words of Munday, 'Holmes's paper crucially puts forward an overall framework, describing what translation studies covers' (Munday 2001/2012: 16). Toury (1995: 9) agrees and argues that the central value of Holmes's categories is that they 'allow clarification and a division of labour between the various areas of translation studies which, in the past, have often been confused' (ibid).

Based on the remarks above, it can safely be argued that the value of Holmes's paper lies in the idea that Holmes's insights (i) smoothed the way for looking at translation studies as a distinct discipline, and simultaneously (ii) suggested the basic divisions of translation studies as an independent branch of knowledge.

2.2.2 Holmes's 'Map' of Translation Studies

In the view of Toury (1995: 10), Holmes's 'map' can be explained as follows: (see Figure 2.1 below):

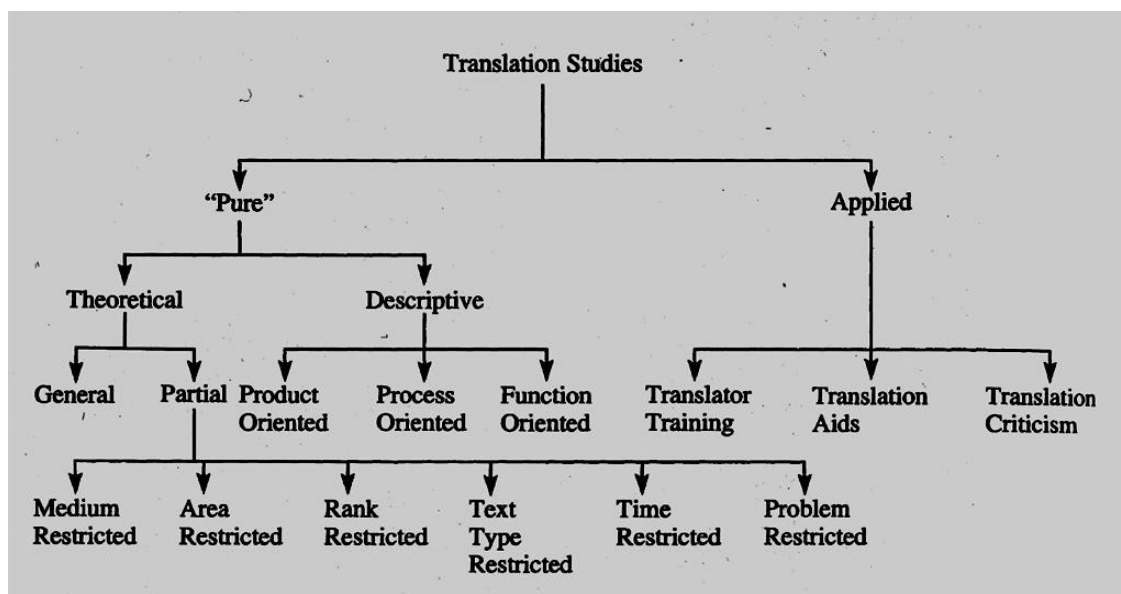


Figure 2.1 Holmes's 'Map' of Translation Studies (from Toury 1995: 10)

Holmes (1988) first approves the idea that translation studies should be looked upon as an autonomous branch of knowledge. He further argues that translation studies should also be regarded as an empirical discipline (ibid: 71). This is justified by the fact that translation studies 'take the phenomena of translating and translation as their basis or focus' (ibid). He proceeds to divide the discipline of translation studies into two basic categories: 'pure' and 'applied' (ibid). 'Pure' translation studies is defined as 'the type of research pursued for its own sake, quite apart from any direct practical applications outside its own terrain' (ibid), whereas 'applied' translation research is concerned with 'the applications that extend beyond the limits of the discipline, e.g. translation teaching, translator training, translation aids, or translation criticism' (ibid: 77).

'Pure' Translation Studies is further sub-divided into two sub-categories: (1) 'theoretical' and (2) 'descriptive' translation studies (ibid: 71). The goal of the former is 'to establish general principles by means of which phenomena of translating and translation can be explained and predicted', whereas 'descriptive' translation studies is intended 'to describe the phenomena of translating and translation as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience' (ibid). Seeking to look in more detail at 'theoretical' translation studies, Holmes further suggests that this category can be

divided into two sub-categories: (1) 'general' theoretical translation studies, and (2) 'partial' theoretical translation studies. (ibid: 73). 'General' theoretical translation studies is intended 'to explain and predict all phenomena falling within the terrain of translating and translation, to the exclusion of all phenomena falling outside it', whereas 'partial' theoretical translation theories are confined to examine some specific translation parameters (see below). One wonders whether adopting 'general' translation theories, as claimed by Holmes above, is a feasible task. My scepticism stems from the idea that Holmes's vision is so broad that it is difficult for such a trend to be viable or even realized. I also believe that such a task cannot be achieved by the translation theorist alone. Rather, this type of theorizing requires a systematic team work involving not only translation theorists, but scholars from related fields as well. Examples of these fields would be cultural studies, ethnography, communication studies, sociology, and psychology.

Holmes further divides 'partial' translation theories into some categories. These categories are:

(a) 'Medium-restricted theories': Holmes subdivides this type of theories into three categories:

(1) Theories of translation 'as performed by humans (human translation)';

(2) Theories of translation 'as performed by computers (machine translation)';

(3) Theories of translation 'as performed by the two in conjunction (mixed or machine-aided translation' (ibid: 74). 'Human' translation is further subdivided into 'written translation' or 'spoken translation', i.e. interpreting (ibid).

(b) 'Area-restricted theories': These constitute translation theories which are confined to certain languages or groups of languages and cultures. Holmes further remarks that 'language-restricted theories have close affinities with work being done in comparative linguistics and stylistics' (ibid). An example of research in this area would be Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995): a contrastive stylistic study between French and English, with particular emphasis on the implications involved in the process of translation.

(c) 'Rank-restricted theories': These are translation theories which are restricted to a certain level of language, e.g. the level of the word, the text, or the culture (Holmes 1988: 75).

(d) 'Text-type restricted theories': These are theories which are confined to a specific genre, e.g. literary, business, and/or technical translation (ibid).

(e) 'Time-restricted theories': These, argues Holmes, can be divided into two sub-categories: (1) theories addressing the translation of contemporary texts, and (2) theories which are related to the translation of texts from older periods (ibid: 76).

(f) 'Problem-restricted theories': These are translation theories which are confined to specific translation problems, e.g. the translation of metaphors or of proper nouns (Holmes 1988: 76).

Holmes also divides 'descriptive' translation studies into three sub-categories (ibid: 72-73):

(1) 'Product-oriented' descriptive translation studies. The central goal of these is to describe existing translations and/or to make a comparison between some translations and their source text at a particular aspect;

(2) 'Function-oriented' descriptive translation studies. Central to this type of research is 'the description of the function of the translation in the recipient socio-cultural situation'. In other words, a core issue in this regard is to examine the impact of the translation in the target culture';

(3) 'Process-oriented' descriptive translation studies: The main goal in this type of study is to investigate 'the act of translating itself'. In other words, this kind of research seeks to explore what is happening in the translator's mind during the translation practice.

In the light of Holmes's map above, the following remarks should be taken into consideration:

- The current research falls into both areas of 'theoretical' and 'descriptive' translation studies. At the theoretical level, the present research adopts both theories of

‘context’ and theories of ‘function’ in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific references in the Qur’ān. From a descriptive perspective, the current research also seeks to explore to what extent the previous translators of the Qur’ān have succeeded in communicating these cultural implications at the functional level to the target reader in a different cultural reality. This is justified by Holmes who describes this likely overlap between the above categories of translation studies as ‘controversial’ (ibid: 78). Holmes also offers his justification for this overlap:

Translation theory, for instance, cannot do without the solid, specific data yielded by descriptive and applied translation studies; while on the other hand, one cannot even begin to work in one of the other two fields without having at least an intuitive theoretical hypothesis as one’s starting point (ibid).

Thus, each proposed category is not in isolation with one another. That is to say, translation theory is the key stone for ‘descriptive’ and ‘applied’ translation studies, while ‘descriptive’ and ‘applied’ studies provide theoretical translation studies with the necessary data by which these theories are examined;

- Because the current research addresses specific translation problems, i.e. polysemy and culture-specific expressions, it is located within the area of ‘partial’ translation theories;
- The current research is intended to investigate theories of translation as suggested by humans (human translation). Also, it falls into the area of ‘written translation’. It addresses the translation of what is believed by Muslims to be a revealed text in its written form. Central to this belief is the issue of ‘translatability’ of the Qur’ān (see 2.7);
- The current research seeks to investigate the notion of ‘equivalence’ at the linguistic and cultural level in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur’ān (see 2.6);
- The contextual approach adopted in this research seeks to examine the text within the surrounding cultural environment. In this sense, the current research addresses both the textual and the cultural level of language;

- The current research falls into the area of religious translation. It embraces the Qurʾān as a source text and its translation (s) as a target one (s);
- The present study addresses theories of context and function in translation studies (cf. Nida 1964/2003; Nida and Taber 1969/1982; Appiah 2000; Hermans 2003) and its related fields, e.g. anthropology (cf. Malinowski 1923/1949) and linguistics (cf. Firth 1964; Halliday and Hasan 1989; Keating and Duranti 2011);
- The current research is confined to investigating two central research problems: polysemy and cultural references in Qurʾān translation;
- The present research should also be located in the area of ‘product-oriented’ descriptive translation studies. As explained earlier, some existing Qurʾān translations will be discussed, with particular emphasis on the role of the translator as a ‘mediator’ of cultural interaction between Arabic and English (see 1.5; 5.7).

2.3 Van Doorslaer’s ‘Map’ of Translation Studies

Holmes’s ‘map’ has widely been employed in the field of translation studies. Realizing the value of dividing translation studies into three specific categories: theoretical, descriptive and applied, Hermans argues that this new approach to translation resulted in:

[a] considerable widening of the horizon, since any and all phenomena relating to translation, in the broadest sense, become objects of study, and on the other hand, it provides a more coherent and goal-directed type of investigation, because it operates within a definite conception of literature and remains aware of the interplay between theory and practice (Hermans 1985: 14).

However, some drawbacks to Holmes’s map have also been recognized. First, as noted earlier, Holmes himself admitted that the borderline between the suggested categories is artificial, i.e. the three suggested areas do overlap (Holmes 1988: 78; Munday 2001/2012: 19). In addition, some translation scholars have queried the reliability of some of the suggested categories. For instance, discussing the viability of Holmes’ map to the area of history of translation, Pym argues that ‘neither Holmes nor his commentators – at least those subscribing to the map and its variants – explicitly named a unified area for the historical study of translation’ (Pym 1998: 1). He points

out that though historical study of translation could be studied within 'time-restricted' theories of translation, the issue of whether to study history of translation under 'descriptive' or 'theoretical' translation studies 'merits some thought' (ibid). That is to say, history of translation may sometimes be studied under the 'product-oriented descriptive' translation studies or under the non-descriptive slots, like translation criticism' (ibid). A third query concerns the location of interpreting in the field of translation studies. As explained earlier, Holmes suggests that interpreting could be enrolled under 'human spoken translation' (Holmes 1988: 74). Alternatively, Munday argues that 'it would probably be best to consider interpreting as a parallel field, under the title of 'interpreting studies' (Munday 2001/2012:20). To justify his view, Munday refers his readers to Pöchhacker 2004, 2009. Munday further argues that audio-visual translation and sign language interpreting should also be looked upon as parallel fields to translation studies (ibid). The remarks above have fostered Pym's argument that 'translation studies cannot be reduced to Holmes' map' studies (Pym 1998: 1). These remarks have also paved the way for the emergence of a new suggested structure of translation.

The first decade of the twenty first century has witnessed the emergence of another 'map' of translation studies. This significant development took place in the course of establishing a new conceptual tool for the Benjamins Online Translation Studies Bibliography. Van Doorslaer (2007) gives a detailed account of this significant development.

Two motivations have encouraged Van Doorslaer to account for the new 'map' of translation studies. First, he sought to complement what Holmes had started (see 2.2.2). In addition, he was motivated to describe the new map of the field. In the words of Van Doorslaer:

The Holmes/Toury's map is a monument in Translation Studies. It is often referred to but only very few attempts have been made to complement it, let alone to draw completely new maps of the discipline (Van Doorslaer 2007: 217).

Van Doorslaer further remarks that this new map is both 'open' and 'descriptive' (ibid). It is 'open' in the sense that this new conceptual tool is open to new suggestions, additions, or modifications. It is also 'descriptive' in the sense that it provides an adequate description of main categories of translation studies and their sub-divisions. In this new map, two basic areas of translation studies can be identified (ibid: 223). These are:

(a) 'Translation Studies', which cover both 'translation studies' and 'interpreting studies' and

(b) 'Translation', i.e. 'the act of translating' (Munday 2012: 22). This also includes both 'translation' and 'interpreting'.

'Translation studies' is further sub-divided into four basic categories. These are:

(1) 'Approaches', e.g. 'anthropological' approach, 'cultural' approach, 'historical' approach, 'linguistic' approach;

(2) 'Theories', e.g. 'skopos theory', 'polysystem theory', 'speech act' theory, 'action' theory;

(3) 'Research methods', e.g. 'descriptive' approach, 'empirical' approach, 'functionalist' approach;

(4) 'Applied translation studies', e.g. 'criticism', 'didactics', 'institutional environment' (Van Doorslaer 2007: 230).

Parallel to the 'basic' map of translation above, there is also a basic 'transfer map' which covers technical terms adopted in the process of transfer from the source into the target text (ibid: 226). This map includes 'strategies, procedures, norms or translation tools, contextual or situational aspects to be taken into account' (ibid). In the light of the categories of 'translation studies' above, the present research suggests a 'functional' approach to the Qur'ānic context in the translation of polysemy and cultural references in Qur'ān translation. Therefore, both theories of 'context' and 'function' will be adopted.

On the other hand, 'translation' as an act, elaborates Van Doorslaer, is further sub-divided into four sub-categories. These are:

- (1) 'Lingual mode', which covers both 'intra-lingual' and 'inter-lingual' mode;
- (2) 'Typology based on media: this includes 'printed', 'audio-visual' which is divided into 'subtitling', 'surtitling' and 'electronic';
- (3) 'Modes of translation', e.g. 'formal'/'dynamic' translation, 'semantic'/'communicative', 'overt'/'covert', 'direct'/'indirect';
- (4) 'Fields of translation', which cover 'political', 'journalistic', 'technical', 'literary', 'religious', 'scientific' and/or 'commercial' (ibid: 223).

In the light of the four categories above, the present research is located in the area of 'inter-lingual' translation. It examines the Arabic-English translation of two problematic issues in the Qur'ān. Thus, it is also located in the field of translating religious texts. In addition, the present research addresses the written form of the Qur'ānic text, so it is located in the area of the 'printed' media. It also adopts the 'dynamic' equivalence in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. Before moving to examine theories of 'context' and theories of 'function' in translation studies, more light will first be shed on what is meant by the term 'theory' and the significance of adopting theories in translation. These serve both as an introduction and as a justification for the subsequent theoretical framework.

2.4 What is a 'Theory' and Why Translation Theories?

The purpose of this section is two-fold: (i) to establish a definition to the term 'theory', and (ii) to argue for the significance of adopting theories in translation studies. According to Chesterman, the term 'theory' was derived from the Greek word (theoros) used in Classical Greece to communicate various meanings. Central to these is 'the person who sees with a purpose' (Chesterman 1997:1). Thus, Chesterman further argues that the term (theory) expresses both an 'outward' and an 'inward' sense. In other words, it communicates both the explicit meaning of 'viewing / looking at' and the implicit meaning of 'contemplation and speculation' (ibid: 2). Pym (2010: 1)

agrees and argues that 'translators are theorising all the time'. In his view, translators perform this act of theorising at two central points: (i) once the translation problem is identified, and (ii) whenever translators make a decision to go for one option rather than another (ibid). Moving to the manner of 'theorizing', Pym claims that at either of the two stages above, translators 'bring into play a series of ideas about what translation is and how it should be carried out' (ibid). This stage of 'internal arguments' may at a certain time 'turn into an explicit theory' (ibid: 2). In brief, the term 'theorizing' implies both (i) identifying the translation problem, and (ii) adopting a proposed approach by which the research problem is addressed.

Various translation scholars have pointed to the significance of approaching a given translation problem by means of a translation theory. In the view of Baker (1992/2011: 1-2), having a 'strong' theoretical background stimulates translators 'to reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another'. Baker further summarizes the value of adopting a certain theoretical approach as follows:

- (a) Acknowledging a specific theory 'minimizes the risks involved on any given occasion' and helps to 'deal with the unpredictable' (ibid: 2);
- (b) Adopting a given theoretical approach provides the practising translator with 'a certain degree of confidence' (ibid). This confidence, explains Baker, stems from the knowledge that the translator's decision is based on 'concrete knowledge' rather than on 'intuition' (ibid);
- (c) Approving a specific theory 'provides the basis on which further developments in the field may be achieved' (ibid).

To further justify her view, Baker proceeds to explore aspects of similarities as well as differences between theories of translation studies and those of medicine or engineering. Examining aspects of similarities, Baker argues that professionalism in these three areas of knowledge necessitates having a theoretical framework in which decisions are made (ibid: 4). However, the only difference between medicine and engineering, and translation studies, adds Baker, is that 'translation is a very young discipline in academic terms' and, therefore, 'it needs to draw on the findings and

theories of other related disciplines to develop and formalize its own methods' (ibid). Based on this insight, it should be noted that the issue of context and culture in translation studies will be addressed not only in translation studies, but in other related fields, such as anthropology and linguistics.

Chesterman and Wagner (2002: 1-2) agree and argue that translation theories help translators to improve their performance and provide them with 'a feeling of professional self-esteem' similar to theories of mechanics and cybernetics which help to produce better robots. Therefore, the value of establishing translation theories lies not in the theories themselves, but in their 'application' and their 'social usefulness' (ibid). At this point, Chesterman and Wagner (2002) agree with Holmes's view above that translation theories are in a way or another correlated with 'applied translation studies'. They proceed to claim that translation theorists 'should also seek to be descriptive, to describe, explain and understand what translators do actually do' (ibid: 2).

Pym (2010: 1) agrees with the insights above on the value of translation theories. He asserts that translation theories 'set the scene' for both processes of identifying the translation problem and making decisions (ibid). For this reason, Pym believes that 'theorizing' is a regular translation practice. However, explains Pym, 'not all inner theorizing turns into public theories' (ibid: 2). That is to say, a given theory acquires publicity under two conditions: (1) this 'theorizing' is agreed upon by two or more translation scholars, and (2) 'when there are disagreements over different ways of translating' (ibid). These different orientations, adds Pym, help to distinguish a certain theoretical translational approach from another (ibid). At this point, Pym acknowledges the value of both adopting and arguing for a given translation theory, because 'when arguments occur, theories provide translators with valuable tools not only to defend their positions, but also to find out about other positions' (ibid: 4). This, explains Pym, widens the scope of translation theories and helps to explore different possibilities of translation (ibid).

Having defined what is meant by 'translation theory' and the value of adopting a given translation theory, we can now proceed to explore both (i) central theories of context

and culture in translation studies and in other related fields, such as anthropology, linguistics and philosophy, and (ii) functional theories of translation.

2.5 Theories of Context

This section is intended to investigate one central theme: context and culture as examined by anthropologists, translation scholars, and linguists. The ultimate goal is two-fold:

(a) To pursue the development of ideas in exploring the two concepts since the second decade of the twentieth century;

(b) To consider the tools of analysis which are proposed by some key scholars in these areas.

To achieve these goals, a chronological survey will be done by selecting one or more key figure from each field, i.e. anthropology, contrastive linguistics, philosophy, and translation studies.

2.5.1 Why Theories of Context? Why in Translation Studies and Other Related Disciplines?

The issue of context in translation has been at the centre of interest of some translation scholars. For instance, Baker (2006) argues that, though 'extensively invoked' in many translation studies, the notion of context 'has rarely been critiqued and elaborated in the study of translation' (Baker 2006: 321). In her words:

In fact, no scholarly publication within linguistics or translation studies has yet attempted to explore the issue of context as it impacts on translational behaviour in any depth (ibid: 322).

House (2006:338) agrees and argues that, though research in text linguistics has widely been adopted in translation studies, 'the notion of context, its relation to text and the role it plays in translation has received much less attention' (ibid). In this sense, theories of context will be adopted in the current research with the goal of exploring the viability of tools of contextual analysis in revealing the hidden layers of meaning

involved in translating polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān, at both the lexical and cultural level.

Theories of context and culture have been approached in both translation studies and other related fields for three reasons:

(a) In the words of House (ibid): 'the notion of context is central to a variety of disciplines concerned with language use, including translation studies' (ibid). Thus, approaching the notion of context in both translation studies and other related disciplines widens the scope of research and provides more tools of analysis to be adopted;

(b) As discussed earlier (see 1.2.1), culture-oriented translation studies is itself an inter-disciplinary field of knowledge. It 'draws on some other related disciplines, without being a sub-division of any of them' (Snell-Hornby 1988: 2);

(c) The correlation between translation studies and other related fields, such as pragmatics, ethnography and cultural studies requires further research. Baker points to this need and argues that, though the notion of context has been a core issue in both pragmatics and translation studies, 'no monograph, collected volume, or special issue of a journal in either discipline has so far been dedicated to exploring the intersection of interests and challenges in these domains' (Baker 2006: 317). In this context, one of the goals of the current research is to explore one of the meeting points between pragmatics and translation studies, as represented by the contextual view of meaning in translating polysemy and culture-specific references in the Qur'ān.

2.5.2 The Anthropological Tradition

In the field of anthropology, i.e. 'the comparative study of human societies and cultures and their development' (Soanes and Stevenson 1998/2005:66), it was Bronislaw Malinowski who first pointed to the difficulty of translating cultural expressions from one language to another (Malinowski 1923/1949:299-300). In his view, translating this type of expressions requires having both (i) the 'verbal

equivalence’ and (ii) some ‘additional knowledge’ (ibid: 300). This ‘additional knowledge’ relates to the immediate living environment in which these expressions are used (ibid: 301). In describing this surrounding cultural environment, Malinowski coins the expression ‘context of situation’ (ibid: 306).

Pointing to the necessity of investigating the meaning of linguistic units within their ‘situational’ context, Malinowski invites his readers to consider a lively utterance quoted from a conversation of native speakers in Trobriand Islands, N.E. New Guinea (ibid: 300 - 301). He provides both the native text and its back translation:

<i>Tasakaulo</i>	<i>Kaymatana</i>	<i>yakida;</i>	<i>tawoulo</i>	<i>ovanu;</i>
We	front-wood	ourselves;	we paddle	in place
<i>tasivila</i>	<i>tagine</i>	<i>soda;</i>	<i>isakaulo</i>	<i>ka’u’uya</i>
we turn	we see	companion ours;	he runs	rear-wood
<i>oluvieki</i>	<i>similaveta</i>	<i>Pilolu</i>		
behind	their sea-arm	Pilolu		

Malinowski further raises the question: does the above word-for-word translation help the audience decode the meaning involved? He answers, ‘certainly not’ (ibid: 300). To understand the meaning involved in the text above, the audience needs both a linguistic and a cultural translation. In other words, the above text should be contextualized at both the linguistic and the cultural level (ibid) (see also 5.2; 5.3.1).

From a cultural standpoint, the text above refers to an overseas trading expedition in which a competition of canoes takes place between the natives of the Trobriand Islands, N. E. New Guinea. In the text above, the expression ‘kaymatana’ metaphorically refers to the canoes used in the competition. The use of ‘kaymatana - front-wood’ and ‘ka’u’uya – rear wood’ obviously refers to the sense of competition involved. Only in this cultural context would it be easy to understand the significance of the idea that the front competitive sailors look back to see their companions lagging behind on the sea-arm of Pilolu. Thus, an optimal cultural translation into English of

the above text would be: 'We run the front-canoes ourselves; we paddle in place; [happily] we turn to see our companions, who are lagging behind on the sea-arm of Pilolu'.

Highlighting the emotive dimensions involved in translating the text above, Malinowski further argues that this cultural episode is not 'a statement of fact'. Rather, it is an event of boast and self- glorification for the participant natives (ibid). This is expressed in the use of 'front' and 'rear', which are indicative of 'people whose attention is so highly occupied with competitive activities' (ibid). These words also reflect the tribal nature of these natives, in which ceremonies, commercial life and business projects are given priority (ibid). Thus, Malinowski comes to the conclusion that a 'significant' translation of these and similar expressions requires both (i) having a lexical equivalent and (ii) providing the target reader with 'a preliminary instruction' in which the linguistic, the cultural and the psychological dimensions are revealed (ibid). In the words of Malinowski:

What I have tried to make clear by analysis of primitive linguistic text is that language is essentially rooted in the reality of the culture, the tribal life and customs of people, and that it cannot be explained without constant reference to these broader contexts of verbal utterance (ibid: 305).

Therefore, losing sight of the immediate living situation in which cultural expressions are used, and relying on mere linguistic equivalence, will surely result in ambiguity and misunderstanding (ibid: 301). In Malinowski's words, mere linguistic analysis makes these words 'sound like a riddle or a meaningless jumble of words; certainly not like a significant, unambiguous statement' (ibid). Applying this ethnographic vision to the translation of cultural expressions as a problematic task, Malinowski offers an optimal solution:

Such words can only be translated not by giving their imaginary equivalent – a real one obviously cannot be found - but by explaining the meaning of each of them through an exact ethnographic account of the sociology, culture and tradition of the native community (ibid: 299-300).

However, Malinowski further argues that the substantial barrier towards an adequate 'ethnographic' translation is that 'the whole manner in which a native language is used is different from our own' (ibid: 300). At this point, Malinowski emphasizes the idea that the central problem in translation does not only lie in the linguistic differences between the source and target language. Rather, the problem also lies in the cultural incompatibility between the two languages. This clearly conforms to Sapir's view that 'no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality; the worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached' (Sapir 1949/1958:162). However, it should also be noted that there are two versions of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: a strong and a weak one. On the one hand, the strong version, known as 'linguistic determinism' argues that human actions and thoughts are fully determined by language. In the words of Sapir:

It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built on the language habits of the group (ibid).

On the other hand, the weaker version, known as 'linguistic relativity' argues that human behaviour and thoughts are partially determined by language. In the words of Whorf:

Linguistics is essentially the quest of meaning. Its main concern is to light up the thick darkness of the language, and thereby of much of the thought, the culture and the outlook upon life of a given community (Whorf 1964: 133).

Sapir's hypothesis above that thought and behaviour are entirely determined by language would lead to the emergence of the issue of 'untranslatability'. However, translation in general and Qur'ān translation in particular are possible and indispensable (see 2.7). Also, such a 'strong' form of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is strongly challenged by the fact that translations do exist and are produced, even of culturally bound texts. In short, though some Qur'ānic expressions resist translation due to linguistic-/or cultural

considerations, communicating Qur'ān meanings remains both a possible task and an urgent need.

Malinowski draws the conclusion that cultural expressions, such as those which describe the native social order, the native beliefs, the specific customs, ceremonies, or magical rites should be translated both linguistically and culturally (Malinowski 1923/ 1949: 299). He further proceeds to shed more light on what he means by 'context of situation'. He argues that examining the 'context of situation' requires in the first place exploring 'the general conditions under which language is used' (ibid: 306). Moving to provide his reader with particular details on 'context of situation', Malinowski claims that:

Each verbal statement by a human being has the aim and function of expressing some thought or feeling actual at that moment and in that situation, and necessary for some reason or other to be made known to another person or persons – in order either to serve purposes of common action, or to establish ties of purely social communion, or else to deliver the speaker of violent feelings or passions (ibid: 307).

Based on the above, it can be argued that Malinowski's 'context of situation' implies examining three basic aspects: (1) the function of the text, (2) the participants and (3) the text as a cultural action. In brief, by emphasizing the need to explore the cultural dimension of language, and coining the notion of 'context of situation', Malinowski (1923/1949) paved the way to examine language in its cultural context.

2.5.3 Text and Context in Linguistics

Malinowski's views were further approved and developed by various linguists. One of these was the British linguist John Firth in his two books: *Speech* (1930) and *Tongues of Men* (1937), brought together in one volume under the title of *Tongues of Men and Speech* (1964). Firth (1964, ix) agrees with Malinowski that language should be examined as a social phenomenon. That is to say, analysing a given text requires investigating both the linguistic and 'situational' dimension (ibid: 16). The way to

achieve this, argues Firth, is not to study the text as an abstract entity. Rather, language should be examined in use. In the words of Firth:

Anything you say or write as an individual in a specific situation on a particular occasion is speech. Speech is personal and social activity interacting with other forces in a situation. It is dynamic (ibid).

Firth points to the significance of examining both (i) the system of language, which covers both vocabulary and grammar and (ii) the system of culture, to which the 'context of situation' is a key component. He further gives his definition to the term 'situation':

The situation is the psychological and practical moment. It is what is going on between two (or more) people, whose eyes, hands, and goodness know what else are sharing a common interest in a bit of life (ibid: 110).

Based on the above, it is obvious that both Malinowski (1923/1949) and Firth (1964) share the idea that there are two central components of 'context of situation': the immediate physical environment and the interlocutors. To these Firth also adds sign and body language as a third constituent.

Firth proceeds to investigate the notion of meaning, which, he argues, lies in the 'complex of relations of various kinds between the component terms of context of situation' (ibid). He proceeds to argue that words should be looked upon as 'acts, events and habits', and, by so doing, priority is given to the social and cultural dimension rather than the mental one (ibid: 173). His justification for prioritizing the cultural over the mental analysis is that it is difficult to observe the inner mental states taking place in the mind, and even when this type of knowledge is available, a sense of mystery is often added (ibid)⁴. To sum up, Firth (1964) both acknowledges and develops Malinowski's notion of 'context of situation'. He evidently argues that the function of the text can be determined by investigating the linguistic aspects within

⁴ It is worth noting that nowadays attempts are made to examine the neurological activity and its relation to the study of language (cf. Croft and Cruse 2004; Evans and Green 2006).

their wider context which covers both the immediate situation and the entire 'context of culture'.

The key figure in functional linguistics in the second half of the twentieth century is Michael Halliday, who defines the 'context of situation' as 'the environment in which the text comes to life' (Halliday 1978: 109). In fact, it was Halliday and Hasan who radically developed this notion of 'context of situation'. In their view, the structure of 'context of situation' is built on three basic dimensions: the 'field' of discourse, the 'tenor' of discourse, and the 'mode' of discourse (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 13). These three dimensions constitute what Halliday and Hasan refer to as 'register' (ibid). Halliday and Hasan proceed to account for these dimensions as follows (ibid):

(a) The 'field' of discourse: this refers to 'what is happening, the nature of the social action that is taking place, what the participants are engaged in';

(b) The 'tenor' of discourse: this dimension is related to the interlocutors: who they are? What are their roles? Is the relationship between these participants temporary or permanent?

(c) The 'mode' of discourse: this dimension is linked to the text itself: the structure of the text, the 'status' of the text, the purpose of the text, e.g. argumentative, persuasive, didactic, etc., the 'channel' of the text, i.e. written or spoken.

To each of the above dimensions, a certain function is attached. The 'field' of discourse represents the 'ideational' function, i.e. 'the representation of experience and the world' (Fairclough 1995: 6); the 'tenor' of discourse represents the 'interpersonal' function, i.e. 'the social interaction between the participants' (ibid), whereas the 'mode' of discourse performs the 'textual' function, i.e. 'tying parts of the text into a coherent whole and tying texts into situational contexts' (ibid). In brief, Halliday both proposes a three-dimensional structure of 'context of situation' and suggests a specific function for each of these dimensions.

The notion of context is central, not only to anthropology and text-linguistics, but to discourse analysis as well. Discourse analysis can be defined as 'the field of knowledge which focuses on knowledge about language beyond the word,

clause, phrase and sentence that is needed for successful communication' (Paltridge 2006/2011: 2). Gee (1999/2011: 29) agrees and argues that 'discourse' represents:

[w]ays of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity (ibid).

Similarly, Keating and Duranti emphasize the significance of the anthropological perspective in the contemporary research of discourse analysis. They consider this dimension to be the main motivator for the current orientation toward culture:

A major shift in our understanding of language within anthropology over the last fifty years has been that it is not only a system of symbols for expressing thoughts and representing human activities and goals, but also a cultural practice, that is, a form of action that both presupposes and at the same time brings about a unique ways of being in the world (Keating and Duranti 2011: 332).

Considering the insights above, it is clear that the concept of culture has remarkably been looked upon as a central dimension in various fields of knowledge. Yet, attention has often been paid to the linguistic aspects involved in understanding the Qur'ān (cf. Drāz 2001; Abdel-Haleem 1999/2011; Sardar 2011), with little emphasis laid to the investigation of the cultural aspects involved (cf. Faiq 2004; Abdul-Raof 2005). Therefore, further research is needed to communicate these aspects to the audience in a different culture. Translation should play an essential role in achieving this goal.

2.5.4 The 'Cultural Turn' in Translation Studies

Conforming to the common thread discussed above, and in the aftermath of what is commonly referred to as 'the cultural turn' in translation studies (cf. Bassnett and Lefevere 1990/1995; Snell-Hornby 2006: 47-67), recent translation studies have also emphasized examining the text at the cultural level. In the words of House (2009: 11):

Translating is not only a linguistic act; it is also a cultural one, an act of communication across cultures. Translating always involves both language and culture simply because the two cannot really be separated. Language is culturally embedded: it both expresses and

shapes cultural reality, and the meanings of linguistic items, be they words or larger segments of text, can only be understood when considered together with the cultural context in which these linguistic items are used.

Similarly, examining the issue of 'culture bumps' in translation, i.e. problems arising from differences in cultures, Leppihalme argues that 'it is not enough to work out how best to render the words of the source text; it is much more important to work out what the words mean in a particular situational and cultural context' (Leppihalme 1997: viii). She further justifies this view arguing that 'the increasing internationalisation of our world means that communication across cultures needs to proceed as smoothly as possible, without too many hitches and breakdowns' (ibid: 2).

Likewise, Hatim agrees with Halliday's view that the text and its context cannot be separated: 'no text can remain in such a state of relative isolation from the facts of socio-cultural life' (Hatim 2009: 47). He also agrees with Fowler (1981: 21) that the text represents the notion of language, whereas the context designates the social as well as cultural atmosphere surrounding the text (ibid: 37). Thus, Hatim comes to the conclusion that 'texts must be seen as macro-structures through which the language user can take stance on an issue or a set of issues' (ibid: 47).

Emphasizing the central role of the translator as a 'cultural mediator' in the contemporary global world, Bassnett argues that the central contribution of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies lies in the remarkable interest in 'examining the role of the translator not only as a bilingual interpreter, but also as a figure whose role is to mediate between cultures' (Bassnett 2011 (a): 95) (see 5.2). Thus, translation should be regarded as both a process of linguistic transfer and an instrument of cultural interaction (ibid).

In short, culture-oriented theories of context have always been a centre of interest, not only in translation studies, but in related disciplines as well. These trends should serve as a catalyst in exploring the viability in translating culture in the Qur'ān at the cultural level.

2.6 ‘Equivalence’ in Translation

Central to the research done in the field of translation studies is the issue of ‘equivalence’. Relevant to the problem raised in the current research are two major notions: the ‘dynamic’ and what might be described as the ‘cultural’ equivalent. Therefore, the discussions below will be limited to three major issues:

(a) The radical development in the treatment of the notion of equivalence from equivalence at the word level (cf. Baker 1992: 2011: 9-49), moving to the textual level (cf. Neubert 1985: 18; Neubert and Shreve 1992: 4-12), and finally to translation at the level of culture (cf. Katan 1999/2004: 72-83). This serves as a historical framework of the issue under discussion;

(b) Relevant approaches to ‘function’ in translation studies will be highlighted: Nida (1964), Nida and Taber (1969/1982), Newmark (1981, 1988) and Koller (1995). These justify the central argument established in the current research: appreciating the hidden layers of meaning involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur’ān requires contextualising the notion at the functional level;

(c) The notion of ‘thick translation’ as originated by Appiah (2000) and developed by Hermans (2003) will be discussed. This justifies the argument for the cultural orientation in the treatment of some polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān.

2.6.1 ‘Equivalence’ in Translation: A Historical Background

Since the first decade of the sixties, the notion of ‘equivalence’ in translation studies has undergone a remarkable development. Ever after, the unit of translation has clearly been developed, from the word, moving to the text, and ending with the entire culture. In the sixties, translation as a process was clearly influenced by linguistic orientations. A key advocate for this linguistic approach to translation was Catford (1965), who defined the process of translation as ‘the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent material in another language (TL)’ (Catford, 1965: 20). Thus, translation as a process was conceived as a transfer of linguistic signs. In other words, translation was realized as a linguistic discipline, in which a source language linguistic unit is transferred into its equivalent target language one.

Consequently, the two systems of language, i.e. the source language system and its target linguistic equivalent, are in contact.

Early in the eighties, an inclination towards analysing the whole of the text can clearly be observed. A leading proponent for this approach was Neubert (1985) who defined translation as 'source-text induced target text production' (Neubert 1985: 18). This textual orientation has consequently resulted in a remarkable tendency to categorise texts into text types and genres. Writes Trosborg:

Throughout the last last decade, genre analysis, in particular, has enjoyed immense popularity. This field of study has attracted the attention of literary scholars, rhetoricians, sociologists, discourse analysts, cognitive scientists, machine translators, computational linguists, English for Special Purposes specialists, business communication experts and language teachers (Trosborg 1997: 3).

Accordingly, some new research questions have been raised: what is the impact of this textual textual orientation on the process of translation? How do translators deal with these distinct genres? Do translation strategies differ according to the genre? These and similar queries have resulted in the emergence of new terms in translation studies: 'legal translation' (cf. Bhatia 1997), 'political translation' (cf. Schäffner 1997; Trosborg 1997); religious translation (cf. Long 2005) and 'technical translation' (cf. Hansen 1997).

Toward the end of the eighties, the notion of equivalence witnessed another development. This involved the tendency to consider, not only the text as the basic unit of translation, but also the culture in which the text is used. Snell Hornby records this shift:

During the course of the last thirty years, the study of language has undergone radical changes: the focus of interest has widened from the purely historical to the contemporary, from the prescriptive to the descriptive, from the theoretical system to the concrete realization, from the micro-level to the macro-structure of the text (Snell Hornby 1988: 7-8)

The key word in the above statement is the term 'macro-structure'. In this new approach, known as the 'cultural turn' in translation studies, calls to move beyond

language to examine the cultural context in which the two culture systems are in contact have obviously been raised (see 2.5.4).

2.6.2 'Dynamic' Equivalence in Translation

Most discussions on the notion of 'equivalence' in the field of translation studies have taken the form of a dichotomy, e.g 'formal' versus 'dynamic' equivalence (Nida 1964/2003: 159 ; Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 15), 'semantic' versus 'communicative' translation (Newmark 1981), 'overt' versus 'covert' translation (House 1997: 66), 'documentary' versus 'instrumental' translation (Nord 1988/2005: 80). The discussion below is confined to Nida, Nida and Taber, Newmark, and Koller (1995), because the insights argued in these theories are closely relevant to the methodology of the current research.

In their discussion on the 'priorities' involved in the process of translation, Nida and Taber make a distinction between 'contextual consistency' and 'verbal consistency' (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 15). The former refers to 'the quality which results from translating a source language word by that expression in the receptor language which best fits each context rather than by the same expression in all contexts' (ibid: 199), whereas the latter refers to 'the quality resulting from the effort to translate a given word from the original consistency by a single word [in all contexts] in the receptor language' (ibid). To illustrate 'contextual consistency', Nida and Taber invite their readers to consider the translation of the Greek word (*soma* - body), as used in various passages of the Bible. In its various linguistic contexts in the Bible, this expression extends to communicate five distinct shades of meaning. These are: body, herself, corpse, your very selves, and lower nature (ibid: 15). They further argue that 'contextual consistency' is prior to 'verbal consistency' and it is also one aspect of 'dynamic' equivalence. This technique is viable to the translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān. It paves the way for the translator of the Qur'ān to appreciate the various senses involved in using the Qur'ānic polysemous expressions in their distinct linguistic contexts (see 1.2.2).

Nida's 'dynamic', later called 'functional' equivalent (see 5.2) is based on the argument that 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message' (Nida 1964/2003: 159). In other words, Nida's 'dynamic' equivalence is based on the notion of 'equivalent effect', where the effect of the translation on the target text receiver should be the same as it is on the source text reader. Newmark criticizes this sense of identity and describes it as 'illusory' (Newmark 1981/1988: 38). He argues that 'the conflict of loyalties, the gap between emphasis on source and target language, will always remain the overriding problem in translation theory and practice' (ibid). Thus, Newmark suggests substituting Nida's 'same' equivalent with 'as close as possible' one:

Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original (Newmark 1981/1988: 39).

Following Newmark, I have a sense of scepticism regarding the ability of the translator of the Qur'ān to achieve 'the same' equivalent effect, as claimed by Nida above. My scepticism stems from the 'distance' of time and place between the source and target culture. Also, the audience in both cultures has different experience and expectations. Alternatively, it is suggested that the translator of the Qur'ān should both adopt Nida's 'contextual consistency' and, simultaneously, update the audience on aspects of similarity as well as differences between the two cultures. This, I believe, would narrow the cultural gap between the two languages and restrain the dominance of a culture over another. This view is also justified by Schäffner who argues that the source and target text differ in their intended functions. The source text fulfils 'a primary communicative function' in the source culture, whereas the target text fulfils 'a secondary communicative function' in the target culture' (Schäffner 1998: 83-84). In this context, it can be argued that the translator of the Qur'ān is responsible for retaining both functions, and the more successful he/she is in achieving this task, with the minimal loss of meaning, the better his/her translation will be.

A third attempt to examine the notion of 'equivalence' in translation was done by Koller (1995), in which he suggests five distinct types of equivalence in the process of translation. Koller first emphasizes the idea that an appropriate textual analysis in the process of translation is double-edged. That is to say, it involves an examination of both (i) the source text and (ii) 'the communicative conditions on the receiver's side' (Koller 1995: 197). This latter emphasis assigned to the receiver seems to be the first signal towards Koller's 'pragmatic equivalence', in which the audience's needs and expectations are at the centre of the translator's interests. Koller proceeds to argue that a linguistic-textual analysis in the process of translation involves an identification of five distinct types of equivalence. These are:

(a) 'Referential' equivalent: this type of equivalence relates to 'the extra-linguistic circumstances conveyed by the text' (Koller 1995: 197). In other words, it involves examining factors other than the linguistic content of the text, e.g. the 'context of culture';

(b) 'Connotative' equivalent: this is the type of equivalence 'conveyed via mode of verbalisation' (ibid). In other words, it involves the translator's choice of words, especially synonymy and near synonymy (Munday 2001/2012: 74). This type of equivalence argues Koller, is often referred to by some translation scholars as the 'stylistic' equivalence (ibid);

(c) 'Text-normative' equivalence: this type of equivalence relates to 'parallel texts in the target language' (Koller 1995: 197). In other words, it involves identifying various types of texts with the goal of exploring how each type behaves in different ways (Munday 2001/2012: 74);

(d) 'Pragmatic' equivalence: this is similar to Nida's 'functional' and / or Newmark's 'communicative' equivalence above. It relates to the effect of the equivalence on the target audience, i.e. 'it takes the receiver into account' (Koller 1995: 197);

(e) 'Formal' equivalence: this, argues Koller, involves an 'aesthetic' analysis of the source text (ibid). This type of equivalence is often referred to by others as the 'expressive' equivalence (Munday 2001/2012: 74).

In this context, it should be noted that Koller's 'referential' and 'pragmatic' equivalents are central to the current research problem. The former is essential in exploring the cultural dimension involved in the translation of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. The latter is closely relevant to the need to consider the target reader as one of the central factors in translation, both as a process and as a product.

2.6.3 'Thick' Translation

Closely relevant to the issue of context in translation is the notion of 'thick' translation. This technical phrase was originally discussed by Appiah (2000) and later approved by Hermans (2003). In the view of Appiah, literary translation should attempt to 'locate the text in a rich cultural and linguistic context' (Appiah 2000: 427). This contextualisation can be achieved by enriching the translation with annotations and accompanying glosses (ibid). To this translational practice Appiah coins the phrase 'thick translation' (ibid).

To justify the above argument, Appiah invites his readers to consider the translation of some proverbs used in the Twi language, which is the major language used in the city of Kumasi in Ghana (ibid: 418). Below are two of these proverbs:

(a) Asém a éhia Akanfoö no na Ntafoö de goro brékété.

[A matter which troubles the Akan people, the people of Gonja take to play the brékété drum];

(b) Kaka ne éka ne ayafunka fanyinam éka.

[Toothache and indebtedness and stomach ache, debt is preferable].

Appiah argues that bearing in mind the premise that 'translation is an attempt to find ways of saying in one language something that means the same as what has been said in another', the proverbs above seem to represent a case of translation resistance (ibid: 418). The reason for this is that an optimal translation of the above proverbs requires not only a literal translation of their linguistic units but also 'a little richer and thicker contextualisation', i.e. the cultural context in which the proverb is used (ibid:

422). For instance, the first proverb above might be used in many cultural situations where 'different people have different attitudes' (ibid: 422). From a cultural perspective, these contrasting attitudes are analogous to the differences of attitudes between Akan and Gonja peoples (ibid). Similarly, the second proverb above communicates the meaning that 'if one has to choose among evils, one should choose the least of them', a meaning which can be used in many cultural situations as well (ibid: 428). Therefore, Appiah argues that:

What we translate are utterances, things made with words by men and women, with voice or pen or keyboard; and those utterances are the products of actions, which like all actions are undertaken for reasons' (ibid: 418).

It is clear that Appiah's argument goes in line with Eco (1976) and Vermeer (1983). Eco argues that the meaning of the word 'can only be a cultural unit' (Eco 1976: 67). This 'cultural unit' can be defined as 'a semantic unit inserted into a system' (ibid). Similarly, Vermeer argues that translation is not only a process of linguistic transfer, but a 'complex form of action' as well (Vermeer 1983: 48, cited from Snell Hornby 2006: 52, see 5.2).

Following Grice (1975) (see 5.6.4.2), Appiah further claims that it is possible to realize the 'reasons' for these actions, because in each language there is a number of 'mutual intentions' and 'mutual expectations' between the user of and the audience. These also justify the argument that the use of language is 'conventional' (ibid: 419). Meaning, in the view of Appiah, is the product of this 'convention', 'mutual knowledge' and 'mutual intentions' between the user and the receiver (ibid: 423). In short, meaning should be looked upon as both a linguistic and a cultural unit.

Similarly, pointing to the significance of the 'situational' meaning, Hermans (2003) refers his readers to Jones' revisionary reading of Aristotle (1962). In his discussion of the Poetics of Aristotle and Greek Tragedy, Jones argues that Aristotle thought of tragedy not in an 'individualized' or 'romantic', but in a 'situational' manner (Jones 1962: 14-16; Hermans 2003: 380). For example, Aristotle did not speak of 'the change in the hero's fortune'. Alternatively, he communicated the notion of 'the change of fortune' (Jones 1962:14). This, accordingly, affects the process of translation. For

example, below are two different translations of the notion of 'fatal error' in tragedy: a pre-Jones' translation, followed by Jones' alternative suggestion:

Pre-Jones' Translation:

'[a] change from ignorance to knowledge, [which] leads either to love or to hatred between persons' (Dorsch 1965: 64)

Jones' revisionary translation:

'[a] change from ignorance to knowledge, and thus to a state of nearness and dearness [Philia] or to a state of enmity, on the part of those....' (Jones 1962: 58).

Hermans agrees with Jones and argues that achieving a 'situational' translation requires providing the audience with informative notes and 'critical apparatus', as these would break 'the linearity of one-to-one lexical matching' (Hermans 2003: 381).

Looking into more detail of 'thick translation', Hermans first emphasizes the value of 'thick translation' for researchers who are studying translation across languages and cultures (ibid: 386). In his view, 'thick translation' is analogous to the ethnographers' 'thick description' in which readers are provided with both a detailed description of a given society and aspects of similarities and differences between different societies (ibid). Looking at translation from this perspective, Hermans argues that 'thick translation' can be looked upon as 'a term for the patient engagement, interpreting, contextualising and negotiation' (ibid: 386). In this sense, the notion of 'thick translation' also implies two essential remarks (ibid: 386-387):

(a) The impossibility of having a 'total translation', i.e. the success in achieving the pre-determined translation goal(s) is relative;

(b) 'The unwillingness to appropriate the other through translation'.

The two remarks above are crucial for the present research. The first goes against the view that the exact meaning can be communicated. It evidently supports the argument

that translation loss is inevitable. In this sense, it is the responsibility of the translator of the Qur'ān to compensate for this loss (see 2.7; 5.3). The second remark is central in the treatment of culture-specific expressions. An essential aspect involved in the treatment of these expressions is to preserve their cultural sensitivity. In this sense, these expressions evidently resist being appropriated (see 5.6).

To sum up, Hermans claims that 'thick translation' carries a lot of advantages for both the process of translation and the translator. As for the former, 'thick translation' gives priority to interpretation, description and contextualisation. Also, it sheds light on similarities and differences between the source and target text. In addition, 'thick translation' leads to a concrete rather than an abstract translation. Besides, it enriches the field with both new terms and new translational practices. As for the latter, 'thick translation' counteracts the translator's neutral position. Alternatively, it instigates the translator to mediate, interpret, or even interfere in the translation. The voice of the translator in 'thick translation' is both obvious and strong (ibid: 387).

2.7 Translating Religious Texts

This section aims to investigate the relevant research and theory into translating holy texts in general, including research from translating other religions and to examine recent debates on the issue of 'translatability' versus 'untranslatability' of the Qur'ān. Therefore, it falls into two sub-sections: (i) Translating Holy Texts (see 2.7.1) and (ii) Qur'ān Translatability (see 2.7.2). The former is intended to constitute a general framework under which the latter should be included.

2.7.1 Translating Religious Texts

Examining translation studies from a cultural perspective involves investigating the concept of inter-disciplinarity of translation theory. Inter-disciplinarity is the investigation of the correlation between translation studies as an independent field of knowledge and other related fields, e.g. cultural studies, psychology, ethnology, religion, etc. In the words of Snell-Hornby: '[t]ranslation studies as a culturally-oriented subject draws on a number of disciplines, including psychology, ethnology and philosophy,

without being a sub-division of any of them' (Snell-Hornby 1988:2). In light of this interdisciplinary approach, and bearing in mind that religion is an integral part of culture, this section aims to examine the relationship between translation and religion.

Long sees various motives for translating holy texts. Amongst these are 'the search for a new spirituality, the pursuit of truth, or simply dissatisfaction with organised religion' (Long 2005: 1-2). Other motives might include 'the political confrontations with nations of other religious beliefs or internal evangelisation and/or the influx of refugees or migrants from one place to another' (ibid: 6-7). Similarly, Jasper adds another central motive for translating religious texts, namely 'attempting to bridge the gap between not only, say, Greek and English syntax and grammar, but also between racial, national, religious, linguistic and, in the academic world, disciplinary differences (Jasper 1993: 1).

In the field of Qur'ān translation, argues Abdul-Raof, two central motives can be recognized: either to present a 'semantic' Qur'ān translation or to introduce a 'communicative' one (Abdul-Raof 2001: 21). The former adopts a word-for-word translation and it can clearly be described as source-text oriented (cf. Arberry 1955/1996; Asad 1980; Ali 1934/1987). The latter seeks to present a sense-for-sense translation and is categorized as a target-text oriented translation (cf. Akbar 1978; see also Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008) (ibid).

There are many reasons why translating religious texts is a problematic task, or as Jasper states, 'a painful affair' (Jasper 1993: 2). Above all, it is commonly believed that due to the divine nature of these texts, any attempt to render their meanings is no more than 'an approximation' (Saeed 2006: 90). For instance, pointing to the difficulty of translating the rhythm of the Qur'ān, Arberry concludes that 'the Qur'ān is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss' (Arberry 1955/1996: 10). Similarly, Abdul-Raof strongly emphasizes that Qur'ānic translation is no more than a representation and an interpretation, and not the Qur'ān itself (Abdul-Raof 2005: 172). Another reason for the difficulty of translating religious texts lies in the fact that, due to the linguistic as well as cultural differences between languages-/-cultures, some parts of

these texts represent an obvious case of linguistic-/cultural untranslatability (see 2.7.2). To deal with this problematic issue in Bible translation, Nida (1964/2003) adopts a contextual approach to translation, offering what he describes as the 'dynamic equivalent' (see 2.6.2). In addition, argues Long, translating religious texts is problematic and may even be described as 'impossible' because 'the space which the religious text needs in the target language is often already occupied and available vocabulary is already culturally loaded with indigenous referents' (Long 2005: 1). Furthermore, due to the historical nature of these texts, a serious problem lies in the difficulty of bridging the gap between the context in which the religious text was revealed and the context in which the target text is interpreted-/used; the difficulty to 'restore' the original context (ibid: 8).

Bearing this difficulty in mind, it is not surprising to notice that a lot of research has been done on the issue of translating holy texts. In the view of Long (2005: 1-4), some of these studies have been used as theoretical frameworks within which problems arising from the translation of holy texts have been discussed. Amongst these studies are (Bhabha, 1994), (Steiner, 1998) and (Even-Zohar, 2000; 2001). Bhabha (1984: 34) examines the difficulty of translating religious texts from the colonial cultures into the colonised ones, offering what he describes as 'evangelical colonialism'. This refers to the process in which colonial powers impose ideological as well as religious beliefs on the colonised (Bhabah 1994: 34). This is also a reference to the difficulty involved in the process of the inevitable cultural transfer from the colonial cultures to the colonised ones. Another complexity is raised by Steiner who strongly argues that 'any thorough reading of a text out of the past of one's own language and literature is a manifold act of interpretation' (Steiner 1975/1998: 18). This argument is crucial in the current research in which one of the main goals is to examine the role of both language and culture in assigning one specific Qur'ānic interpretation to the polysemous expression in the Qur'ān rather than proposing multiple possible interpretations (see 4.5; 4.7). A third theoretical framework is established by Even-Zohar, who describes the absorption of the target culture of aspects of the source one as 'cultural interference' (Even-Zohar 2001: section 1). In addition, examining the function of the translated literature in the target culture, Even-Zohar argues that translated literature should be conceived 'not

only as an integral system within any literary poly-system, but as a most active system within it' (Even Zohar 2000: 193). This argument clearly supports the issue often raised among historians of culture that translation studies should be looked upon as a central factor in forming national cultures (ibid: 192).

In light of the above theoretical frameworks, Long (2005: 8-15) introduces a number of papers on translating religious texts, which is currently looked upon as one of the aspects of 'genre translation' (cf. Williams and Chesterman 2002: 9-13). One of these studies was done by Christopher Shackle, who has long experience in translating sacred as well as secular texts both from Greek into Arabic and from Persian into Urdu and Punjabi (Long 2005: 8). Shackle argues that translating religious texts is both a difficult task and a significant contribution to the contemporary consciousness (Shackle 2005: 19). He also emphasizes the distinguished status of the religious texts at a time where there is 'greater proximity to one another than ever before' in the contemporary globalized world (ibid) (see 1.4.1). Following Smith (1993: 228), Shackle agrees that religious texts should be looked upon as a 'distinguishable' genre, i.e. distinguished from both poetry and prose (Shackle 2005: 19). Investigating the issue of 'untranslatability' of the sacred texts in Bible translation, Greek/Arabic and Persian/Urdu, Shackle comes to the conclusion that 'the context rather than the content makes the holy untranslatable' (Shackle 2005: 20). That is to say, the central reason why some parts of the sacred texts are often described as 'untranslatable' does not lie in the textual or cultural complexity of the source text. Rather, it lies in the manner by which this complexity is received in the target culture. In particular, the difficulty lies in the stylistic choices made by different translators, which are mainly dependent on two central factors: the purpose of translation and the audience (ibid: 28-29). For example, Shackle presents four different strategies by which the below Sikh text can be translated, all of which are mainly attributed to the cultural context in which the target text is received (ibid:29):

(jini kari upadēsu giāna-anjanu dīā, inī nētrī jagatu nihāliā Asa ki Var 13: 2; Adi Granth, 470).

Strategy One: 'typical expansion', i.e. 10 words of the original to 21 ones in the target text:

He

gave me

his teaching

His wisdom

gave my eyes

the mascara

They need

to see

the world

As it is

Strategy Two: 'as a hymn', i.e. the same verse is translated into 12 words in the Long Metre (8.6.8.6):

And with his teaching as their slave

These eyes survey the world.

Strategy Three: 'the semicolon split characteristic of the psalm format':

Who gave me the slave of divine instruction; with these eyes I then beheld God in the world (Macauliffe 1963, 1: 236).

Strategy Four: 'as prose':

And who in the form of his teachings put the antimony of wisdom in my eyes and thus enabled me to see clearly with those eyes what the world really is, that is to say, it enabled me to see the anti-God in society (S. Singh 1982: 92).

It is worth noting that Shackle's argument above is obviously in line with examining both the 'cultural' and the 'functional' dimension in approaching the culture-specific expressions in the sacred texts in general and in the Qur'ān in particular (see 5.2).

Other central papers in the area of translating religious texts are those published in *Translating Religious Texts: Translation: Transgression and Interpretation*, edited by Jasper (1993). In the preface of the book, Jasper summarizes the motives for publishing this reference. These are (ibid: 1):

- (a) These papers address the issue of translating religious texts, 'with all their peculiar difficulty and elusiveness' (ibid);
- (b) Not only do these papers examine the linguistic aspects involved in translating religious texts, but they also deal with the theme of interpretation, which is central to this genre.

Relevant to the current research is Zelechow's argument that translation is mainly a process of interpretation (Zelechow 1993: 122). Following Nietzsche (1975), Zelechow agrees that 'all experience, including sense experience, is interpretative' (ibid). In this context, Zelechow argues that the process of translation is no more than an act of negotiation (ibid). In other words, there is no absolute translation and translation as a product is always approximate and never final. This argument is clearly in line with Steiner's argument above that translation is mainly an act of interpretation. In addition, as explained earlier, this argument is crucial in Qur'ān translation, which is often exegetic rather than communicative. Before attempting to propose a model of translation in which the scope of infinite interpretation is narrowed through language and culture (see Chapter Four), light will be shed on the issue of Qur'ān translatability.

2.7.2 Qur'ān Translatability

Recent debates on the issue of 'translatability' versus 'untranslatability' have its origin in two opposing views raised in the philosophy of language: 'universalist' versus 'monadist' (Steiner 1975/1992: 76-77; Bassnett 1998: 25; Hermans 1998/2009:300). The former argues for the universality of the underlying structure of language. In this view, differences between human languages are 'essentially of the surface' (Steiner 1975/1992: 76-77). In other words, though linguistic differences are problematic in translation, translation is possible and realized due to genetic, historical, social and cognitive considerations (ibid: 77). One of the proponents of this view is Jakobson, who argues that 'all cognitive experiences and their classifications are conveyable in any existing language' (Jakobson 1959/ 2000: 115). In his view, what is needed in translation is 'two equivalent messages in two different codes' (ibid: 114). On the other hand, the 'monadist' argues that differences between languages are too deep, too 'abstract', and too 'generalized' to be logically or psychologically examined. Accordingly, as Bassnett describes this view, the 'monadist' looks upon translation as 'a traducement, a betrayal, and an inferior copy of a prioritised original' (Bassnett 1998: 25). In short, the 'monadist' holds the view that 'real translation is impossible' (Steiner 1975/1992: 77).

In this context, this section is intended to introduce both a historical and critical survey of the debate over the issue of Qur'ān translatability. The ultimate goal is to establish one central argument: in spite of the Islamic traditional belief that the Qur'ān, as a divine book, is 'untranslatable' at both the linguistic and cultural level, the communication of meanings of the Qur'ān to people of different languages and cultures should always be looked upon as an indispensable task. To provide justifications for this argument, answers to the questions below will be provided. These are:

- (a) What justifications have opponents of Qur'ān translatability provided against Qur'ān translatability?
- (b) How have opponents of Qur'ān translatability classified the issue? What examples have they provided for each category?

(c) What alternatives have some of these scholars introduced as a means to communicate the message of the Qur'ān to the audience who is not aware of the Arabic language?

(d) Does this mean that the Qur'ān should not be translated?

The question of Qur'ān translatability has remained a controversial issue since the early decades of Islam. That is to say, translating the Qur'ān has traditionally been viewed by some Muslim scholars as 'illegitimate' (Mustapha 1998/2009: 226). It was Imām Abū Ḥanīfah (80 – 148 AH), the well-known Muslim jurist and founder of the Ḥanafī school of thought, who, in 125 AH, permitted both translating the Qur'ān into the Persian language and reading the translated version during prayer (Sardar 2011: 39). However, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah's bold fatwā was shortly withdrawn in 126 AH, and since then there has been an agreement among Muslim scholars that during prayers the Qur'ān should only be read in Arabic, its original language (Abdul-Raof 2004: 92). Imām Abū Ḥanīfah's ruling was vigorously opposed by the three other Muslim schools of thought: Imām Mālik (93 – 177 AH), Imām al-Shāfi'ī (150 - 204 AH), and Imām Ḥanbal (164-241 AH) (Sardar 2011: 39). Imām Mālik argued that non-Arab Muslims should learn Arabic. They should not even make an oath in any language other than Arabic (ibid). Similarly, Imām al-Shāfi'ī claimed that it is a duty on all non-Arab Muslims to learn Arabic, because the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic (ibid: 40). Imām Ḥanbal strongly argued that the divine nature of the Qur'ān adds a highly distinctive feature to the book, namely 'ī'jāz al-qur'ān – inimitability of the Qur'ān'. This inimitability can easily be observed in three linguistic aspects of the Qur'ānic text (ibid: 39):

(a) The structure of the text;

(b) The sounds and rhythm of the text;

(c) The rhythm of the text.

Thus, the three Muslim scholars argued that it is beyond the human capacity to render a complete Qur'ān translation (ibid).

Another recent Muslim ruling, which also rejects the idea of translating the Qur'ān, was issued in 1908 by Sheikh Rashīd Riḍā, the famous Syrian jurist. Sheikh Riḍā argued that there are three problematic issues involved in translating the Qur'ān (ibid: 40):

(a) Translation as an act may differ from one translator to another. Thus, Qur'ān translation may also differ due to differences in the way the translator of the Qur'ān understands the Qur'ānic text;

(b) It is difficult to translate metaphors in the Qur'ān using word-for-word translation. This may result in deforming the Qur'ānic meaning;

(c) Because the Qur'ān is a divine book, it will be highly problematic to offer an accurate translation of words, rhyme and structure of the Qur'ān (ibid).

There are two central reasons why Muslim traditional scholars oppose the view that the Qur'ān can be translated. Above all, Muslims believe that the Qur'ān is the divine book, which was revealed to Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islam, in the last twenty three years of his life (610 – 632 CE). The Qur'ān emphasizes this belief in many Qur'ānic verses. One of these is:

(qul ayyu shay'in akbaru shahādah qul allāhu shahīdun baynī wa-baynakum wa-'ūḥiya ilayya hadhā al-Qur'āna li'undhirakum bihi wa-man balagha)

(Say [the Prophet] 'What counts most as a witness?' Say, God is witness between you and me. This Qur'ān was revealed to me to warn you [people] and everyone it reaches, Q 6: 19) (see also Q 3: 44; Q 4: 82; Q 4: 163; Q 6: 50; Q 6:106; Q 6: 145; Q 7: 203; Q10: 15; Q 10: 37; Q 10: 109; Q 53:4).

Accordingly, since, for Muslims, the Qur'ān is a divine book, whereas translation is a human act, Muslim scholars strongly argue that the Qur'ān cannot fully be translated. What aggravates the problem is that the Qur'ān itself emphasizes the idea that the Qur'ān, as a divine book, was revealed in Arabic. This emphasis takes place in many Qur'ānic verses. One of these is:

(innā ‘anzalnāhu qur’ānan ʿarabiyyan laʿallakum taʿqilūn – We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ān so that you [people] may understand Q 12: 2” (see also Q 13: 37; Q 20: 113; Q 39: 28; Q 41:3; Q 42: 7; Q 43: 3; Q 46:12). This also seems to be one of the main reasons why some traditional Muslim scholars strongly argue that having an English Qur’ān is ‘a translational impossibility’ (Abdul-Raof 2004: 106).

Another important reason why Muslim scholars believe that the Qur’ān is ‘untranslatable’ is that Muslims have a strong belief that the Qur’ān is not only a divine book, but it is a linguistic miracle as well. In the words of Abdul-Raof:

From the very first moment the Qur’ān was revealed as the word of God, it was considered, among many other things, an immortal linguistic miracle, inimitable and beyond human faculty to produce a single verse that could match it (Abdul-Raof 2001: 37).

This belief is justified by many Qur’ānic verses, in which God challenges the disbelievers that they cannot produce even one similar Qur’ānic chapter:

(wa-in kuntum fī raybin mimmā nazzalnā ʿalā ʿabdinā fa-’tū bisūratin min mithlihi wa-dʿū shuhadā’akum min dūnil-lāhi in kuntum šādiqīn. fa-’in lam tafʿalū wa-lan tafʿalū fa-ttaqū an-nāra al-latī waqūduhā an-nāsu wal- ḥijārah ‘uʿiddat lil-kāfirīn)

(If you have doubts about the revelation, We have sent down to our servant [Muḥammad], then produce a single chapter like it [the Qur’ān] and enlist whatever supporters you have other than God [if you truly think you can]. If you cannot do this – and you never will, then beware of the Fire prepared for the disbelievers, whose fuel is men and stones, Q 2: 23-24) (See also Q 4: 82; Q 10:38; Q 11:13; Q 17: 88; Q 52: 33-34).

It should also be noted that at the time when the Qur’ān was revealed to Muḥammad, Arabs ‘were at the peak of their linguistic homogeneity and proficiency’ (ibid).

Sardar also adds two probable reasons why some traditional Muslim scholars have argued against Qur’ān translation. The first relates to ‘the alleged superiority of the Arabic language’ (Sardar 2011: 41). That is to say, it has often been claimed that Arabic is superior to other languages, because it is the language of the Qur’ān. Sardar

refutes this claim, wondering how Arabic is claimed to be superior when traditional Muslim scholars themselves have neither studied languages other than Arabic nor have they compared Arabic to any other language. In the words of Sardar, traditional Muslim scholars 'seem so charmed at the undoubted versatility of Arabic, that they took the matter for granted and gave little or no evidence in support of their assertion' (ibid). Another likely reason, adds Sardar, is that some Muslim traditional scholars have opposed translating the Qur'ān, claiming that unity among all Muslims nations requires having one faith and one language (ibid). Again, Sardar refutes this argument by referring to the fact that although European countries speak different languages, they managed to establish a significant political as well as economic unity: the European Union. Having one language does not always result in unity. Though Arabic is the main language of a lot of Muslim countries, they have not yet achieved this unity, neither politically nor economically (ibid).

Based on the above views, attempts have been made to classify areas of 'untranslatability' in the Qur'ān. A recent Muslim treatment of the issue is introduced by Abdul-Raof (2004). The author starts from the traditional position that a complete translation of Qur'ānic meanings is impossible. This is due to the Muslim vision that translating the Qur'ān is a challenging task, i.e. the Qur'ān is 'inimitable' (ibid: 91). To justify his vision, Abdul-Raof further classifies 'untranslatable' expressions in the Qur'ān into two basic categories (ibid: 93-104):

- (1.) Linguistically 'untranslatable' Qur'ānic expressions;
- (2.) Culturally 'untranslatable' Qur'ānic expressions.

He proceeds to classify the former type into three sub-categories:

- (a) 'Lexical and semantic voids';
- (b) 'Structural/stylistic voids';
- (c) 'Rhetorical voids'.

Abdul-Raof presents many examples to both linguistically and culturally 'untranslatable' terms in the Qur'ān. An example of the linguistically 'untranslatable'

Qur'ānic expressions would be the expression 'al-mawqūdḥah', which means 'any animal that receives a violent blow, is left to die and then eaten without being slaughtered according to Islamic law' (ibid: 93). This is one of the types of animals, which is forbidden to eat in Islam. In the Qur'ān itself:

(ḥurrimat ^calaykum al-maytatu wad-damu wa-laḥmul-khinzīr wa-mā 'uhilla liḡhayril-lāhi bihi wal-munkhaniqatu wal- mawqūdḥah wan-naṭīḥah)

(You are forbidden to eat carrion; blood; pig's meat; any animal over which any name other than God's has been invoked; any animal strangled; or a victim of violent blow or a fall, Q 5: 3).

The Qur'ānic expression 'al-mawqūdḥah', argues Abdul-Raof, represents an example of lexical and/or semantic voids in the Qur'ān, because there is no lexical/semantic equivalent to the expression in English (ibid).

An example of the culturally 'untranslatable' Qur'ānic expressions, adds Abdul-Raof, would be (ibid: 105):

(wa-'idhā ra'aytahum tu^cjibuka ajsāmahum wa-'in yaqūlū tasma^c liqawlihim ka'annahum khushubun musannadah)

(When you [Prophet] see them [hypocrites], their outward appearance pleases you; when they speak, you listen to what they say. But they are like propped-up timbers, Q 63: 4)

The phrase 'ka'annahum khushubun musannadah - they are like propped-up timbers' in the above Qur'ānic verse carries a cultural analogy between the hypocrites at the time of Muḥammad and the useless planks of timber which people at this time used to put against the wall at the back of their houses (ibid). Thus, an optimal translation of this phrase requires informing the target text reader of the cultural implication involved. Ali could successfully achieve this task, because he makes explicit what is implicit in the source text.

When they [hypocrites] speak, thou listenest to their words. They are as (worthless as hollow) pieces of timber propped up (unable to stand on their own (Ali 1934/1987: 1551).

In the context of the above belief that reaching a complete translation of the Qur'ān is an unattainable goal, it is not surprising to notice that Muslim Qur'ān translators and scholars have approached the issue with great caution, even in the titles assigned to their translations or research. Consider the following:

- *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān: Text and Explanatory Translation*, [Pickthall, M. M. 1930 / 1996];
- *The Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*, [Ali, A. Y. 1934 / 1987];
- *The Koran Interpreted*, [Arberry, A. J. 1955/1996];
- *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'ān in the English Language: A Summarized Version of Aṭ-ṭabarī, Al-Qurṭubī and Ibn Kathīr with Comments from ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, [Al-Hilali, M. T. and Khan, M. M. 1974 / 2011];
- *The Message of the Qur'ān: translated and explained by Muhammad Asad* [Asad, M. 1980/2003];
- *Qur'ān Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis*, [Abdul-Raof, H. 2001];
- *The Qur'ān: An Eternal Challenge: al-naba' al-ʿaẓīm* [Drāz, M. 2001]
- *The Qur'ān: Limits of Translatability* [Abdul-Raof 2004];
- *The Qur'ān With Sūrah Introductions and Appendices: Saheeh International Translation*, [Al-Mehri, A. B. (ed.) 2010].

Notice above the use of expressions like 'The meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān', 'explanatory translation', 'commentary', 'the Qur'ān interpreted', 'the message of the Qur'ān', 'exegesis', 'challenge', 'limits of translatability', 'the Qur'ān with Sūrah Introductions and Appendices'. Thus, it can safely be argued that most Muslim Qur'ān translators have sought to provide an alternative to the term 'translation'. This trend obviously reflects their belief that an adequate Qur'ān translation is not a translation in the true sense of the word. Rather, it is an explanation, exegesis, interpreting, or commentary on the original. These expressions also reflect the hyper-sensitivity in dealing with the issue of Qur'ān translation over the years. Very few Muslim Qur'ān translators have dared to give their translations different titles:

- *The Qur'ān Translation: al-qur'ān al-ḥakīm*, [Shakir 1999/2011];
- *The Qur'ān: A New Translation*, [Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008];

- *The Qur'ān*, [Khalidi 2009].

Perhaps a more promising perspective is to invite Muslims to consider the Qur'ān not only as a divine and challenging book but as a universal message. To those who argue that since the Qur'ān is a divine book, it should not be translated, I say it is also the Qur'ān which emphasizes that Islam is a universal message that should be communicated to all people in every corner of the world. In the Qur'ān itself:

(qul yā 'ayyuhā an-nāsu inni rasūlul-lāhi ilaykum jamī^cā al-ladhī lahu mulku as-samawāti wal-arḍ lā ilāha illā huwa yuḥiyī wa-yumīt fa'āminū bil-lāhi wa-rasūlihi an-nabiyy al-'ummiyy al-ladhī yu'minu bil-lāhi wa-kalimātihi wat-tabi^cūhu la^callakum tahtadūn)

(Say [Muhammad], 'People, I am the Messenger of God to you all, from Him [God] who has control over the heavens and the earth. There is no God but Him; He gives life and death, so believe in God and His Messenger, the unlettered prophet who believes in God and His words, and [people] follow him so that you may find guidance, Q 7: 185).

Similarly, in the Qur'ān itself:

(wa-hādhā kitābun anzalnāhu mubārakun muṣaddiqul-ladhī bayna yadayhi wa- litundhira 'umma al-qurā wa-man ḥawlahā)

(This is a blessed Scripture that We have sent down to confirm what came before it and for you to warn the Mother of Cities [Mecca] and all around it, Q 6: 92).

According to al- ṣābūnī, 'umma al-qurā - the Mother of Cities' is a reference to the city of Mecca and 'wa-man ḥawlahā – and all around it' is a reference to all people, as narrated by Ibn ^cabbās (Al- ṣābūnī 1997, 1: 396) (See also 1.2.2.1; Q 3: 96-97, Q 6: 71; Q 6:162; Q 42: 7,). Also, Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, says:

(ballighū ^cannī wa-law āyah)

(Communicate what was revealed to me, even one Qur'ānic verse).

Notice above that the term ‘ballighū – communicate’ is used in the imperative form in Arabic. Thus, communicating what was revealed to Muhammad is an obligation, which is imposed on every [male and female] Muslim. Needless to say, in the contemporary globalized world, where there are no borders, one of the central means to render what was revealed to Muhammad is translation (see 1.2.1).

I agree with Muslim scholars, e.g Abdul-Raof (2004), that both the divine nature and the linguistic challenge of the Qur’ān constitute substantial barriers to the Qur’ān translator in his/her attempts to render a complete Qur’ān translation. This is justified by both (i) the linguistic and cultural gap between Arabic and English, and (ii) the historical ‘distance’ between the time in which the Qur’ān was revealed and the contemporary life. Accordingly, achieving the ‘equivalent effect’ is a challenging task and may sometimes be impossible (see 2.6.2). This also necessitates providing the target reader with either informative footnotes or explanatory paraphrasing, and sometimes both. Referring to Bible translation as an example, Nida emphasizes that translating religious texts involves ‘varying degrees of paraphrase’ (Nida 1997: 195). However, I suggest reframing the issue, to be viewed not from the perspective of the source text reader, but from the perspective of the target text reader. In this context, I invite traditional Muslim scholars to consider the following question: Is it a priority for the target text reader to examine the Qur’ān as a linguistically challenging book or as a carrier of the divine meanings which were revealed to Muhammad? The priority for the audience is more likely to be given to understanding the text first, then comes the stage in which the audience may like to appreciate the text as a linguistic miracle. What I want to argue for is that a native speaker of Arabic may be more concerned with the issue of the Qur’ān as a linguistic challenge, but for the audience in the target culture, the priority is more likely to be given to understanding the Qur’ānic meanings as revealed to Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. This is also justified by the idea that considering a given text as a linguistic challenge follows the stage of understanding the text. Thus, I suggest looking at the issue from the receiver’s pair of glasses, not the native speaker’s. This is also justified Nida, who argues that a central question to be raised in the process translation is ‘for whom’ is the translation addressed (Nida 1981: 1). Thus, attention should be paid to both (i) the audience and the purpose of

translation (see 5.2). In addition, in reply to Muslim traditional scholars who argue that since the Qur'ān is a linguistic challenge, a complete Qur'ān translation is impossible, two remarks are made:

(a) Accepting the argument that a complete Qur'ān translation is impossible, why not considering this argument as a catalyst which always motivates Qur'ān translators to take the challenge and attempt to render the Qur'ānic message as closely and as faithfully as possible.

(b) The idea of meaning loss is not confined to the translation of religious texts. Various translation scholars argue that 'translation loss is inevitable' (Dickins et al. 2002: 21). In this regard, Dickins et al. draw an analogy between 'translation loss' and 'energy loss', which takes place in the field of engineering. Engineers do not consider 'energy loss' as a problematic issue. Rather, they look upon the issue as 'a practical problem which they confront by striving to design more efficient machines, in which energy loss is reduced' (ibid). Thus, Dickins et al argue that 'translators should not agonize over the loss, but should concentrate on reducing it' (ibid).

Finally, to those who claim that since understanding the Qur'ān may differ from one translator to another, translators of the Qur'ān may deform the Qur'ānic meanings, I would like to direct their attention to the fact that traditional Muslim scholars have also differed in their interpretations of the Qur'ān. Abdel-Haleem points to this fact and asserts that:

Over the years, a large body of commentaries on the Qur'ān has accumulated, and differences in interpretation can be observed both between the various traditions within Islam (such as Sunni, Shi'ī, or Sufi), and between different periods in history (Abdel-Haleem 2004: xxi).

This seems to be a main reason why a given Qur'ān translation may differ from another in its interpretation to some Qur'ānic verses. This does not mean that differences in interpreting the Qur'ān are encouraged. What I mean is that differences in interpreting the Qur'ān by traditional Muslim scholars have consequently resulted in

differences in the translation of some Qur'ānic verses. To avoid this problematic issue, two points should be taken into consideration:

(a) Translators of the Qur'ān are advised to look at Qur'ān interpretations as aids to understanding the meaning of a Qur'ānic verse. However, if there are differences in interpreting a certain Qur'ānic verse, then the translator should depend on other tools, e.g. 'cohesion' and 'coherence' in the Qur'ān (cf. El-Awa 2006). This is justified by the idea that 'different parts of the Qur'ān explain each other' (Abdel-Haleem 2004: xxxi);

(b) The Qur'ān encourages people to contemplate meanings of the Qur'ān. In the Qur'ān itself:

(afalā yatadabarūna al-qur'ān 'am 'alā qulūbin 'aqfāluhā)

(Will they not contemplate the Qur'ān? Do they have locks on their hearts, Q 47: 24)

(See also Q 4: 82). Also, it should be admitted that 'to err is human', and translators, like all other people, are also likely to make mistakes. The possibility of making unintentional mistakes does not mean that translating the Qur'ān should itself be prohibited. Rather, maximum attention should be paid, especially when the translator is dealing with a sensitive text.

2.8 Summary

The goal in the above sections has been two-fold. First, this chapter has sought to locate the present research project within the field of translation studies. Second, a theoretical as well as historical framework of the current research has been established. Three central issues have been investigated: (i) theories of context, (ii) approaches to function in translation and (iii) translating religious texts. We are now in a better position to account for the first research problem addressed in the current project, namely the Arabic-English translation of the notion of polysemy in the Qur'ān. Therefore, polysemy as a semantic notion in both Arabic and English will constitute the main topic of the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Polysemy in Arabic and English

'We can portray the total meaning potential of a word as a region in a conceptual space, and each individual interpretation as a point therein' (Croft and Cruse 2004: 109).

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, the notion of polysemy in Arabic and English was introduced. Emphasis was laid on the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'ān as a problematic issue in Qur'ān translation. The ultimate goal at this stage has been to raise the awareness of Qur'ān translators of the several distinct senses communicated by the polysemous Qur'ānic expressions in their various linguistic as well as cultural contexts. Accordingly, Qur'ān translators are advised first to explore these senses and then to communicate them to the target reader. In addition, the second chapter has proposed a contextual view in which both the linguistic and the cultural aspects involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān are appreciated.

In this context, the current chapter is intended to look in more detail at the phenomenon of polysemy in Arabic and English. In particular, the present chapter seeks to achieve four goals: (a) to locate the notion of polysemy within the wider map of lexical semantic relations, (b) to review the related literature in both Arabic and English, (c) to explore types of polysemy in both languages, and (d) to investigate both causes and effects of polysemy in Arabic and English.

To achieve the goals above, the present chapter falls into four basic sections. In (3.2), polysemy as a semantic notion will be located within the 'map' of lexical semantic relations. In (3.3), some issues relevant to the notion of polysemy in Arabic will be raised. These are: (a) a review of the related literature, (b) types of polysemy in Arabic, (c) causes of polysemy in Arabic, and (d) effects of polysemy on Arabic. Similarly, in (3.4) the phenomenon of polysemy in English will be investigated. The focus will be on (a) reviewing the related literature, (b) exploring types of polysemy in English, (c) investigating causes of polysemy in English, and (d) exploring the impact of

polysemy on English. In (3.5), a comparative as well as contrastive study between polysemy in Arabic and English will be done.

3.2 Section One: ‘Map’ of Lexical Semantic Relations

Many semanticists have sought to explore the lexical semantic relations which take place between words in the text⁵. In the context of these studies, it has repeatedly been argued that the exploration of lexical semantic relations helps the semanticist to ‘identify aspects of meaning relevant to linguistic analysis (O’ Grady and Dobrovolsky 1989/1996: 269).

The first step towards a proper examination of polysemy in Arabic and English would be an establishment of what Miller and Fellbaum describes as ‘the network of lexical semantic relations’ (Miller and Fellbaum 1991: 197), or what might be called ‘the map of lexical semantic relations’. This would help to look in more detail at the the general framework within which polysemy as a lexical semantic relation is situated (see Figure 3.1 below).

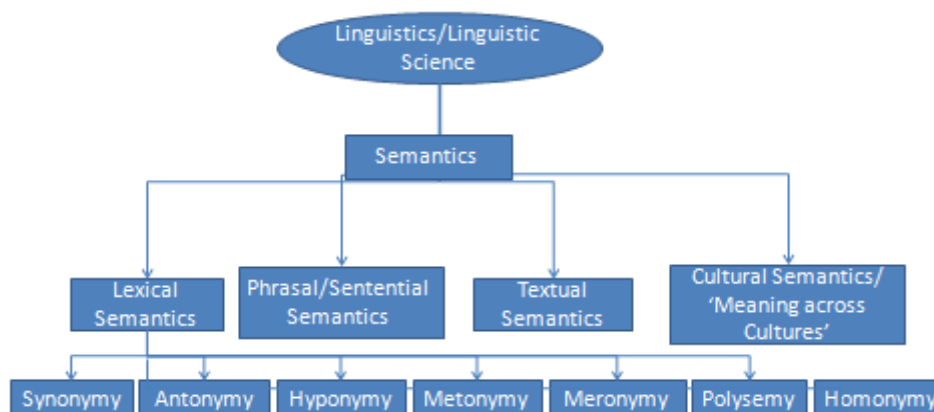


Figure 3.1: Map of Lexical Semantic Relations

⁵ Amongst these are: Fromkin and Rodman 1974/1998; Cruse 1986; Todd 1987/1999; Miller and Fellbaum 1991; O’ Grady and Dobrovolsky 1989/1996; Cruse 2000; Croft and Cruse 2004; Vaerenbergh 2007.

As illustrated above, Linguistics, sometimes also called 'linguistic science', is defined as 'the scientific study of language' (Crystal 1980/2008:283). This definition, argues Todd, poses two further questions: (i) what does the term 'scientific' mean? And (ii) what does the term 'language' mean (Todd 1987/1999:1)? With respect to the first question, explains Todd, the term 'scientific' implies that the way by which the linguist analyzes language is similar to the way the scientist examines a given scientific phenomenon. In other words, similar to the work done by the scientist, the linguist observes how language is used, establishes one or more hypotheses, tests and refines them, and finally draws conclusions or reaches findings. In a word, both the scientist and the linguist work 'systematically' (ibid). Regarding the second question, 'language' is defined as 'a set of signals by which we communicate' (ibid: 2). It is the system of sounds, words and structures which communicate meaning (ibid: 2). Linguistics as an academic field is further categorized into some sub-fields, e.g. phonetics, phonology, syntax, pragmatics, socio-linguistics and psycho-linguistics. The branch of linguistics which is concerned with 'the systematic study of meaning in language' is referred to as 'semantics' (Crystal 1980/2008: 428). 'Semantics' systematically studies meaning at four levels:

- (a) The meaning of the word, i.e. 'lexical semantics'/'lexical meaning' (cf. Murphy 2010);
- (b) The meaning of the phrase and-/or the sentence, i.e. 'phrasal/sentential semantics' (Fromkin 1974/1998: 158);
- (c) The meaning communicated by texts, i.e. 'textual semantics/ text typology' (cf. Trosborg 1997; Swales 1990);
- (d) 'Meaning across cultures', i.e. what might be called 'cultural semantics' (cf. Nida and Reyburn 1981; Schäffner and Kelly-Holmes 1995).

Central to the present discussion are both fields of 'lexical semantics' and 'cultural semantics', because these are closely relevant both to the aims of the current research and to the prospective audience (see 1.5; 1.9). At the word level, a central issue in the area of lexical semantics is the analysis of semantic relations between words:

'synonymy', 'antonymy', 'metonymy', 'hyponymy', 'meronymy', 'polysemy' and 'homonymy'.

'**Synonymy**' can be defined as those words which communicate a very similar meaning in a given context in case they are interchangeable (Fromkin and Rodman 1974/1998: 159). A good example is the words '*sofa*' and '*couch*' in the below sentences:

1. He is sitting on the *sofa*.
2. He is sitting on the *couch*.

In the contexts above, Fromkin and Rodman argue that '*sofa*' and '*couch*' communicate 'very similar meanings'. The only difference is that some users may like to use '*sofa*', whereas others may prefer to use '*couch*'. However, it should be noted that cases of 'perfect synonymy' in language are very rare. This observation has long been known. Thus, in the preface to 'A Selection of English Synonymys', Whately alerts the reader that:

[t]he word 'synonym' is, in fact, a misnomer. Literally, it implies an exact coincidence of meaning in two or more words: in which case there would be no room for discussion; but it is generally applied to words which would be more correctly termed pseudo-synonyms- i.e., words having a shade of difference, yet with a sufficient resemblance of meaning to make them liable to be confounded together (Whately 1853: v).

In the meantime, Cruse offers another example of what he regards as a 'perfect' synonymy, namely the English pair 'fiddle' and 'violin' (Cruse 1986: 86). This pair, argues Cruse, is 'incapable of yielding sentences with different truth-conditions' when one takes the place of another (ibid). Thus, the sentence 'He plays the violin very well' both entails and is entailed by the sentence 'He plays the fiddle very well'. Consequently, argues Cruse, 'violin' can be regarded as a 'true' synonymy of 'fiddle' in the above two sentences. However, contrary to what Cruse claims, it should be noted that the pair 'fiddle' and 'violin' represents a different level of formality. That is to say, 'fiddle' is used in informal situations, whereas 'violin' is a more formal word (Soanes

and Stevenson, (eds.) Oxford Dictionary of English 2006: 640). Thus, though the two words communicate the same ‘truth-conditions’, they are different at the level of formality and, therefore, they are contextually different.

‘Near-synonymy’, on the other hand, can be defined as those words which communicate similar meanings, but, at the same time, they are not ‘interchangeable’. For instance, the pair ‘deep’ and ‘profound’ can be regarded as synonyms when collocated with ‘thought’, but the word ‘water’ can only be modified by ‘deep’ (Fromkin and Rodman 1974/1998: 165). Another example is the pair ‘allow’ and ‘permit’. The former tends to be used in the active sense, whereas the latter tends to be used in the passive sense (Whately 1853: 18). Thus, ‘I allow him to walk in my garden’ implies a ‘positive sanction’, whereas ‘I permit him to walk in my garden’ implies that ‘I do not hinder him’ (ibid). Central to these examples is the issue of ‘ collocational’ and ‘ colligational’ differences between lexical items. ‘Collocation’ can be defined as ‘the property of language whereby two or more words seem to appear frequently in each other’s company, e.g. *inevitable + consequence*’ (Hoey 2005: 2). In this sense, ‘collocation’ refers to the idea that ‘a lexical item is primed to co-occur with another lexical item’ (ibid: 43). However, in ‘colligation’ the lexical item ‘is primed to occur in or with a particular grammatical function; alternatively, it may be primed to avoid appearance in or co-occurrence with a particular grammatical function’ (ibid). For example, the verbs *agree, choose, decline, and manage* ‘colligate with to+infinitive constructions, as opposed to –ing forms, e.g. I agree to go versus *I agree going’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 86). A third example of ‘near-synonymy’ would be the pair ‘though’ and ‘although’, which ‘nearly approach each other in meaning’ (Whately 1853: 14). However, the latter is ‘stronger and more emphatic’ (ibid). Therefore, in a sentence like, ‘Although my difficulties are great, I hope to succeed’, ‘although’ is more likely to be used (ibid). To sum up, ‘near-synonymy’ can be defined as ‘the use of different terms with somewhat analogous meanings’ (Vaerenbergh 2007:235).

Likewise, the Qur’ān is abundant in ‘near-synonymy’ (cf. Al-Dūrri 2006: 87-208). Al-Dūrri describes this phenomenon in the Qur’ān as ‘al-alfāz al-mutaqāribah – words which are close in meaning’ (ibid: 18). This issue seems to be one of the most problematic issues in Qur’ān translation. For example, consider the minor semantic

differences between ‘al-qalb’ and ‘al-fu’ād’ in the Qur’ān. Al-Dūrri explains that ‘al-fu’ādu laṭīfatul-qalbi wash-shu‘ūru huwa ḥāsatul-fu’ādi – al-fu’ādu is the sensitive part of the heart where feelings and emotions reside’, whereas ‘al-qalbu mawḍi‘u quwatin wa-jalādah - al-qalbu is the place of stamina and endurance’ (ibid: 103). This seems to be the reason why ‘al-qalb’ is used in the Qur’ān to communicate the senses of stamina, persistence and toughness, e.g. (wa-law kunta faẓẓan ghalīẓa al-qalbi lanfaḍḍū min ḥawlika – Had you [Prophet/Muḥammad] been harsh, or hard-hearted, they [believers] would have dispersed and left you, Q 3: 159), whereas ‘al-fu’ād’ is used in the Qur’ān to express the meaning of delicacy and sensitivity, e.g. (rabbanā innī askantu min dhurriyyatī biwādin ghayri dhī dhar‘in ‘inda baytaka al-muḥarram rabbanā liyuqīmū aṣ-ṣalāta faj‘al af‘idatan min an-nāsi tahwī ilayhim wa-rzuqhum min ath-thamarāti la‘allahum yashkurūn – Our Lord, I [Abraham] have established some of my offspring in an uncultivated valley, close to your Sacred House, so make people hearts turn to them, and provide them with produce, so that they may be thankful, Q 14:37) (see 5.6.6). The problem here lies in the fact that Arabs use two expressions to communicate the meaning of ‘al-qalb’: ‘al-qalb’ and ‘fu’ād’ (see above), whereas in English only one word is used: ‘the heart’, which expresses both meanings of (i) stamina and endurance, e.g. ‘hardening his heart, he ignored her entreaties’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, Soanes and Stevenson, eds 1998/2005: 801) and (ii) sensitivity and delicacy, e.g. ‘their warmth and hospitality is right from (the bottom) of their heart’ (ibid: 802).

The second relation in the suggested ‘map’ above is **‘antonymy’**. This can be defined as ‘the sense relation involving oppositeness of meaning’ (Todd 1987/1999: 82). Todd further argues that three types of oppositeness can be identified (ibid 82-85). These are:

- (a) ‘Implicitly graded antonyms’:** these constitute pairs which ‘can only be interpreted in terms of a pre-established norm for comparison’ (ibid: 82). For instance, in examining the opposites ‘big’ and ‘small’, ‘big’ ‘can only be interpreted in terms of being bigger than something which is established as the norm for the comparison’ (ibid). Similarly, Miller and Fellbaum argue that the pair ‘rich’ and ‘poor’ is an example of ‘gradable’ antonyms. That is to say, ‘to say that someone is not rich

does not mean that they must be poor; many people consider themselves neither rich nor poor' (Miller and Fellbaum 1991:203). Likewise, Cruse argues that some opposite pairs 'denote degrees of some variable property, such as length, speed, weight, accuracy, etc.' (Cruse 1986: 204). For instance, Cruse invites the reader to consider the 'variable property' embedded in the pair 'long / short' as used to modify the word 'river' and the same pair as used to describe the words 'eye' or 'lashes'. Thus, Cruse raises the question: does the pair 'long / short' express the same degree in both usages? (ibid: 205).

(b) 'Complementarity': these are the pairs where 'the denial of one implies the assertion of the other' (Todd 1987/1999:83). For instance, the pair 'male' and 'female', 'single' and 'married', 'good' and 'bad';

(c) 'Converseness': these are the pairs which 'are in a converse relationship' e.g. 'sell' and 'buy', 'lend' and 'borrow', 'give' and 'take' (ibid: 84).

The third lexical semantic relation, which is commonly used and illustrated, is '**hyponymy**'. Hyponymy can be defined as a 'relation of inclusion' O' Grady and Dobrovolsky (1989/1996: 271). Miller and Fellbaum define hyponymy as follows: 'a meaning x is said to be a hyponym of y if native speakers accept sentences constructed from such frames as: An x is a (kind of) y' (Miller and Fellbaum 1991: 202). For example, 'maple' is a hyponym of 'tree', and 'tree' is a hyponym of 'plant' (ibid). Thus, this semantic relation, add Miller and Fellbaum, can be regarded as a relation of hierarchy where the 'hyponym' is one type of the 'superordinate' (ibid). For instance, the Arabic word 'asad – lion' is a 'hyponym' of the Arabic superordinate 'ḥayawān – animal'. Croft and Cruse introduce some examples of linguistic expressions whose usage communicates the sense of 'hyponymy'. Some of these are (Croft and Cruse 2004: 141):

(a) Xs are Ys, e.g. 'Koalas are marsupials';

(b) Xs and other Ys, e.g. 'Koalas and other marsupials';

(c) Of all Ys, I prefer Xs, e.g. 'Of all fruits, I prefer mangoes';

(d) There was a marvellous show of Ys: the Xs were particularly good, e.g. 'There was a marvellous show of flowers: the roses were particularly good';

(e) Did she X him / her? Yes, she Y him / her, e.g. 'Did she hit him / her? Yes, she punched him / her in the stomach';

(f) Is your new skirt X? Yes it is Y, e.g. 'Is your new skirt red? Yes, it is a maroon velvet'.

The fourth semantic relation is '**metonymy**', which is defined as 'a figurative usage of language which is based on association' (Cruse 2000: 112). Cruse further provides some examples (ibid):

(a) There are too many *mouths* to feed. (metonymic)

(b) Don't talk with your *mouth* full. (real)

(a) Jane married a large *bank account*. (metonymic)

(b) Jane has a *bank account*. (real)

(a) He is the *voice* of the people. (metonymic)

(b) He has a loud *voice*. (real)

(a) John has his own *wheels*. (metonymic)

(b) One of the *wheels* fell off. (real)

The fifth semantic relation is known as '**meronymy**'. This can be defined as a 'part-whole relationship' (Miller and Fellbaum 1991: 203). That is to say, 'a given meaning X is a meronym of another meaning Y if native speakers of this language accept that Y has an X (as a part), or an X is part of Y. For instance, the Arabic word (yad – hand) is a meronym of the word (jism - body), and the English word (finger) is a meronym of the word (hand).

A further distinction should also be made between '**polysemy**' and '**homonymy**'. The former 'designates a linguistic situation in which a single word has a

set of related meanings or senses' (Goddard 1998: 19), whereas the latter can be defined as 'different words that are pronounced the same, but may or may not be spelled the same' (Fromkin and Rodman 1974/1998: 163). An example of polysemy would be the polysemous word '*school*', as discussed by Seuren, in the sentences below (Seuren 2001: 328-329)

- (a) The *school* is on fire. [The school as *a building*];
- (b) The *school* had excellent results this year. [The school as *an institution*];
- (c) The *school* has a day off. [The school as *a set of people*].

Seuren argues that it is the predicate of each sentence which plays a central role in decoding each sense. That is to say, 'to be on fire requires a concrete object; to have results requires a functioning organism; to have a day off necessitates a human subject' (ibid: 329). Another example of polysemy in English is provided by Goddard, who invites his readers to consider the distinct senses communicated by the use of the polysemous adjective '*wrong*' in the sentences below (Goddard 1998: 19):

- (a) We thought that the war was *wrong*.
- (b) It was *wrong* not to thank your host.

Goddard argues that the sense implied in the use of the polysemous word '*wrong*' in the first sentence is 'immoral', whereas the sense implied in the second sentence is 'improper' (ibid). A third example, to which the pragmatic force is clearly attached, would be the distinct senses communicated by the polysemous expression '*suggest*' in the different 'contexts of situations' below (Egins 1994/2004: 9):

- (a) (From a boss to a subordinate): I *suggest*.....
- (b) (From a subordinate to a boss): I *suggest*.....
- (c) (From a friend to a friend or friends): I *suggest*.....

Egins argues that in the three social situations above, the polysemous word (*suggest*) communicates three different senses. In the first sentence, the word (*suggest*) implies the sense of a polite order, i.e. please do it. In the second sentence the word (*suggest*) implies the sense of a plea, i.e. a humble request for help from someone in authority. In the third sentence, the word (*suggest*) expresses a real suggestion (ibid). Therefore,

Eggs evidently argues that ‘it is not possible to tell how people are using language if you do not take into account the context of use’ (ibid: 8).

Polysemy is also a common linguistic phenomenon in Arabic. Consider the Arabic polysemous verb ‘nazala’ in the sentences below:

(a) (nazala aṭ-ṭālibu fī funduq ash-shirātun – The student booked a room at the Sheraton hotel;

(b) (nazala aṭ-ṭālibu minal- ḥāfilah – The student got out of the vehicle)

It is clear that the ‘predicate’ in both sentences, i.e. (*nazala fī funduq ash-shirātun – booked a room in the Sheraton Hotel*) and (*nazala min al-ḥāfilah – got out of the vehicle*) respectively, is the indicator of the two different senses which the polysemous verb (*nazala*) conveys in the two linguistic contexts above. The term ‘predicate’ is used to refer to ‘a major constituent of sentence structure, traditionally associated with a two-part analysis in which all obligatory constituents other than the subject are considered together’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 381). The sense collocated with the word ‘*funduq - hotel*’ is ‘booking a room’, whereas the sense collocated with the word ‘*al-ḥāfilah - the vehicle*’ is that of ‘getting out of’. It is also interesting to notice that the same polysemous word, i.e. ‘nazala’, is expanded in its Qur’ānic context to communicate the implied meaning of (ʿallama – taught). Consider the Qur’ānic verse below:

(nazala bihi ar-rūḥu al-amīn ʿalā qalbika litakūna minal-mundhirīn)

(The Trustworthy Spirit has brought it [The Qur’ān] down to you [The Prophet] upon your heart [O Muḥammad] that you are of the warners, Q 26:193-194).

Al-Dāmaghānī interprets the polysemous word (*nazala*) in this context as: ‘ʿallama Jibrīlu al-nabayya – Jibrīl taught the Prophet’ (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 454).

Also, Fromkin and Rodman provide some examples of homonyms, i.e. words which are of the same phonological forms, but convey unrelated meanings. A famous example would be the homonymous word ‘*bank*’ in the sentences below (Fromkin and Rodman 1974/1998: 164):

(a) I'll meet you by the *bank*, in front of the automated teller machine.

(b) I'll meet you by the *bank*. We can go skinny-dipping.

In the first sentence, the word 'bank' communicates the meaning of 'a financial establishment that uses money deposited by customers for investment, pays it out when required, makes loans at interest, and exchanges currency' (Oxford Dictionary of English, Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2005: 127), whereas in the second sentence, the meaning expressed by the word 'bank' is 'the land alongside or sloping down to a river or lake (ibid). Thus, both polysemy and homonymy share the idea of expressing multiple senses in different contexts. However, the central difference is that polysemy extends in its context to communicate 'related' senses, whereas homonymy expresses multiple 'unrelated' meanings.

3.2.1 'Relatedness' versus 'Unrelatedness'

It is important at this stage to draw a distinction between 'related' and 'unrelated' senses. On the one hand, in lexical semantics, this distinction is looked upon as the dividing line between 'polysemy' and 'homonymy', where polysemy is looked upon as one lexical item that communicates 'related' senses, whereas homonymy is treated as two (or more) different words which communicate unrelated senses (Saeed 2003: 64). On the other hand, in lexicography this distinction 'helps lexicographers to list polysemous terms under the same lexical entry in the dictionary, while homonymous senses are given separate entries' (ibid). The question remains: What is meant by 'related' versus 'unrelated' senses? Leech provides an answer to this question as follows:

When we come to know what the term 'related' means, we have two answers: one historical and one psychological, which do not necessarily coincide. The two meanings are historically related if they can be traced back to the same source or if one meaning can be derived from the other; the two meanings are psychologically related if present-day users of the language feel intuitively that they are related, and therefore tend to assume that they are different uses of the same term (Leech 1974/1990: 227).

Considering Leech's statement above, the conclusion which can be drawn is that identifying the relatedness of the senses extended by the use of the polysemous expression in its various contexts requires that the translator should carry out two essential tasks, one of which is etymological and the other is psychological. The former is carried out by conducting a diachronic approach in which the source of the polysemous word is traced over the years. In other words, an etymological survey requires that the linguist traces the historical development of the meaning of the term over a given period of time. This seems to be easier than the latter, i.e. the psychological inquiry, in which the linguist attempts to explore the psychological relationship between the distinct senses communicated by the polysemous term. This seems to be a more difficult task, because for someone who is not a native speaker, it is not easy to recognize that two (or more) senses are psychologically related. In addition, such communicated senses may vary from one culture to another. Some expressions are indeed 'culture-specific' and are viewed by some translators as 'translation-resistant words' (Abdul-Raof 2004: 104). Thus, the competent translator needs to perform a multi-faceted task at various levels: language, culture and history.

Recapitulating the above, polysemy is located within the 'map' of lexical semantic relations, in which various other lexical semantic relations can be identified: synonymy, near-synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, meronymy, metonymy and homonymy. The distinction between Polysemy and homonymy is based on the argument that the polysemous word communicates 'related' senses, whereas the 'homonymous' word expresses 'unrelated' senses. Central to this distinction are both the semantic development of the lexical item and the native intuition. In this sense, polysemy can also be looked upon as an inter-disciplinary notion in many fields of knowledge: lexical semantics, translation studies, lexicography, psychology, and cultural studies.

3.3 Section Two: Polysemy in Arabic

3.3.1 Review of Related Literature

This section is intended to present a review of related literature of polysemy in both Arabic linguistics and Arabic/English translation studies. The ultimate goal at this stage

is two-fold: (i) to explore the development of ideas relating to the study of polysemy in Arabic, and (ii) to pinpoint the research gap to which the present research contributes.

Polysemy in Arabic has been approached by a large number of both classical and modern Arab theologians as well as linguists.⁶ Over the years, these scholars have sought to define, illustrate and explore causes and effects of polysemy in both Classical and Qur'ānic Arabic. There is a consensus of opinion among these scholars on the fertility of the phenomenon of polysemy in Arabic. For instance, Anīs describes polysemy in Arabic as 'so unique and remarkable that it is difficult to deny its existence' (Anīs 1952: 180). Similarly, Al-Miṭṭānī suggests another title for the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qur'ān: 'tharā' maṭānī al-qur'ān – richness of Qur'ān meanings' (Al-Miṭṭānī 1992: 367).

However, very few scholars opposed the existence of polysemy in Arabic. Of these, a key opponent was Ibn Dristoriyyah (d. 291 AH/921 AC). In his comment on the multiple use of the Arabic word 'wajada'⁷, Ibn Dristoriyyah claims that:

[t]hose, who neither contemplated the multiple meanings of the verb 'wajada', nor investigated the facts, thought that this verb has been used to convey diverse meanings. This is not true, because all these meanings are the same. They all give the meaning of getting something, either as a real or as a metaphoric meaning (Al-Sayūṭī n.d:384).

Ibn Dristoriyyah further rejects the idea that some words in Arabic are polysemous. His view is that 'polysemy leads to ambiguity and it is neither logical nor wise for a language to be ambiguous. This is due to the fact that that the major function of language is to achieve communication. For this reason, language should not be looked upon as being ambiguous' (ibid).

⁶ Amongst these are: Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān (d. 150 AH/653 AC/2001); Al-Naḥawī (d. 285 AH/788 AC/1988); Al-Dāmaghānī (d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983); Ibn al-jawzī (d. 597 AH/ 1200 AC/1979); Al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH/1297 AC/1988,); Al-Fayrūzābādī (d. 817 AH/ 1420 AC/1994); Ibn Al-ʿImād (d. 887 AH/ 1490 AC/1977); Al-Sayūṭī (d. 911 AH/ 1514 AC/1999); Anīs (1952); Wahbah and Al-Mohandis (1979); Al-Miṭṭānī (1992); Al-Khūly (2000); Al-Munjid (1999); Berrī (1999), Lotion (2006); Darkazzly (2006).

⁷ The verb 'wajada' in Arabic is used in its different contexts to communicate five meanings: (a) grieved for something, (b) got angry about something, (c) fell in love with something/someone, (d) found, and (e) learned about something (Al-Sayūṭī n.d:384).

I agree with Ibn Dristoriyyah that polysemy is a source of ambiguity in language. However, this does not mean that the phenomenon of polysemy itself is refuted. Instead, means of resolving this ambiguity at both the linguistic and cultural level should be explored. Contrary to what Ibn Dristoriyyah claims, it is noteworthy to observe that many dictionaries as well as references in Arabic are replete with Arabic words that extend to evoke diverse meanings in their distinct linguistic contexts. For instance, Al-Fayrūzābādī mentions about seventy distinct meanings of the word (al-khāl – maternal uncle) in Arabic (Al-Fayrūzābādī (d. 817 AH/ 1420 AC/1994: 1287-1288). Some of these meanings are: (1) mother’s brother, (2) a brigade in the army, (3) owner of something, (4) clouds, (5) thunder, (6) arrogance, (7) the huge mountain, (8) a big camel, (9) the tolerant man, and (10) horse bridle (ibid). Alternatively, it is the responsibility of the translator to resolve this ambiguity through identifying the specific sense involved. Also, based upon the above statement, it is clear that Ibn Dristoriyyah approves the existence of the phenomenon of real and metaphoric meanings in Arabic, which is one of the important causes of polysemy in Arabic (see 3.3.3). In the words of Anīs, ‘the transfer from the real meaning to the metaphoric one is one of the most important causes of polysemy in Arabic’ (ibid: 183). Also, the fact that the use of polysemous words causes ambiguity does not mean that the phenomenon itself is denied.

A careful examination of the literature written on the notion of polysemy in both classical and Qur’ānic Arabic reveals that all of the scholars above (except for Ibn Dristoriyyah) have sought to investigate the polysemous word within its linguistic context, at both the micro and macro-level. The micro-level is used in the sense of examining the polysemous word as a linguistic unit in its relation to other linguistic units at both the sentential and textual level. The macro-level is used to mean the analysis of the polysemous word at the inter-textual and/or the cultural level. For instance, at the linguistic level, Ibn Al-^ḥImād identifies three distinct senses communicated by the use of the polysemous Qur’ānic word ‘ḥasanā - good’ in its various Qur’ānic contexts (Ibn Al-^ḥImād (d. 887 AH/1490 AC 1977: 81). These senses are:

(a) ḥaqqā – truthful, as in

(alam ya^cidkum rabbukum wa^cdan ḥasanā)

(Did your Lord not make you a gracious promise, Q 20: 86);

(b) muḥtasibā – merely for Allāh, as in

(man dhal-ladhī yuqrīdu al-lāha qarḍan ḥasanā fa-yuḍā^cifahu lahu aḍ^cāfan kathīrah)

(Who will give God a good loan, which He will increase for him many times, Q 2:245);

(c) al-jannah – paradise, as in

(afaman wa^cadnāhu wa^cdan ḥasanā fahuwa lāqīhi Kaman matta^cnāhu matā^ca alḥayāti ad-dunyā thumma huwa yawma al-qiyāmati minal-muḥḍarīn)

(Can the person who will see the fulfilment of the good promise which We gave him compared to someone We have given some enjoyments for this worldly life, but who on the Day of Resurrection, will be summoned [for punishment], Q 28:61).

Similarly, Berrī argues that the Qur’ānic polysemous word ‘al-‘ithm – the sin’ extends in its various Qur’ānic contexts to communicate various shades of meaning (Berrī 1999: 164-172). At the cultural level, the Qur’ānic word ‘al-‘ithm – the sin’ communicates its primary meaning, i.e. ‘the sin’. Consider the Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa-dhkurū al-lāha fī ayyāmin ma^cdūdāt faman ta^cajjala fī yawmayni falā ‘ithma ^calayhi wa-man ta’akhara falā ‘ithma ^calayhi liman ‘ittaqa wat-taqū al-lāha wa-^clamū annakum ‘ilayhi tuḥsharūn)

(Remember God on the appointed days. If anyone is in a hurry to leave after two days, there is no blame on him, nor is there any blame on anyone who stays on, so long as they are mindful of God. Be mindful of God, and remember that you will be gathered to Him, Q 2: 203)

In his comment on the Qur’ānic verse above, Berrī emphasizes the cultural atmosphere as a key factor in interpreting the polysemous word ‘al-‘ithm’ to mean ‘the sin’. In the words of Berry:

This Qur’ānic verse was revealed in the context of ‘āyāt al-ḥijj – pilgrimage verses’. These verses address pilgrims while they are in

Minnā to perform the rite of stoning the Devil in the three days which follow ‘Īd al-Aḍḥā - the Sacrifice Eid’. They also address pilgrims who stay on till the end of pilgrimage time. In performing this worship, believers are advised to remember God in these appointed days. Those who are in hurry to leave after two days ‘lā dhanba ʿalayhim - are not to blame, and the same for those who stay on as long as all are mindful of God (Berry 1999: 164).

However, in another context, the same word extends to communicate the meaning of ‘al-kadhib – telling lies’ (ibid: 167). For instance, consider the Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa tarā kathīran minhum yusārīʿūna fil-‘ithmi wal-ʿudwān wa-aklihimu as-suḥta labi’asa mā kānū yaʿmalūn. Lawlā yanhāhum ar-rabbāniyūn wal-‘aḥbār ʿan qawlihim al-‘ithm wa-aklihimu as-suḥta labi’asa mā kānū yaṣnaʿūn)

(You [Prophet] see many of them [disbelievers] rushing into sin and hostility and consuming what is unlawful. How evil their practices are! Why do their robbies and scholars not forbid them to speak sinfully and consume what is unlawful. How evil their practices are, Q 5: 62-63).

In the Qur’ānic context above, Berrī argues that the shade of meaning implied in the use of the polysemous Qur’ānic word ‘al-‘ithm’ is the act of ‘telling lies’. This interpretation, in Berrī’s view, is justified by the use of the collocation ‘qawlihim al-‘ithm – to speak sinfully’ (ibid).

It is clear from the above examples that Qur’ān commentators, interpreters and scholars have relied on both the linguistic relations (the collocation) and the cultural analysis (asbāb al-nuzūl - circumstances of revelation) in decoding the implied senses communicated by these polysemous terms at both the linguistic and cultural level. The identified senses have ranged from two senses, (e.g. the polysemous word ‘al-asaf’ which extends to express both meanings of ‘al- ḥuzn – sorrow in Q 12:84 and ‘al-ghaḍab – anger’ in Q 43: 55 (Al-Dāmaghānī (d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983: 32), to more than fifteen shades of meaning, e.g. ‘al-hudā – guidance’ (see 1.2.2). Another important remark is that in their attempt to identify the total meaning of the polysemous term in the Qur’ān, these interpreters have identified one ‘basic’ meaning and some other, as Izutsu describes them, ‘relational’ meanings (Izutsu 2004: 15). Izutsu draws the distinction between these two types of meaning as follows:

Thus, while the ‘basic’ meaning of a word is something inherent in the word itself, which it carries with it wherever it goes, the ‘relational’ meaning is something connotative that comes to be attached and added to the former by the word’s having taken a particular position in a particular field, standing in diverse relations to all other important words in that system (ibid: 17).

Izutsu’s observation seems to be analogous to Leech’s argument above (see 3.2.1). They both agree that the native speaker’s intuition is an important factor in judging the relatedness of the shades of meaning associated with the use of polysemous expressions in their distinct contexts. Also, Izutsu emphasizes the idea that though these senses are intuitively ‘related’, the shades of meaning communicated differ due to the position which the polysemous expression takes in a given field and-/or the position of the polysemous expression within the system of language.

The question remains: have previous Qur’ān translators managed to communicate these ‘relational’ Qur’ānic senses to the audience? An adequate answer to this question requires (a) selecting an example representing the notion of polysemy in the Qur’ān and (b) investigating the manner by which the translator of the Qur’ān has treated the ‘relational’ shades of meaning attached to the use of the polysemous expression in its different contexts. Consider the example below:

Both Al-Dāmaghānī (d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983: 173-174) and Al-Sayūṭī (d. 911 AH/ 1514 AC/1999: 446) argue that the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘ad-du^ḥā’ – prayer’ extends in its Qur’ānic context to communicate both a ‘basic’ meaning and some ‘relational’ meanings. The ‘basic’ meaning communicated by this expression is used in the Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa-qāla rabbukum id^ḥūnī astajib lakum inna al-ladhīna yastakbirūna ^ḥan ^ḥibādātī sayadkhulūna jahannama dākhirīn)

(Your Lord says, ‘Call on Me and I will answer you, those who are too proud to serve Me will enter Hell humiliated, Q 40:60).

Both Al-Dāmaghānī and Al-Sayūṭī agree that the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘al-du^ḥā’ – prayer’ in the Qur’ānic verse above communicates the meaning of ‘al-su’āl – praying to God’, which is the ‘basic’ meaning of ‘al-du^ḥā’ in the Qur’ān (ibid). Now,

consider how the Qur'ān translators below have approached this central meaning in their translations:

(a) Pickthall: 'And your Lord has said: *pray unto Me* and I will answer you, those who are too proud to serve Me will enter Hell humiliated' (Pickthall 1930/1996: 455);

(b) Ali: 'And your Lord says: *Call on Me*; I will answer your prayer, but those who are too arrogant to serve Me will surely find themselves in Hell – in humiliation!' (Ali 1934/1987: 1279);

(c) Arberry: 'Your Lord has said, "*Call Upon Me* and I will answer you. Surely those who wax too proud to do Me service shall enter Gehenna utterly abject' (Arberry 1955/1996: 181);

(d) Al-Hilali and Khan: 'And your Lord: "*Invoke Me* [i.e. believe in my oneness (Islamic monotheism) and ask me for anything], I will respond to your invocation. Verily, those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islamic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!" (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 374).

(e) Saheeh International: 'And your Lord says, "*Call Upon Me*; I will respond to you." Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible' (Al-Mehri (ed.) 2010: 407);

All the above translations have succeeded in communicating the 'basic' meaning, i.e. 'al-su'āl – praying to God' to the target reader. However, add Al-Dāmaghānī and Al-Sayūṭī, the same polysemous expression, i.e. 'ad-du^cā' – prayer', extends in another Qur'ānic context to express another 'relational' meaning, namely 'ibādat allāh al-wāḥid – worshipping none but Allah, the One' (ibid). This shade of meaning is communicated in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(wa lā tad^cū min dūni allāhi mā lā yanfa^cuka wa lā yaḍurruka fa'in fa^calta fa'innaka 'idhan min aḏ- ḏālimīn)

(Do not *pray* to any other God that can neither benefit nor harm you: if you do, you will be one of the evildoers Q 10: 106).

Now, consider how the Qur'ān translators below have approached this Qur'ānic meaning:

(a) Pickthall: 'And *cry* not, beside Allah, unto that which cannot profit you nor hurt you, for if you did so then were you of the wrong doers' (Pickthall 1930/1996: 190);

(b) Ali: 'Nor *call* on any, Other than God; such will neither profit thee nor hurt thee: if thou dost, behold! Thou shalt certainly be of those who do wrong.' (Ali 1934/1987: 511);

(c) Arberry: 'And do not *call*, apart from God, on that which neither profits nor hurts thee, for if thou dost, then thou wilt surely be of the evildoers' (Arberry 1955/1996: 237);

(d) Al-Hilali and Khan: 'And *invoke* not besides Allāh any such that will neither profit you nor harm you, but if (in case) you did so, you shall certainly be one of the *ẓālimūn* (polytheists and wrongdoers' (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 182).

(e) Saheeh International: And do not *invoke* besides God that which neither benefits you nor harms you, for if you did, then indeed you would be of the wrongdoers' (Al-Mehri (ed.) 2010: 178);

Neither of the above Qur'ān translators has successfully managed to communicate the 'relational' meaning involved. Instead, the above translators have resorted to the 'basic' meaning, e.g. 'pray', 'cry', 'invoke' and/or 'call'.

Two essential remarks are made here. The first is that the Qur'ān translations above have established a specific equivalent and used it in all contexts, whether the meaning involved is 'basic' or 'relational'. The result loses sight of the various 'relational' meanings involved in the use of the polysemous expressions in different Qur'ānic contexts. This is the research gap, which the present research seeks to fill in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān. A central goal in the current treatment of polysemy in the Qur'ān is to reveal the 'relational senses' involved at both the linguistic and cultural level (see 1.2.2.1; 1.2.2.2). The second remark is that it should be clear that, in the current research, the goal is not to describe the translation of polysemy in previous Qur'ān translations. Instead, the goal is to provide the future translator of the Qur'ān with both the linguistic and cultural tools of analysis necessary

to achieve the ‘contextual consistency’ in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur’ān (see 2.1; 2.6.2).

3.3.2 Types of Polysemy in Arabic

In the previous section, a reference has been made to the argument that Arabic is abundant in polysemous expressions which extend in their contexts to communicate diverse ‘relational’ meanings. In this section, justifications to this argument will be provided. Because the research is located within the area of Qur’ān translation, more emphasis will be laid on the notion of polysemy in the Qur’ān. Various types of Qur’ānic polysemy can be identified. These are: (i) nominal polysemy, (ii) verbal polysemy, (iii) adjectival polysemy, (iv) prepositional polysemy and (v) conjunctive polysemy.

3.3.2.1 Nominal Polysemy in Arabic: These are polysemous expressions which take the form of a noun. In the view of Ḥassān, what distinguishes the noun from all other parts of speech is that it is the word which is used for giving a name (Ḥassān 1979:95). An example of nominal polysemy in Arabic is the polysemous word ‘^ʿayn – eye’. In its linguistic as well as cultural context, this expression extends to communicate various senses in both Classical and Qur’ānic Arabic. In Classical Arabic, ‘^ʿayn – eye’ extends in its context to communicate the meanings below (Darkazly 2006: 41):

- (a) ‘^ʿayn al-insān/^ʿayn al-ḥayawān - the eye as a part of the body: both for humans and animals’;
- (b) ‘an-naqd – money’;
- (c) ‘al-maṭar – rain’;
- (d) ‘al-yanbū^ʿ - spring of water’;
- (e) ‘an-nafs - the self’;
- (f) ‘al-jāsūs – the spy’;
- (g) ‘al-ḥasad – envy’;
- (h) ‘sayyid al-qawm - the master’;
- (i) ‘al-khayār – the option’;

(j) ‘ash-shams - the sun;

(k) adh-dhahab - the gold;

In Qur’ānic Arabic, the same polysemous expression extends to express the senses below (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983/338):

(a) ‘an-nahr – the river’, as in

(faqlnā idrib bi^caṣāka al- ḥajar fa’infajarat minhu ithnatā^c ashrata^c aynā)

(We [God] said to him [Moses], “Strike the rock with your staff.” Twelve springs gushed out, Q 2:60);

(b) ‘al-ḥifẓ wal-kalā’ah - Divine care’, as in

(wa-ṣna^c al-fulka bi’a^cyuninā wa-waḥyinā)

([Noah] Build the Ark under our [watchful] eyes and with our inspiration, Q 11:37);

(c) ‘al-bāṣirah – the eye as a part of the body’, as in

(‘alam naj^cal lahu^c aynayn)

(Did We [God] not give him [the human-being] eyes, Q 90:8).

3.3.2.2 Verbal Polysemy in the Qur’ān

Some polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān take the form of verbs. An example of verbal polysemy in the Qur’ān is the verb ‘qaḍā’ which evokes diverse meanings in various Qur’ānic contexts (Darkazly 2006:47). These are:

(a) ‘faragha min – completed’, as in

(fa’idhā qaḍaytum manāsikakum fadhkurū allāha)

(When you have completed your rites, remember God, Q 2: 200);

(b) ‘amara – decreed/ordered’, as in

(wa-‘idhā qaḍā amran fa’innamā yaqūlu lahu kun fayakūn)

(When He [God] decrees something, He says only, ‘Be,’ and it is, Q: 2: 117);

(c) ‘amāta – caused to death’, as in

(fawakazahu Mūsa faqaḍa ^calayhi)

(Moses struck him with his fist and [unintentionally] killed him, Q 28:15);

(d.) ‘khalaqa – created’, as in

(faqaḍāhunna sab^ca samāwātin fī yawmayni)

(He [God] created seven Heavens within two days, Q 41:12);

(e) ‘fuṣila – judged’, as in

(waquḍiyya baynahum bi al-ḥaqq)

(fair judgement will be given between them [the Prophets and witnesses], Q 39:69).

3.3.2.3 Adjectival Polysemy in the Qur’ān

Adjectival polysemy is also a remarkable phenomenon in the Qur’ān (cf. Al-Dāmaghānī 1983; Ibn al-Jawzī 1979; Ibn al-^cImād 1977). Adjectives can be defined as ‘terms used in the grammatical classification to refer to the main set of items which specify the attributes of nouns’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 11). For instance, Al-Dāmaghānī mentions various senses communicated by the use of the Qur’ānic polysemous adjective ‘al-^caẓīm – the great’ in its diverse Qur’ānic contexts (Al-Dāmaghānī d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983: 326-327):

(a) ‘ar-rafi^c – the highly elevated’, as in

(wa-‘innaka la^calā khuluqin ^caẓīm)

(Indeed, you [Muḥammad] are of a highly-elevated manner, Q 68: 4);

(b) ‘ash-shadīd – horrible and unbearable’, as in

(wa-lahum ^ᶜadhābun ^ᶜaẓīm)

(And for them [disbelievers] is a great punishment, Q 2:7);

(c) ‘al-mutaqabbal – accepted’, as in:

(Wa-fadaynāhu bidhibhin ^ᶜaẓīm)

(And We ransomed his son [Ismail] with a momentous sacrifice, Q 37:107);

(d) ‘al-jalīl – the Supreme/the Greatest’, as in:

(wa-huwa al-^ᶜaliyyul-^ᶜaẓīm)

(He [God] is The Most High, The Tremendous, Q 2: 255).

3.3.2.4 Prepositional Polysemy in the Qur’ān

Some Qur’ānic polysemous expressions take the form of prepositions. Prepositions can be defined as ‘terms used in the grammatical classification of words, referring to the set of items which typically precede noun phrases, to form a single constituent of structure’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 383). This preposition, together with the following noun, constitutes ‘a prepositional phrase’, which expresses time, place, possession, or direction (ibid). In Arabic, prepositions are used to refer to a place, e.g. ‘fī/bi – in/at’, or to a direction, e.g. ‘min – from’ and ‘ilā – to) (Ryding 2005/2008: 366). From the semantic perspective, Arabic prepositions can express the location, e.g. ‘fī al-madrasah – at school’, or the time, e.g. ‘fis-sā^ᶜah al-khāmisah – at five o’clock’ (ibid). An example of prepositional polysemy in Arabic would be the word ‘fī – in/at/on’, which extends in its Qur’ānic context to communicate various meanings (Al-Dāmaghānī d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983: 366-368):

(a) ‘ma^ᶜa – with’, as in:

(wa-adkhilnī biraḥmatika fī ^ᶜibadika aṣ-ṣāliḥīn)

([O God] Admit me [Solomon] by Your Grace into the ranks of Your righteous servants,
Q 27:19);

(b) ‘min – from’, as in:

(wa-yawma nab^cathu fī kulli ‘umatin shahīdā)

(The day [Day of Judgement] will come when We raise up in each community a witness
against them, Q 16: 84);

(c) ‘an – about’, as in:

(wa-man kāna fī hādhihi a^cmā fahuwa fil-ākhirati a^cmā wa-‘aḍallu sabīlā)

(Those who were blind in this life will be blind in the Hereafter, and even further off
the path, Q 17: 72);

(d) ‘ilā – to’, as in:

(alam takun arḍu allāhi wāsi^cah fatuhājirū fihā)

([The angels say] ‘But was God’s Earth not spacious enough for you to emigrate to
some other place’? Q 4:97).

3.3.2.5 Conjunctive Polysemy in the Qur’ān

Some polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān are conjunctions. Conjunctions can be defined as ‘terms used in the grammatical classification of words to refer to an item or a process whose primary function is to connect words or other constructions’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 101). For instance, the Arabic polysemy ‘aw – or’ extends in its context in the Qur’ān to express the meanings below (Al-Dāmaghānī d. 564 AH/1157 AC/1983: 56):

(a) ‘bal – or even’, as in:

(fakāna qāba qawsayni aw adnā)

([Angel Gabriel] approached – coming down until he was two bow-lengths away or even closer, Q 53: 9);

(b) ‘alif ṣilah/ wa - and ‘, as in:

(faqūlā lahu qawlan layyinan la^callahu yatadhakaru aw yakhshā)

(Speak to him [Pharaoh] gently so that he may take heed, or show respect, Q 20:44);

(c) ‘al-khayār – or/ to give the choice between two things’, as in:

(innamā jazā’u al-ladhīna yuḥāribūna allāha wa-rasūlahu wa-yas^cawna fil-arḍi fasādā an yuqattalū aw yuṣallabū aw tuqaṭṭa^ca aydihim wa-arjuluhum min khilāf aw yunfaw minal-arḍi)

(Those who wage war against God and His Messenger and strive to spread corruption in the land should be punished by death, crucifixion, the amputation of an alternate hand and foot or banishment from the land, Q 5:33).

3.3.3 Causes of Polysemy in Arabic

Arab linguists have also been interested in investigating the reasons why polysemy in Arabic takes place. They argue that polysemy in Arabic takes place because of one of the below factors:

3.3.3.1 Transfer from the real meaning to the metaphoric one

One of the main sources of polysemy in Arabic is that a given polysemous expression is used both literally in one context and metaphorically in another. The term ‘metaphor’ here is defined as ‘a process of understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another’ (Crystal 1980/2008: 98). For instance, consider the Qur’ānic expression ‘^caqīm – sterile’ in the two Qur’ānic contexts below:

(a) (yahibu liman yashā'u 'ināthan wa-yahibu liman yashā'u adh-dhukūr aw yuzawwjuhūm dhukrānan wa-'ināthan wa-yaj^calu man yashā'u ^caqīmā)

([God] grants female offspring to whoever He will, male to whoever He will, or both male and female, and He makes whoever He will barren, Q 42:49-50);

(b) (wa-fī ^cādīn idh arsalnā ^calayhimu ar-rīḥa al-^caqīm)

(There is another sign in the ^cād: We sent the life-destroying wind against their Lord's command, Q 51:41).

In the first Qur'ānic verse above, the Qur'ānic expression '^caqīm', in this Qur'ānic context, expresses its 'basic' meaning, i.e. 'barren/sterile'. However, in the second context, the same expression extends metaphorically to communicate the 'relational' meaning of 'useless'. Abdul-Raof explains this metaphoric transfer as follows:

The word 'al-^caqīm literally means 'sterile'. ^cād people were hoping that the wind would bring them some clouds and rain, but the wind was no more than a 'useless' thing which destroyed rather than benefited them (Abul-Raof 2001: 148).

Thus, the polysemous expression '^caqīm' in the above contexts communicate both a 'basic' meaning, i.e. sterile and a 'metaphoric' one, i.e. 'useless'.

3.3.3.2 Interference among languages

Another pathway to polysemy in Arabic lies in the fact that some Arab tribes used an Arabic word to give a certain meaning. However, another tribe used the same lexical item to refer to another meaning. For instance, the tribe of Banī qays used the Arabic word 'al-alfat' to mean 'al-ghabiyy - the stupid'. However, the same expression was used by the tribe of Banī Tamīm to mean 'al-a^cṣar - the one who is left-handed' (Darkazly 2006: 44). Another example would be the word 'dast', which means 'hand' in the Persian language. However, the same expression has been used in Arabic to mean (i) 'winning at chess', (ii) 'a minister' and (iii) 'clothing' (Wahbah and Al-Mohandis 1979: 27).

3.3.3.3 Phonemic Change

A third cause of polysemy in Arabic is the change of one or more sounds from one word to another. This happens when there are two words which are different in both form and meaning. For one reason or another, one of these words witnesses a phonemic change. As a result, this same word becomes phonemically identical with the other, though it expresses a different meaning (Al-Munjid 1999:46). Examples of this phenomenon would be:

1. The Arabic word 'at-taghab', which expands in its linguistic context to communicate two senses: (i) 'al-wasakh – uncleanliness', and (ii) 'al-jū^c – hunger'. Amazingly, the Arabic word 'as-saghab' also means hunger (Anīs 1952:189);
2. The Arabic word 'al-farwah' communicates the meaning of 'the head skin'. Amazingly, the same expression extends to mean 'ath-tharwah' – wealth'. This latter meaning is the original one in Arabic (Lotion 2006: 106);

3.3.3.4 Semantic Development

Semantic development is also one of the causes of polysemy in Arabic. Arabic has witnessed a remarkable semantic change in understanding a given word over the years, starting from the pre Islamic period, moving through the Islamic era, as represented in the language of the Qur'ān, up till now. Aspects of semantic development in Classical Arabic can be identified as follows:

3.3.3.4.1 Expansion of meaning

This is the case when the meaning expands to express more meanings. For instance, the Arabic word 'al-^cayn' was originally used to express the meaning of 'the part of the body by which things are seen', then the same expression has metaphorically been extended to mean 'the spy' (Darkazly 2006: 46).

3.3.3.4.2 Narrowing of meaning

This is the case in which the meaning of the word narrows to be used in special situations. For instance, the Arabic word ‘allāh’ was used in the pre-Islamic era in both poetry and theology to mean ‘God’, but in the polytheist sense. However, in Islam, the same expression has been narrowed and specialized to mean ‘allāh the One’ (Izutsu 2004: 11).

3.3.3.4.3 Ameliorization

This is a linguistic situation in which the term is used to give a more elevated meaning than the one used before. For instance, consider the elevated meaning which the Arabic word ‘rasūl’ – messenger/Prophet’ has acquired after the revelation of the Qur’ān. In the Pre-Islamic era, the word ‘rasūl’ – messenger/Prophet’ was used to refer to the one who communicates a message from one person to another. With the revelation of the Qur’ān, the same expression has been used to refer to the one who carries a divine message to people.

3.3.3.4.4 Pejoration of Meaning

This is a linguistic situation in which the term is underestimated to give a less elevated meaning. For example, the term ‘aṣ-ṣuḥuf’ which has been used to mean the Holy Scriptures is also nowadays used to mean ‘newspapers’.

3.3.4 Effects of Polysemy on Arabic

Modern Arab linguists have been interested in investigating both the positive and negative effects of polysemy on Arabic. Al-Monjid argues that the metaphorical use of polysemy results in a highly stylistic and a more influential expression, especially when that metaphor is used for the first time (Al-Monjid, 1999:51). To justify his view, he invites the reader to consider the metaphoric use of the polysemous expression ‘al-ghurūb – the sunset’ in the lines of verse below, as expressed Al-Khalīl (ibid):

(Ya wayḥa qalbī min dawā^cī al-hawā idh raḥala aljīrānu ^cinda al-ghurūbi
Atba^ctuhum ṭarfī wa-qaḍ azma^cū wa-dam^cu ^caynī kafayḍi al-ghurūbi)

(Oh, my heart, I am really suffering my lovely neighbours left at sunset
I have followed their steps and I shed a flow of tears for them)

In the first line of verse above, the polysemous expression 'al-ghurūb' is used to express its 'basic' meaning, i.e. 'the sunset'. However, the same polysemous expression extends metaphorically in the second line of verse to express the meaning of 'ad-dalw – the bucket' (Darkazly 2006: 44). Also, Darkazly argues that polysemy in Arabic relieves the human memory. In other words, using a separated lexical item for each meaning may increase the pressure on the human memory (ibid). However, contrary to what Darkazly claims, Al-Monjid argues that 'it is not fair to underestimate this massive human faculty by saying that a group of polysemous terms may increase the pressure on it, especially when these polysemous terms are frequently used in our daily life situations' (Al-Monjid 1999:51).

A third positive aspect of Polysemy is that the Qur'ānic polysemous expressions are general, rich and flexible, so one can perceive various Qur'ānic senses for the same polysemous Qur'ānic term in its different Qur'ānic contexts (Al-Miṭṭānī 1992: 368). This is taken to be both a sign of God's mercy to human-kind and one of the linguistic miracles of the Qur'ān. However, this phenomenon, in many cases, complicates the matter for the translator of the meanings of the Qur'ān. In other words, this generality is challenging for the translator of the Qur'ān, because he/she needs to decide on whether the general or the more specific equivalent will be selected (see 1.2.2).

However, both Darkazly and al-Monjid agree that polysemy is one of the major causes of ambiguity in Arabic (Darkazly 2006: 44; Al-Monjid 1999: 52). In order to resolve this, tools by which this ambiguity is resolved need be explored and applied so that the target reader enjoys the unique senses involved in the use of these polysemous expressions (see 3.3.1). Darkazly also argues that one of the negative aspects of polysemy in Arabic is that it decreases 'the range of vocabulary' (Darkazly 2006: 44). Contrary to this claim, though Arabic sometimes uses borrowings, it has been looked upon as a rich language. It has been able to express most meanings in daily life situations over the years. This is also justified by the remarkable semantic development which Arabic has witnessed over the years, starting from the pre-Islamic

era, moving through the age in which the Qur'ān was revealed, up till now (see 3.3.4). To sum up, the phenomenon of polysemy casts its shadows on the Arabic language, and results in many positive aspects. However, the same phenomenon has often been looked upon as a source of ambiguity.

3.4 Section Three: Polysemy in English

3.4.1 Historical Background

Looking at polysemy as a problematic notion in English dates back to the Greek philosophy (Nerlich 2003: 58). Polysemy at this stage was looked upon as a source of 'arbitrariness' as opposed to 'naturalness'. In other words, polysemy at that time was looked upon as an obstacle to natural speech. In the words of Householder:

Democritus [460/457- mid - 4th century B.C.] (as quoted in Proclus' Commentary on the *Cratylus* 16) offered four arguments (with four specially coined names) in favour of arbitrariness: (a) "homonymy" or "polysemy", i.e., the same sequence of phonemes may be associated with two or more unrelated meanings; (b) "polyonymy" or "isorrophy", i. e., the existence of synonyms; (c) "metonymy", i.e., the fact that words and meanings change; (d) "nonymy", i.e. the non-existence of single words for simple or familiar Ideas (Householder 1995: 93).

Two remarks are made here. First, polysemy has often been looked upon as a linguistic challenge for a very long time. Second, at this stage, the border line between 'polysemy' and 'homonymy' was not clearly established.

It was Bréal who first coined the term polysemy at the end of the 19th century (Nerlich 2003: 60). Bréal looked at polysemy as 'a phenomenon of language use, language acquisition, language change and even neurolinguistics' (ibid). It is also noteworthy to observe that Bréal also argues that the context, at both the linguistic and cultural level, is a key factor in decoding the specific sense involved in using a certain polysemous expression (ibid: 61).

The notion of polysemy has also widely been approached by many modern semanticists and translators⁸, who, in the course of their investigation of the phenomenon, have differed in the way they have treated the issue. Scholars like Ullmann, Lyons, Leech, Crystal, Goddard, Dickins, Saeed, Cowie and Riemer have focused on exploring causes of polysemy, drawing a distinction between polysemy and homonymy and exploring the various layers of meaning involved in the use of polysemy. Kilgarriff, Wilks, and Ravin and Leacock, on the other hand, have been interested in examining the notion of polysemy from a computational perspective. Their interest has centred on ‘disambiguating’ the various senses of polysemy in the area of machine translation. In the field of Arabic-English translation, Enani showed interest in examining polysemy as a problematic notion in translation, with particular emphasis on Qur’ān translation (Enani 1990, 16-19). Commenting on the translation of the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ in its various Qur’ānic contexts, Enani invites his reader to consider the distinct senses involved in the translation of the polysemous expression in the Qur’ānic verses below:

(a) (yubashshiruhum Rabbuhum biraḥmatin minhu wa-riḍwān wa-jannātin lahum fihā na^cīmūn muqīm)

(Their Lord gives them the good news of His Mercy and Pleasure, Gardens where they will have lasting bliss, Q 9: 21);

(b) (falammā jā’a amrunā najjaynā ṣāliḥan wal-ladhina āmanū biraḥmatin minna)

(When Our Command was fulfilled, by our Mercy, We saved ṣāliḥ and his fellow believers from the disgrace of that day, Q 11: 66);

(c) (wa-khfiḍ lahumā janāḥa adh-dhulli mina ar-raḥmati wa-qul Rabbi irḥamhumā kamā rabbayānī ṣaghīrā)

⁸ Amongst these are: Ullmann 1962: 159-160; Lyons 1977, 1:235; Lyons 1981: 43; Leech 1974/1990: 227; Enani 1990: 16-17; Crystal 1987/ 1997: 106; Goddard 1998: 163; Ravin and Leacock 2000:1, Dickins et al. 2002: 239; Nerlich 2003: 60; Kilgarriff 2003:361; Wilks 2003: 393; Saeed 2003: 64; Cowie 2009: 25; Riemer 2010: 160.

(And lower your wing [human-being] in humility towards them [parents] in kindness and say, ‘Lord, have Mercy on them, just as they cared for me when I was little, Q 17: 24).

In the Qur’ānic verses above, argues Enani, the sense communicated by the use of the the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ in each context is clearly distinct (ibid: 16). That is to say, in the first context, the polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ is closer to the meaning of ‘forgiveness’ than it is to mercy. In the second context, the sense implied in the use of the polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ is closer to the meaning of ‘kindness and delicacy’ than it is to mercy. In the third context, the same expression is closer to the meaning of ‘compassion’ than it is to mercy (ibid). However, adds Enani, the translator of the Qur’ān insists on using the term ‘mercy’ in the three Qur’ānic verses and neglects the Qur’ānic sense it represents in its specific Qur’ānic context (ibid). Therefore, Enani concludes that:

It is not at all an adequate translation to resort to the general equivalent, i.e. ‘mercy’ in the three different different contexts. Instead, the faithful translator should always search for the hidden meanings inherent in each Qur’ānic verse. He / she should take into consideration the linguistic context in which the Qur’ānic polysemous term is used. They should do this even if the sense they choose is different from the senses introduced in the specialized dictionaries (ibid: 17).

Two remarks are made here. First, it is both the linguistic and the socio-cultural context which are the key factors in decoding the implied senses in the Qur’ānic verses above. In the first Qur’ānic verse, it is both the ‘anaphoric signal’: (yubashshiruhum – their Lord gives them the good news) and the ‘cataphoric signals’: (riḍwān – pleasure) and (jannah – Garden) which approximates the ‘relational’ meaning to the meaning of forgiveness. In the second Qur’ānic verse, it is the both the ‘anaphoric signal’ and the ‘context of situation’ that help to decode the implied meaning. The former lies in the expression (najjaynā ṣāliḥan – We [God] saved ṣāliḥ), which communicates the meaning of Divine protection and safety. The latter is the cultural reference to the Thamūd tribe, to whom ṣāliḥ was sent as a messenger. He said, ‘My people, worship God, you have no other

God than Him, Q 11: 61). However, the Thamūd tribe did not believe him and asked for a miracle that proves his Prophecy. He said, ‘My people, this camel belongs to God, as a sign for you, so leave it to pasture on God’s earth and do not harm it, or you will soon be punished, Q 11: 64). However, they hamstrung it. Therefore, God destroyed them. In this cultural context, the Qur’ān mentions, ‘When Our command [God’s destruction] was fulfilled, by Our mercy [kindness, and bless], We [God] saved ṣāliḥ [from God’s punishment]. In the third context, it is the ‘anaphoric signals’: (ikhfiḍ lahumā janāḥa adh-dhulli – lower your wing of humility [human-being] for them [parents]) which decode the implied meaning.

The second remark is that it is clear that Enani, calling for decoding and communicating the implied sense to the target reader, adopts Vinay and Darbelnet’s concept of ‘explicitation’. In other words, Enani encourages the translator of the Qur’ān to make explicit what is implicit in the source text (see 5.3).

To sum up, the notion of polysemy has often been viewed as a challenging phenomenon since the Greek Philosophy. Since that time, it has been approached from different angles and for different purposes. However, the focus on the need to decode its distinct senses has always been prioritized.

3.4.2 Types of Polysemy in English

Similar to the case in Arabic, English is also rich in polysemous expressions which expand in their contexts to communicate various senses. Four types of polysemy can be identified in English. These are: (i) nominal polysemy, (ii) verbal polysemy, (iii) adjectival polysemy and (iv) prepositional polysemy.

3.4.2.1 Nominal Polysemy in English

Some English polysemous expressions take the grammatical form of nouns. For example, the polysemous word ‘eye’ extends in its various contexts to communicate different meanings. These are (Waite, ed. 1994/2012: 286-287):

(a) The organ of sight in humans or other animals.

(b) A person’s attitude or feelings: to European Eyes, the city seems overcrowded.

- (c) A round eye-like marking on an animal
- (d) A round, dark spot on a potato from which a new shoot can grow.
- (e) The small hole in a needle through which the thread is passed.
- (f) A small metal loop into which a hook is fitted as a fastener on a garment.
- (g) A loop at the end of a rope, especially one at the top end of a shroud or stay.
- (h) The extreme forward part of a ship.

Ullmann adds some other senses (Ullmann 1962: 162):

- (i) An object resembling the eye in appearance, shape, or position: the centre of a flower.
- (j) The opening through which the water of a fountain wells up.
- (k) A central mass; the brightest spot (of light).
- (l) The centre of revolution.
- (m) In architecture: the centre of any part, as in 'the eye of a dome'
- (n) In typography: the enclosed space in letters like d, e and o
- (o) To describe an abstract phenomenon, as when we speak of the eye of the law, or when Hamlet says: 'Methinks I see my father....in my mind's eye'.

Ullmann further remarks that the multiple uses of the polysemous expression 'eye' stems from the fact that this expression is used to express both a 'real' and a 'metaphoric' meaning. This metaphoric transfer takes place 'without losing the original meaning' (Ullmann 1962:162). In the words of Ullmann: 'the old and new meaning (or meanings) will live on side by side as long as there is no possibility of confusion between them' (ibid).

3.4.2.2 Verbal Polysemy in English

In addition to nominal polysemy, some polysemous expressions in English take the form of a verb. For instance, Raukko wonders: how many senses does the polysemous verb 'get' communicate in the utterance below (Raukko 2003:171):

I did not get that. What did you say?

Raukko further provides the reader with at least three probable interpretations. These are (ibid):

- (a) 'Understanding' in the sense of 'grasping the content' (I did not understand what you said);
- (b) 'Undersanding' in the sense of 'hearing the word' (I did not understand because I did not hear well);
- (c) 'Hearing' the word in the sense of 'catching' (I did not hear what you said).

Raukko further provides some other senses involved in the use of 'get' in its diverse contexts (ibid: 172-174). Some of these are:

- (a) She had enough money to get a car. (Buy / concrete obtaining)
- (b) What are you getting for your birthday? (Receiving / concrete receiving)
- (c) Get out of here. (Go / motion)
- (d) I'm getting tired. (Feel / Change of state)
- (e) Please get me a drink. (Concrete obtaining for someone else)
- (f) I got an A on the test. (Metaphorical receiving)
- (g) Get a life. (Metaphorical obtaining for oneself)

3.4.2.3 Adjectival Polysemy in English

A third type of polysemy in English is the adjectival polysemous expressions. In the words of Ullmann: 'adjectives are apt to change their meaning according to the

noun they qualify' (Ullmann 1962:160). For instance, consider the various senses communicated by the polysemous expression 'great' in the below contexts (Waite (ed.) 1994/2012: 359, Oxford Paperback Thesaurus):

- (a) We had great difficulty in solving the problem. (Large in degree)
- (b) I read an article about Alexander the Great. (Particularly important)
- (c) It is great to see you again. ((Informal) good; wonderful)
- (d) There was a great big dog in the garden. ((Informal) used to emphasize something).

3.4.2.4 Prepositional Polysemy in English

In addition to nominal, verbal, adjectival polysemy in English, some prepositions in English are polysemous. For instance, consider the various senses of the polysemous expression 'over' in the contexts below (Bennett 1973: 25):

- (a) The airplane flew over the town. (directly above)
- (b) She spread a cloth over the table. (above and covering)
- (c) They hung a curtain over the picture. (before and covering)
- (d) He has two people over him in the office. (above in status or position)
- (e) He climbed over the gate. (above and onto the other side of)
- (f) The bridge over the river is closed. (across; from one side to the other)
- (g) John fell over a cliff. (downwards; from the edge of)
- (h) John fell over a stone. (as a result of collision with).

3.4.3 Pathways to Polysemy in English

In the following sections, causes of polysemy in English will be highlighted. These are: (i) the use of figurative language, (ii) 'collocational relations', (iii) 'specialization in a social milieu' and (iv) semantic change (Ullman 1962: 159). Knowing the pathways to

polysemy in English paves the way to determine the tool of analysis by which the specific sense involved is decoded.

3.4.3.1 Figurative language

Figurative language leading to the phenomenon of polysemy can be divided into three types: (a) metaphor, (b) metonymy, and (c) synecdoche (Nerlich 2003: 50). Metaphor can be defined as a 'figure of speech in which two things (or ideas or emotions) are likened to one another by being fused together into a new non-denotative compound' (Dickins et al. 2002: 238). For example, in the sentence, 'the red, red rose of my love', the literal sense of rose (as a flower) extends metaphorically to include the emotive feature (as a symbol of love) (ibid). Metonymy can be defined as 'a figure of speech that consists in using the name of one thing for the name of something else with which it is associated' (Cowie 2009: 32). For instance, in the sentence, 'the village has welcomed the construction of a bypass', the literal sense of village (as a location) extends metonymically to represent human features (the people of the village) (ibid). Synecdoche can be defined as 'a categorical transfer phenomenon based on semantic inclusion as conceived by the speaker between a more comprehensive and a less comprehensive category' (Seto 2003:196). For example, in the sentence, 'All of his cattle are affected; he'll lose more than fifty head', the more comprehensive category is 'cattle' and the less comprehensive one is 'head' (Saeed 2003:190).

3.4.3.2 'Collocational Relations'

The second source of polysemy in English is the collocational relations, which take place between two words in the utterance, what Ullmann describes as 'shifts of application' (Ullmann 1962: 159). For instance, consider the distinct senses involved in the use of the polysemous adjective 'smart' in the contexts below, as illustrated by Oxford Dictionary of English, (Soanes and Stevenson (eds.) 2003: 1670):

(a) (Of a person) clean, tidy, and well-dressed: You look very smart.

(b) (Of clothes) attractively neat and stylish: a smart blue skirt.

- (c) (Of an object) bright and fresh in appearance: a smart green van.
- (d) (Of a place) fashionable and upmarket: a smart restaurant.
- (e) (Informal) having or showing a quick-witted intelligence: if he was that smart, he would never have been tricked.
- (f) (Of a device) programmed so as to be capable of independent action: smart phone; hi-tech smart weapons.
- (g) Quick; brisk: he set off at a smart pace.
- (h) (With Pricing) reasonable, moderate, not costing: smart price.

3.4.3.3 ‘Specialisation in a Social milieu’

Ullmann also argues that polysemous expressions extend to convey different senses when used to express different specialities. For instance, consider the polysemous noun ‘statement’ in the contexts below (Waite (ed.) 1994/2012: 789, Oxford Paperback Thesaurus):

- (a) Used by clients in banks: a document setting out items of debit and credit between the bank and the customer.
- (b) Used by witnesses in the police or in the court: a formal account of facts or events one gives in the police or in the court.
- (c) Used in the mass media: a formal spoken or written announcement; e.g., the Prime Minister will make a statement about the defence cuts today.
- (d) (In the UK): an official assessment of a child’s special educational needs.

3.4.3.4 Semantic Change

In the words of Riemer, ‘meaning change is everywhere, and no words are immune from it’ (Riemer2010: 372). Riemer further identifies four traditional categories of semantic change in English. These are: (i) ‘specialization’, (ii) ‘generalization’, (iii) ‘ameliorization’, and (iv) ‘pejoration’ (ibid: 374-475). In

'specialisation', 'the word narrows its range of reference' (Ibid: 374). For instance, the English word 'pavement' was originally used to refer to any paved surface, but it is now narrowed to mean the footpath of the edge of a street (ibid). 'Generalization' is the case in which the meaning of the word expands to cover a wider range of reference (ibid). For instance, the verb 'arrive' was originally used to mean 'come to shore', but it is now widened to mean 'reaching any destination' (Ullmann, 1962: 230). 'Ameliorization' refers to the situation in which the meaning of the word 'changes to become more positively valued' (Riemer, 2010: 375). For instance, the adjective 'nice', which was originally used in Middle English to mean 'simple, foolish, silly, ignorant'; its modern sense, i.e. 'agreeable, pleasant, satisfactory, attractive' has been used since the eighteenth century (ibid). 'Pejoration' is the situation in which 'the word takes on a derogatory meaning' (ibid: 374). For instance, the adjective 'silly', which was originally used to mean 'blessed; happy; fortunate', is also nowadays used to mean 'foolish' (Ibid: 375)

3.4.4 Effects of Polysemy on English

In terms of the positive aspects of polysemy, Ullmann argues that using polysemous expressions helps relieve the burden on the human memory (Ullmann 1962: 168). Another positive aspect is mentioned by Ravin and Leacock, who emphasize the idea that polysemy is a remarkable source of humour and puns (Ravin and Leacock 2000:1). With respect to the negative effects of polysemy on English, Ullmann emphasizes the idea that Aristotle was highly critical of polysemy. Therefore, Aristotle describes polysemous as 'words of ambiguous meanings; chiefly useful to mislead his hearers' (Ullmann 1962: 167).

3.5 Section Four: The Relationship between Polysemy in Arabic and English

Central to this section is the identification of aspects of similarities as well as differences between polysemy in Arabic and English at both the linguistic and the cultural level. This two-fold identification is important for both the translator and the applied linguist. In the view of House, one of the approaches to translation studies is

the the examination of the source text 'as an example of how a particular language works, with a view to noting how it contrasts with the language into which it is to be translated' (House 2009: 15). From this perspective, translation should also be looked upon as one of the related fields of contrastive linguistics (ibid). However, there is a basic difference between translation studies and contrastive linguistics. Whereas the latter is concerned with investigating the notion of equivalence 'within and across languages', i.e. between two or more languages, translation studies 'focus on equivalence in texts, in the actual use of the languages and their component parts in communicative situations' (ibid). In the course of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies, it could be argued that a third type of equivalence should be added. This might be described as 'equivalence within and across cultures'.

On comparing and contrasting polysemy in Arabic and English from a cultural perspective, some aspects of similarities as well as differences can be recognized. For instance, consider the cultural implications associated with the Arabic kinship term 'ab' in its various Qur'ānic contexts in contrast with its English equivalent 'father'. With respect to aspects of similarity, the below remarks can be made:

(a) Both languages share the 'basic' meaning: 'a male parent' (Collins English Dictionary 2011: 358);

(b) Both languages communicate the emotive meaning attached to the expression. The phrase 'fatherly care' in English is emotively analogous to (ar-ri^cāyah al-abawiyah) in Arabic;

(c) Both languages share the figurative extension which the expression sometimes undertakes. The phrase (father figure) in English is figuratively analogous to the phrase (maqām al'ab) in Arabic. Similarly, the (father of the church) in English is figuratively analogous to ('ab al-kanīshah) in Arabic.

However, in Qur'ānic Arabic, this polysemous expression expands to communicate two distinct 'relational' meanings, which are not used in English (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983:1):

(a) (al-jadd - The grandfather), as in

(wattaba^ctu millata ābā^ī lbrāhyma wa-Ishāqa wa-Ya^cqūba mā kāna lanā an nushrika billāhi min shay’);

(And I follow the faith of my forefathers: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Because of God’s grace to us and to all mankind, we would never worship anything beside God, Q 12: 38);

(b) (al-^camm - The Paternal Uncle), as in

(qālū na^cbudu ilāhaka wa-’ilāha ābā^īika lbrāhyma wa-Ismā^ciyā wa-Ishāqa ilāhan wāhidan)

(They [Jacob’s sons] replied, ‘We shall worship your God and the God of your fathers: Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, one single God, Q 2: 133).

Al-Dāmaghānī notes that Ishmael was Isaac’s paternal uncle (ibid).

Similarly, Oxford English Dictionary lists some uses of the polysemous expression (father) in English, which are not used in Arabic (Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 2003: 629):

(a) To be the father of something: to be the source or originator of, e.g. the father of English poetry;

(b) Fatherland: a person’s native country;

(c) Father’s Day: a day of the year on which fathers are particularly honoured by their children.

In (a) above the expression ‘father’ is often translated into Arabic as ‘rā’id - pioneer’. In (b) above, ‘fatherland’ is often translated into Arabic as ‘masqaṭ ra’s – birth-place’. In (c) above, Arab culture does not celebrate father’s day, so this expression represents a lexical as well as cultural gap in Arabic.

Another example to show the linguistic as well as cultural differences in the treatment of polysemy in Arabic and English would be the the expression ‘al- ḥikmah’

in comparison with its equivalent in English: ‘wisdom’. The expression ‘wisdom’ is used in English to express the one of the following meanings (Soanes and Stevenson, eds. Oxford English Dictionary 1998/2005: 2021):

(a) The quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement: *listen to his words of wisdom*;

(b) The fact of being based on sensible or wise thinking: *some questioned the wisdom of building the dam so close to an active volcano*;

(c) The body of knowledge and experience that develops within a specified society or period: *Eastern wisdom*;

Meanings (a), (b), and (c) above are also used in Standard Arabic. For example, with respect to the meaning (a) above, Arabs say ‘aḥkamathu at-tajārub’ to refer to someone who has the ability to make a sound judgement because of experience and/or knowledge (Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 12: 143). It should also be noted that in (c) above the expression ‘wisdom’ is not translated into Arabic as ‘al-ḥikmah’. Alternatively, the expression ‘al-turāth’ is used.

However, Arabic expresses some additional meanings associated with the word ‘al-ḥikmah’. For instance, in Standard Arabic, ‘al-ḥikmah’ is used to express the meaning of ‘al-‘adl – justice’ (ibid). Also, the same expression expands in its Qur’ānic context to communicate some shades of meaning, which are not used in English. These are (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 141-142):

(a) (as-sunnah – Wisdom taught by Muḥammad), as in

(kamā arsalnā fikum rasūlan minkum yatlū ‘alaykum āyātīnā wa-yuzakkikum wa-yu‘allimukum al-kitāba wa-lḥikmah)

(Just as We [God] have sent among you a Messenger of your own to recite our revelations to you and teach you the Scripture and wisdom, Q 2:151);

(b) (an-nubuwwah – Prophetic teachings), as in

(faqad ātaynā āla Ibrāhīma al-kitāba wa-lḥikmah)

(We [God] gave the descendants of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom);

(c) (tafsīr al-Qur'ān – Interpreting the Qur'ān), as in

(yu'tī al-ḥikmata man yashā' wa-man yu'ta al-ḥikmata faqad 'ūtiya khayran kathīrā)

(He [God] gives wisdom to whoever He wills. Whoever is given wisdom has truly been given much good, Q 2: 269);

(d) (al-Qur' ān – the Qur' ān), as in

(id^cu ilā sabīli rabbika bilḥikmati wa-lmaw^cīẓati alḥasanah)

([Prophet] Call [people] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching, Q 16:125).

The examples above point to one central argument: polysemy in Arabic expands to communicate various shades of meaning, which are linguistically and/or culturally different from their equivalents in English. The extent to which the Arabic/English translation of polysemy is easy or difficult is conditioned by the degree of similarity and/or differences in the shades of meaning expressed in both languages. This issue is two-dimensional, one of which relates to the translator, while the other is relevant to the target reader. With respect to the translator, it is his/her responsibility to compare and contrast the shades of meaning communicated in the source and target text in terms of language and culture. In case these shades are different, explanatory notes could be provided to resolve linguistic and/or cultural ambiguity. Four types of explanatory notes are suggested: (i) footnotes, (ii) bracketed comments, (iii) unmarked explications and (iv) intertextuality, i.e. 'different parts of the Qur'ān explain each other' (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx). For instance, in their treatment of the translation into English of the polysemous expression 'ummah – nation', previous Qur'ān translators have shown a remarkable variety in adopting these methods (see below). The Qur'ānic expression 'ummah – nation' has expanded in its Qur'ānic contexts to communicate five distinct senses in terms of language and culture. These senses are:

1. The Central Meaning: 'ummah – nation', as in

(kuntum khayra 'ummatin 'ukhrijat lin-nās ta'murūna bilma^ḥrūf watanhawna ^ḥan al-munkari wa-tu'minūna billāh)

(Muslims), you are the best nation singled out for people: you order what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God, Q 3:110, see also Q 2: 128, Q 2: 134, Q 2: 141, Q 4: 41, Q 5: 48, Q 7: 34, Q 7: 38, Q 16: 36, Q 16: 84, Q 16: 89, Q 22: 43, Q 22:44, Q 28: 75, Q 35: 24, Q 40: 5).

To emphasize this meaning, i.e. 'ummah – nation', Al-Hilali and Khan provide the target reader with a *footnote*:

(V. 3: 110) Narrated by Abū Hurayrah, may Allāh be satisfied with him, the verse:- "You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism and real followers of Prophet Muhammad and his Sunna (legal ways etc.)] are the best of peoples ever raised up for man-kind" means, the best for the people, as you bring them with chains on their necks till they embrace Islam (and thereby save them from the eternal punishment in the Hell-Fire and make them enter the Paradise in the Hereafter (ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, Vol.6, Ḥadīth No.80) (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 597) .

2. 'ummah – a group of men', as in

(wa-lammā warada mā'a midyana wajada ^ḥalayhi 'ummatin minan-nāsi yasqūna)

(When he [Moses] arrived at Midian's waters, he found a group of men watering [their flocks], Q 28:23).

To emphasize this meaning, i.e. 'ummah – group of men', both Abdel-Haleem (2004/2008) and Al-Hilali and Khan (1974/2011) add *bracketed comments*, i.e. [their flocks] (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 246; Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 597).

3. 'ummah – an example', as in

(inna Ibrāhīma kāna ummatan qānitan lilāhi ḥanīfan wa-lam yaku minal-mushrikīn)

(Abraham was truly an example: devoutly obedient to God and true in faith. He was not an idolater, Q 16: 120).

To emphasize this sense, Al-Hilali and Khan both *foreignize* their translation by borrowing the same expression, i.e. 'ummah', then provide a detailed *explication* of the specific sense involved in using the expression in this specific context: 'Verily, Abraham was an *Ummah* (a leader having all the good righteous qualities)' (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 422). Similarly, Saheeh International Translation (Al-Mehri 2010, ed.) provides the target reader with both a bracketed explication and a footnote:

'Indeed, Abraham was a [comprehensive] leader, devoutly obedient to Allāh, inclining toward truth, and he was not of those who associate others with Allāh (Saheeh International Translation (Al-Mehri 2010, ed.: 261).

Footnote (ibid): i.e. embodying all the excellent qualities which make one an example to be followed.

4. 'Ummah – a period of time', as in

(wa-qāla alladhī najā minhumā wad-dakara ba^cda ummatin 'anā 'unabbi'kum bi-ta'wīlihi)

(But the prisoner who had been freed *at last* remembered [Joseph] and said, 'I shall tell you what this means, Q 12: 45).

To emphasize this meaning, i.e. a period of time, Abdel-Haleem uses *unmarked explication* with the expression 'at last' (see above) (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 148).

5. 'Ummah – religion', as in

('inna hadhihi 'ummatakum 'ummatan waḥidah wa'anā rabbukum fa^cbudūn)

([Messengers], this community of yours is one single community and I am your Lord, so serve Me, Q 21: 92).

To emphasize this sense, Abdel-Haleem opts for *intertextuality*, i.e. 'utilization of the relationships between parts of the Qur'ān' (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx). In an explanatory footnote, Abdel-Haleem refers the target reader to Q 23: 51-53, where God orders messengers to eat good things and do good deeds as He is aware of what

they do because their religion is one and God is their Lord. However, they have split their community into sects, each believing and rejoicing in their own (ibid: 217).

As for the second dimension, i.e. the audience, the problem is explained by Lado as follows:

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture – both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives (Lado 1957/1964: 2).

In the light of the above two arguments: (i) the linguistic and cultural differences between polysemy in Arabic and English, and (ii) Lado's argument above, the translator's intervention in the process of translation is inevitable in order to compare and contrast the source and target text and, accordingly, reveal the linguistic as well as cultural differences between the source and target text. At this point the difference between 'mediation' and 'intervention' in translation can be recognized. In the former, it is the job of the translator to narrow the linguistic as well as cultural gap between the source and target text. This can be achieved by providing the target reader with explanatory notes which help to reveal the differences between the source and target language and/or culture. In looking at the translator as 'an intervenient being', the translator is viewed as 'the one who intervenes in the text' (Maier 2007: 2). One form of this intervention is the interpretation of the text.

Adopting a pragmatic perspective to translation, Verscheuren argues that the translator's interpretation of the text should be seen as one of the forms of intervention:

Interpretation is not just a matter of decoding but essentially the consecutive giving of different meanings to the same words on the basis of different experiences and contexts. Though it would not be correct to assume that the new meanings were not there from the start, and though the 'old' meanings are not necessarily overruled by the new ones, it must be clear that there is no doubt a form of intervention in the interpretation process (Verscheuren 2007: 74).

Verscheuren further emphasizes Hymes' argument that 'in the study of language as a mode of action, variation is a clue and a key' (Hymes 1974: 75). Following Hymes, Verscheuren argues for the 'variability' involved in the process of translation. That is to say, the use of language differs from one person to another. To provide a justification for this argument, Verscheuren quotes a text from *The Da Vinci Code*, in which Captain Bezu Fache's questions Robert Langdon as he might be connected with Jacques Saunière:

'So you shared interests with him?' Fache asked.

'Yes. In fact, I've spent much of the last year writing the draft for a book that deals with Mr. Saunière's primary area of expertise. I was looking forward to picking his brain.'

Fache glanced up. 'Pardon?'

The idiom apparently did not translate. 'I was looking forward to learning his thoughts on the topic.'

The example above, argues Verscheuren, represents two distinct codes. The first is the one which is familiar to all users, whereas the second is open to negotiation with this code (ibid). Since the translator is a language user as well, translation as a product is also expected to differ from one translator to another. Thus, central to the process of translation are both the individuality of the translator and the view of translation as a process of negotiation (ibid: 75-76). In this sense, every act the translator undertakes and every choice the translator opts for should also be seen as one of the forms of intervention. Thus, intervention in translation is 'inevitable':

We cannot ignore the implication that every translator or interpreter inevitably intervenes when translating or interpreting. As there are no fully equivalent codes, claims to equivalence in translation become void in the absence of a thorough awareness of inevitable difference (ibid: 76).

In the light of the above insights, each translator is likely to interpret the polysemous expression differently. However, does this mean that the translator of the Qur'ān has the right to opt for an equivalent to the polysemous expression without providing justifications for his/her choice? Another important question is: how do we evaluate the translation and provide guidelines? In this context, it is argued that both language

and culture of the Qur'ān should be viewed as crucial tools in decoding the implied sense involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 4.5; 4.7). Viewing the text as a linguistic entity which is surrounded by a cultural background is the key to select the most probable equivalent to the polysemous expression in the Qur'ān.

3.6 Conclusion

The current chapter has attempted to achieve many goals. Above all, polysemy as a semantic notion has been located within the 'map' of lexical semantic relations. Also, a review of the related literature in Arabic and English has been provided. In this context, some sub-issues have been raised: types, causes, and effects of polysemy on Arabic and English. In addition, a comparative as well as contrastive study of polysemy in Arabic and English has been carried out. This study has shown that polysemy in Arabic and English have proved to be linguistically and culturally different. We are now in a better position to identify the linguistic and cultural aspects involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān, which will be the focus of the next chapter. Emphasis will be laid on two essential aspects: the various layers involved in interpreting polysemy in the Qur'ān and tools of textual analysis by which linguistic and/or cultural ambiguity involved in both understanding and translating Qur'ānic polysemy is resolved.

Chapter Four

Polysemy, Context and Culture

‘Context is crucial in interpreting the meaning of any discourse, Qur’ānic or otherwise’ (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx).

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, it was emphasized that identifying the diverse aspects of lexical meaning across different cultures has often been viewed as a problematic issue. This is due to the fact that words’ linguistic and cultural implications vary from one culture to another. In the words of Lado, ‘meanings are culturally determined or modified; they represent an analysis of the universe as grasped in a culture’ (Lado 1957/1964: 113). Accordingly, this linguistic and/or cultural variation creates both a lexical and cultural ambiguity.

In this context, the purpose of the current chapter is two-fold. First, it aims to look in more detail at the issue of polysemy as a source of ambiguity in Qur’ān translation in terms of language and culture. This ambiguity is a product of the multiple layers of meaning involved in using polysemy in diverse Qur’ānic contexts. Another goal in the present chapter is to suggest some tools of textual analysis by which the specific sense involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur’ān is decoded. The ultimate goal at this stage is to achieve a contextual specification of the diverse meanings communicated by polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān. These tools are based on one central argument: in analysing polysemy in the Qur’ān, there is a strong correlation between meaning, context and culture. Thus, a contextual specification of the diverse meanings of polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān requires expanding the scope of the context to include both the linguistic and cultural context.

To achieve the above goals, the current chapter falls into three basic sections. In 4.2, two issues will be addressed: (i) the nature of meaning, and (ii) the various dimensions involved in the study of lexical meaning. These are intended to pave the

way to investigate various types of meaning involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān, which will be the focus of 4.3. In 4.4, tools of textual analysis at both levels of language and culture will be suggested. This is intended to be both an argument against generalizing the polysemous expression in all Qur'ānic contexts as well as an argument for future translators to determine the specific sense communicated by the polysemous expression in each context.

4.2 The Nature of Meaning

The term 'meaning' is, in the words of Ullmann, 'one of the most ambiguous and most controversial terms in the theory of language' (Ullmann 1962:54). The reason for this, explains Ullmann, is that over the years the term has often been defined differently, to the extent that *The Meaning of Meaning* (Ogden and Richards 1923/1949) offers sixteen different definitions for the term. Riemer (2010: 2) agrees and argues that 'meaning' is 'a very vague term'. However, he adds, this notion has always been at the centre of interest of semanticists because 'meaning is the heart of language; it is what language is for: to have a language without meaning would be like having lungs without air' (ibid: 3).

Seeking in a seminal work to shed more light on the diverse senses implied in the use of the term 'mean' in different contexts, Lyons invites his reader to consider the following sentences (Lyons 1981: 13):

(a) Mary means well.

(b) The red flag means danger.

In the first example, argues Lyons, the use of the term 'means' in this context implies that Mary intends no harm. In the second sentence, the hearer or the reader infers that the red flag is a sign of danger (ibid). Thus, Lyons draws the conclusion that the term 'mean' is used to express, not only explicit meanings, but implicatures and inferences as well.

Similarly, Murphy (2010) encourages his readers to consider some of the different uses of the term 'mean' by asking his readers to provide a substitute for the

polysemous expression 'means' in some sentences. Two of these are (Murphy 2010: 30):

(a) Happiness means what I'm feeling right now. (refers to)

(b) Happiness means something more ordinary than ecstasy. (connotes / is associated with)

Thus, Murphy adds two essential dimensions to the study of meaning: the 'referential' and the 'connotative' meaning. Adopting well-known definitions from translation studies, the former can be considered as 'the study of the meaning of words as symbols which refer to objects, events, abstracts, or relations' (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 56), whereas 'connotative' meaning is 'the words as prompters of reactions of the participants in communication' (ibid).

In addition, closely relevant to the problem of the current research is the distinction commonly drawn in the discussions on the nature of meaning between 'sense' and 'reference'. The former relates to the treatment of polysemy as a lexical semantic relation in Arabic and English, whereas the latter is crucial in the translation into English of culture-specific references in Qur'ān translation. The 'referential' theory of meaning establishes the argument that 'words mean by referring to objects and states in the world' (Malmkjær 1991: 331). In other words, 'the meaning of the word is the object it stands for' (ibid). In this sense, names and descriptions represent the objects, while verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions represent the relationships between and characteristics of these objects (ibid). Also, general words extend in their contexts to refer to classes of things (ibid: 331-332). For example, *that cow* and *the cow over there* refer to a specific cow, whereas *the cow is a mammal* refers to the class of cows (ibid: 332). However, there are two problems with this theory (ibid):

(a) Statements which express true identity do provide the audience with information, e.g. the morning star is the evening star.

(b) Some constituent parts of a statement may lack reference. However, the statement communicates meaning, e.g. the present king of France is bald;

In (a) above, assuming that the meaning of the word merely lies in the object it refers to, it is not possible for a true identity statement to communicate new knowledge. In (b) there is no reference to 'the kingdom of France'. Yet, the statement is meaningful. Alternatively, Frege argues that to the term 'reference' another concept should be added:

It is natural now, to think of there being connected with a sign (name, combination of words, letter), besides that to which the sign refers, which may be called the reference of the sign, also what I should like to call the sense of the sign, wherein the mode of presentation is contained (Frege 1970: 57).

Frege further examines the relationship between the sign, the sense and the reference. In his view, attached to the sign is a lucid sense, which, in turn, points to a specific reference. However, what is attached to the reference is merely the sign (ibid: 58). The 'sense' of the word can be seen as the product of 'the system of linguistic relationships, i.e. sense relations/semantic relations which a lexical item contracts with other lexical items, e.g. synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and collocations (Crystal 1980/2008: 432, see 3.2). In this sense, the 'sense' of the word refers to the internal relations taking place between the linguistic units of the utterance, whereas the term 'reference' points to is 'extra-linguistic – the entities, states of affairs in the external world' (ibid).

4.2.1 Types of Meaning

Before proceeding to examine and illustrate one of the 'pragmatic' aspects of the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān, namely Qur'ānic polysemy in context, two essential issues should first be explored. These are: (i) Types of meaning in general, and (ii) 'semantic' versus 'pragmatic' meaning in particular. This is intended to be a theoretical framework of the below sections. In the words of Leech:

We can, by carefully distinguishing types of meaning, show how they all fit into the total composite effect of linguistic communication, and show how methods of study appropriate to one type may not be appropriate to another (Leech 1974/1990: 22).

Based on Leech's statement above, investigating the diverse aspects of meaning is important for two reasons:

(a) This analysis helps to establish an integral vision of the diverse meanings a given polysemous expression expresses in its several contexts;

(b) Consequently, this type of investigation also helps to identify the optimal method of textual analysis by which the specific sense involved in the use of polysemy is revealed. For instance, examining the linguistic relations which take place between words in a given utterance may lead the semanticist to pinpoint the ' collocational' relations, or in the words of Nida and Taber 'the semotactic marking' (Nida and Taber 1969/1982:56). These refer to 'the interaction of the polysemous term with the meanings of other terms in its environment' (ibid). For instance, consider the different senses communicated by the use of the polysemous expression 'hand' in the below examples (ibid: 58):

(a) He cut his hand.

(b) He cut off a hand of bananas.

(c) Hand me the book.

In the first sentence, explain Nida and Taber, the use of both 'cut' as a verb and the possessive pronoun 'his' reveal that 'hand' in this context is used to mean 'a part of the body'. However, in the second sentence, the use of 'hand' as collocated with 'of bananas' reveals the sense of 'a number of bananas in a single or double row and still fastened to each other at the base' (ibid). In the third sentence, the word 'hand' is used as a verb, because it is followed by an indirect and direct object. Thus, it is used in this context to mean 'give by hand' (ibid).

In the view of Crystal, linguistics, on the one hand, and disciplines such as sociology and psychology, on the other, share the interest in identifying dimensions of meaning, or in the words of Ogden and Richards 'the meaning of meaning' (Crystal 1980/2008: 299; Ogden and Richards 1923/1949). The result is that there are various

labels attached in describing the types of meaning. Crystal suggests dividing these types into three major categories (ibid):

(a) Types of meaning which are relevant to the analysis of the relationship between language, on the one hand, and the events, states, objects, which fall out of the scope of language. These are labelled 'referential', 'denotative', 'descriptive', 'extensional', 'factual', and/or 'objective' meanings;

(b) Types of meaning which are relevant to the analysis of the relationship between language, on the one hand, and what is going on in the user's mind. These can be divided into two groups: (i) 'the personal/emotional aspects', which are labelled 'attitudinal', 'affective', 'connotative', 'emotive', and/or 'expressive' meanings, and (ii) 'the intellectual/factual' aspects, which are labelled 'cognitive', 'ideational' meanings;

(c) Types of meaning in which the 'situational' background affects the interpretation and/or understanding of the text. These are labelled 'situational', 'contextual', 'pragmatic', 'social', 'functional' and/or 'interpersonal' meanings.

Considering the above division, it is noticed that Crystal emphasizes examining the relationship between language and other areas of knowledge. Contrary to what Crystal suggests, 'linguistic' meaning, in the words of Nida, 'structurally precedes referential and emotive meanings, which may be said to begin where linguistic meaning leaves off' (Nida 1964/2003: 57). Thus, an optimal analysis of types of meaning should start with analysing the linguistic relations taking place between the constituent units of the text. The next step would be to examine this linguistic content within the wider context of the relationship between language and other related fields, e.g. language and events, objects, states, language and mind, and/or language and culture. This can be summarized in the figure below:

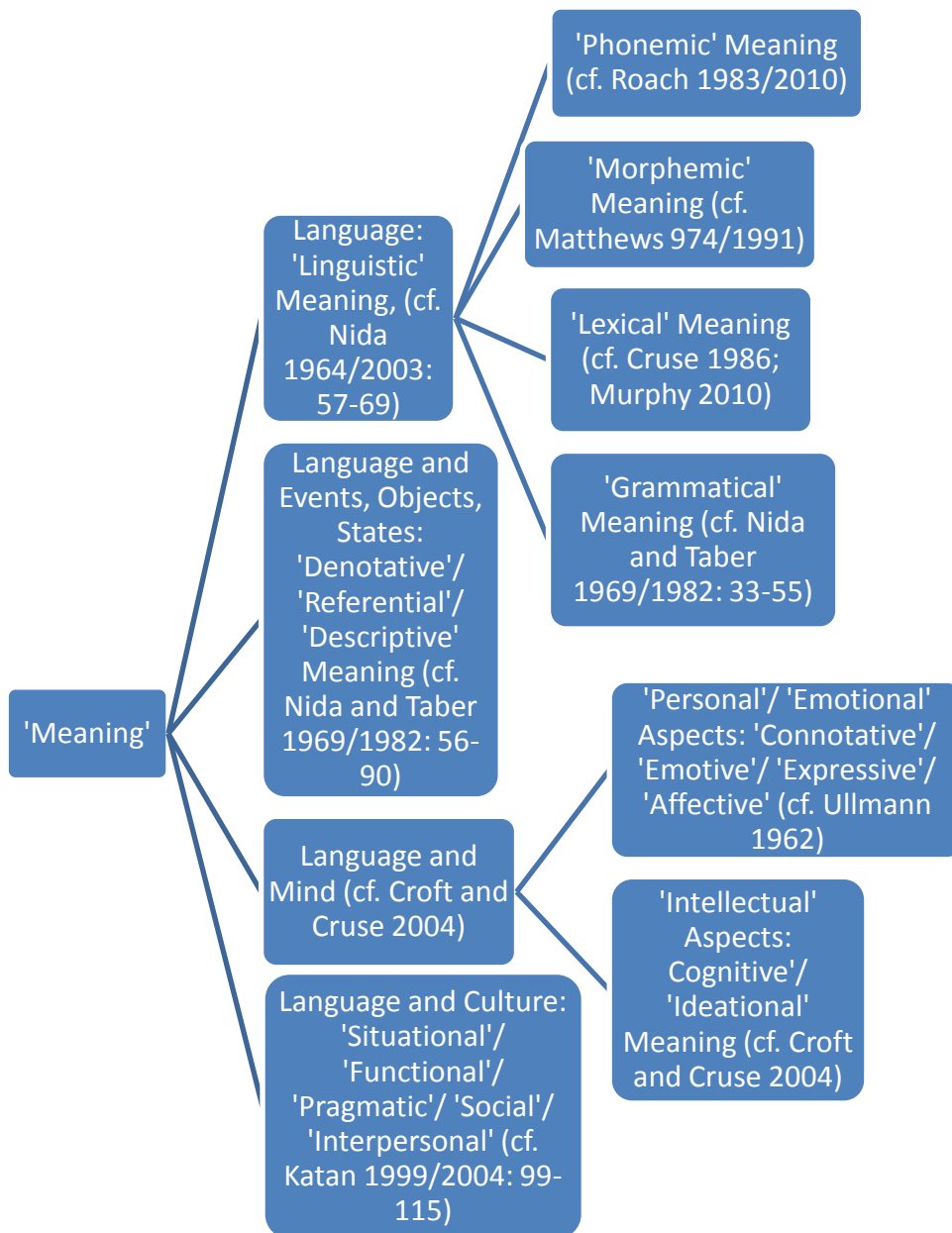


Figure 4:1 Types of Meaning

Narrowing the discussion to the examination of the ‘pragmatic’ aspects of meaning, and in particular the notion of ‘language in context’, which is the main focus of the present study, a further distinction should also be drawn between the ‘semantic’ and ‘pragmatic’ meaning. In this context, two methods of lexical analysis can be observed: (i) context-independent analysis and (ii) context-dependent analysis (Leech 1983: 5). The former, in the words of Leech, represents the ‘semantic’ use of a given expression,

whereas the latter points to the ‘pragmatic’ use (ibid: 5-6). On the one hand, the ‘semantic’ use answers the question: ‘What does word X mean?’ In other words, the ‘semantic’ meaning of an expression is ‘the meaning of the word in abstraction from particular situations, speakers, or hearers’, i.e. the dictionary meaning of the word (ibid: 6). The ‘pragmatic’ meaning of an expression, on the other hand, answers the question: ‘What did you mean by the word X?’ In other words, it is ‘the study of meaning in relation to speech situations’ (ibid). This distinction can be summarized in the below figure:

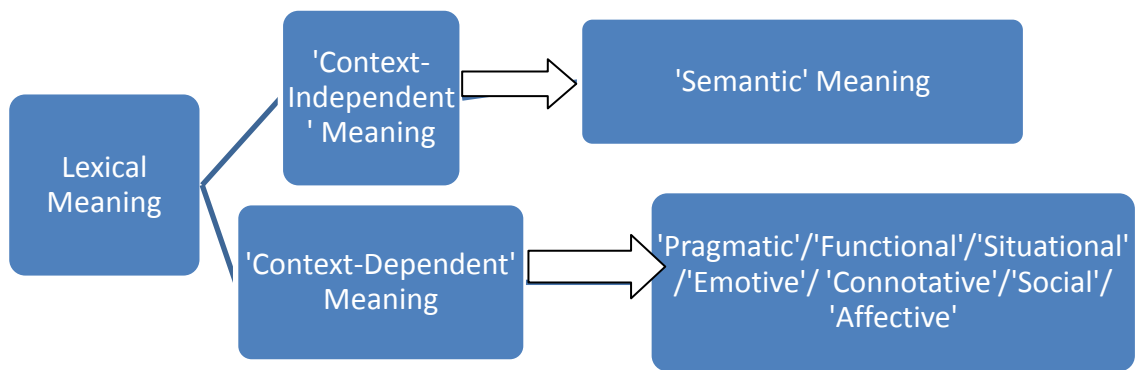


Figure 4.2 Lexical Meaning in Terms of Context

The issue of the role of context in semantic analysis has often been at the centre of interest of many linguists. In the words of Ullmann:

In principle, practically any term may acquire emotive overtones in a suitable context; conversely, even words with a strong emotional charge may on occasion be employed in a purely objective manner (Ullmann 1962: 52).

To justify his view, Ullmann invites his readers to consider the use of the word ‘home’ in English in the below distinct contexts (ibid):

- (a) ‘Home Office’ or ‘B.B.C. Home Service’

(b) 'Home, Sweet home'; 'England, home and beauty'.

In the first sentence, the context in which the word 'home' is used communicates the 'objective' dimension of the word. In the second context, the same word extends to express the 'emotive' dimension (ibid). Similarly, consider the distinct shades of meaning involved in the use of the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'yawm – day' in the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (shahru ramaḍāna al-ladhī 'unzila fīhi al-qur'ānu hudan lin-nāsi wa-bayyinātin min al-hudā wa-lfurqān faman shahida minkum ash-shahra falyaṣumhu wa-man kāna marīḍan aw ^calā safarin fa^ciddatun min ayyāmin 'ukhar)

(It was in the month of Ramaḍān that the Qur'ān was revealed as guidance for mankind, clear messages giving guidance and distinguishing between right and wrong. So any one of you who is present that month should fast, and anyone who is ill or on a journey should make up for the lost days by fasting on other days later, Q 2: 185);

(b) (wa-laqaḍ arsalnā mūsā bi-āyātinā an akhrij qawmaka min aẓ-ẓulumāti ilā an-nūr wa- dhakkirhum bi-ayāmi allāh inna fī dhalika la-āyātin li-kulli ṣabbārin shakūr)

(We [God] sent Moses with our signs: 'Bring out your people from the depths of darkness into light. Remind them of the Days of God: there truly are signs in this for every steadfast, thankful person, Q 14:5);

(c) (wat-taqū yawman lā tajzī nafsun ^can nafsīn shay'ā wa-lā yuqbalu minhā shafā^cah wa-lā yu'khadhu minhā ^cadlun wa-lā hum yunṣarūn)

([Children of Israel] Guard yourselves against a Day when no soul will stand in place of another, no intercession will be accepted for it, nor any ransom; nor will they be helped, Q 2: 48).

According to Ibn Manẓūr, the basic, i.e. ‘the semantic’ meaning of the word ‘yawm’ in Arabic is ‘a duration which starts from the sunrise till the sunset; the plural is ayyām’ (Ibn Manẓūr (1956, 12: 649). This is the meaning used in the first Qur’ānic context above, where is a reference to the day(s) which Muslims should fast as a compensation of any day (s) that may not be fasted as a result of being ill or being on a journey. However, both Mujāhid and Ibn Manẓūr agree that in the second Qur’ānic context above, the same expression, i.e. ‘yawm’, extends in its Qur’ānic context to communicate the meaning of ‘ni[‘]am Allāh – God’s blisses’ (Mujāhid 1931, 1: 333; Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 12: 649). This interpretation is also justified by the use of the cataphoric signal ‘ṣabbārin shakūr – a steadfast and thankful person’. In the third Qur’ānic verse above, God addresses Children of Israel and invites them to accept Muḥammad’s mission. This acceptance guards them against the divine punishment on the Day of Judgement. Thus, the shade of meaning involved in the translation of the expression ‘yawm’ in this context, and according to this situational background, is neither the normal day human-beings live in life nor the blisses rewarded by God to Moses’s people. Rather, the sense implied in this context is ‘the Day of Judgement’. This same Qur’ānic sense, states Izustu, was repeatedly collocated to expressions like ‘al-dīn’, i.e. ‘yawm ad-dīn – Day of Judgement’ (Q 1: 4), ‘al- ākhir’, i.e. ‘al-yawm al- ākhir – The Last Day’ (Q 2:8; see also Q 2:48; Q 2:62; Q 5:119; Q 6: 93; Q 6:122), ‘al-qiyāmah, i.e. ‘yawm al-qiyāmah – The Day of Resurrection’ (Q 2:85), ‘al-ba[‘]th’, i.e. ‘yawm al-ba[‘]th – The Day of Resurrection’ (Q 30:56); ‘al- ḥisāb’, i.e. ‘yawm al- ḥisāb – The Day of Reckoning’, Q 38:16 (Izustu 2004: 17). Thus, it can safely be argued that the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘yawm’ communicates both a ‘basic’ meaning, i.e. ‘day’ and two pragmatic meanings, i.e. ‘bliss’ and ‘the Day of Judgement; the Day of Resurrection; the Day of Reckoning; the Last Day’. This ‘pragmatic’ aspect of meaning will be explored in the section below.

4.2.2 ‘Pragmatic’ Meaning

It was the American semiotician Charles Morris who coined the term ‘pragmatics’ (Morris 1938/1944: 6). Morris first defines ‘semiosis’ as ‘the process in which something functions as a sign’ (ibid: 3). He further explores the different dimensions involved in the study of semiosis. The first dimension, argues Morris,

investigates 'the relations of signs to the objects to which these signs are applicable'. This area of study is called 'semantics' (ibid: 6). The second dimension, adds Morris, examines 'the relations of signs to interpreters'. This study is called 'the pragmatical dimension of semiosis' (ibid). Morris further sheds more light on the various dimensions involved in the study of pragmatics:

Pragmatics deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs (ibid: 30).

Pragmatics has originally been viewed as an 'interdisciplinary' field of knowledge. That is to say, in examining pragmatic aspects of meaning, references to other areas of knowledge, e.g. sociology and psychology should be considered. Crystal agrees and argues that 'pragmatics is not a coherent field of study' (Crystal 1987: 120). He further observes that the relationship between pragmatics and psycholinguistics is overlapping, i.e. both examine the psychological states and abilities of the participants (ibid).

In addition, one of the central issues in pragmatics is the issue of 'text in context' (cf. Yule 1996: 1; Goddard and Wierzbicka 1997:231; Verschueren 1999:75; Schmitt 2002:9; Mey 2008: 41; Cheng 2010: 19-20). The common thread in all these insights is that attention should be paid to the social and cultural factors involved in the process of textual analysis. Yule, for instance, argues that an investigation of the pragmatic meaning involves 'the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context and how the context influences what is said' (Yule 1996:1). Similarly, Goddard and Wierzbicka (1997: 231) argue that 'describing and explaining culture-specific ways is one of the tasks of discourse and culture'. Likewise, Verschueren claims that examining the context in which the text is situated requires examining the 'world of the text' (Verschueren 1999:75). He further classifies this world into three major divides: (i) the 'mental' world, i.e. the process of communication from mind to mind (ibid: 87); (ii) the 'social' world, i.e. investigating both the social setting and the participants in communication (ibid: 91) and (iii) the 'physical world', i.e. examining both the 'temporal' and 'spatial' background of the text (ibid: 95). Following a similar line of thought, Mey emphasizes the dynamicity of the notion of context:

Context is a dynamic, not a static concept; it is to be understood as the continually changing surroundings, in the widest sense, that enable the participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible (Mey 2008: 41).

Similarly, Cheng argues that the functional interpretation of language, contextuality and the analysis of language-in-use are all central features in the process of pragmatic textual analysis (Cheng 2010:20). In short, pragmatics as a branch of knowledge lays emphasis on various notions. Central among these are the notions of 'situationality' and 'functionality'. Also, as an inter-disciplinary notion, 'pragmatics' also pays attention to investigating the relationship between pragmatics and other related fields, such as sociology and psychology.

In this context, two procedures will be adopted to examine the pragmatic aspects involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān:

(a) The first step toward finding solutions for a given problem should be a thorough examination of the causes of this problem. Thus, the various layers of meaning involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān will first be examined (see 4.3);

(b) Tools of text analysis in translation will be suggested (see 4.5; 4.7). These are designed as a guide for the future translators of the Qur'ān in their treatment of the phenomenon polysemy in the Qur'ān.

4.3 Polysemy in the Qur'ān: Various Layers of Meaning

The various layers of meaning involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān are multi-faceted. Polysemy in the Qur'ān extends in its context to communicate various dimensions of meaning: 'metaphoric', 'collocated', 'situational', 'emotive', 'overall' and 'cultural' meanings. These will be illustrated in the sections below.

4.3.1 The Metaphoric Meaning: ‘an-nūr – The light’

The basic meaning of the word ‘an-nūr’ in both Qur’ānic and Classical Arabic is ‘aḍ-ḍiyā’: wan-nūru ḍidu aẓ-ẓulmah – the light and the opposite is darkness’ (Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 5: 240). This is the meaning communicated in the Qur’ānic verses below:

(a) (alam taraw kayfa khalaqa allāhu sab^{ca} samāwātin ṭibāqā wa-ja^{ca}ala al-qamara fihinna nūrā wa-ja^{ca}ala ash-shamsa sirājā)

(Have you ever wondered how God created seven heavens, one above the other, placed the moon as a light in them and the sun as a lamp, Q 71: 15-16);

Al-Dāmaghānī comments: ‘wa-ja^{ca}ala al-qamara fihinna nūrā – [God] placed the moon as a light in them [the seven heavens]’ means that ‘God placed the moon in the heavens as a light for both the heavens and the Earth’ (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 467);

(b) (al-ḥamdu lil-lāhi al-ladhī khalaqa as-samāwāti wal-arḍi wa-ja^{ca}ala aẓ-ẓulumāti wan-nūr thumma al-ladhīna kafarū birabbihim ya^{ca}dilūn)

(Praise belongs to God who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light; yet the disbelievers set up equals to their Lord, Q 6:1).

However, both Al-Dāmaghānī and Ibn al-^{ca}Imād argue that the same expression ‘an-nūr – the light’ extends metaphorically to communicate some other meanings. These are (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 466-467; Ibn al-^{ca}Imād 1977: 272-274):

(a) (Islām – the Religion of Islām), as in

(yurīdūna an yuṭfi’āū nūra allāhi bi’afwāhihim wa-y’bā allāhu illā an yutimma nūrahu wa-law kariha al-kāfirūn)

(They [the disbelievers] try to extinguish God’s light with their mouths, but God insists on bringing His light to its fullness, even if the disbelievers hate it, Q 9: 32);

(b) (al-īmān – the Belief), as in

(yā ayyuhā al-ladhīna āmanū ittaqū allāha wa-āminū birasūlihi yu'tikum kiflayni min raḥmatihi wa-yaj^cal lakum nūran tamshūna bihi wa-yaghfir lakum wal-lāhu ghafūrun raḥīm)

(Believers, be mindful of God and have faith in His messenger: He will give you a double share of His mercy; He will provide a light to help you walk; He will forgive you- God is most forgiving, most merciful, Q 57: 28);

(c) (al-hudā – the Guidance), as in

(allāhu nūru as-samāwāti wal-arḍ)

(God is the Light of the heavens and earth, Q 24: 35);

(d) (an-nubuwwah – Prophecy), as in

(nūrun ^callā nūr)

(Light upon light, Q 24: 35);

(e) (nūr aṣ-ṣirāṭ - the light which guide believers to the right path on the Day of Judgement), as in

(yawma tarā al-mu'mināna wal-mu'mināti yas^cā nūruhum bayna aydīhim wa-bi'aymānihim bushrākum al-yawma jannātun tajrī min taḥtiḥā al-anhāru khālidīna fihā dhālika huwa al-fawzul-^caẓīm)

(On the Day when you [Prophet] see the believers, both men and women, with their light streaming out ahead of them and to their right, [they will be told], 'the good news

for you is that there are gardens graced with flowing streams where you will stay: that is truly the supreme triumph, Q 57: 12);

(f) (al-qur'ān – the Qur'ān), as in

(fa'āminū bil-lāhi wa-rasūlihi wan-nūri al-ladhī anzalnā wal-lāhu bimā ta^cmalūna khabīr)

(So believe in God, in His messenger, and in the light We have sent down: God is fully aware of what you, Q 64: 8);

(g) (al-'aḥkām - Religious Rulings; bayān al- ḥalāl wal-ḥarām – a statement of what is allowed and what is forbidden), as in

(innā anzalnā aT-Tawrāta fihā hudan wa-nūr)

(We revealed the Torah with guidance and light, Q 5: 44);

(h) (al- 'adl – Justice), as in

(wa-'ashraqat al-arḍu binūri rabbihā wa-wuḍi^ca al-kitābu wa-jī'a bin-nabiyyīna wash- shuhadā' wa-quḍiya baynahum bil-ḥaqqi wa-hum lā yuẓlamūn)

(The earth will shine with the light of its Lord; the Record of Deeds will be laid open; the Prophets and witnesses will be brought in. Fair Judgement will be given between them: they will not be wronged, Q 39:69).

4.3.2 The 'Collocated' and 'Situational' Meaning: 'al-waḥy – revelation'

Consider the distinct meanings of the Qur'ānic expression 'al- waḥy – revelation' in the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (innā awḥaynā ilayka kamā awḥaynā ilā nūḥin wan-nabiyyīna min ba^cdihī)

(We [God] have sent revelation to you [Prophet] as We did to Noah and the Prophets after him, Q 4:163);

(b) (wa-idh awḥaytu ilā al-ḥawāriyīna an āminū bī wa-birasūlī qālū āmannā wa-shhad bi’annanā muslimūn)

(I [God] inspired the disciples to believe in Me and My messengers – they said, “We believe and bear witness that we devote ourselves to God, Q 5: 111);

(c) (faqaḍāhunna sab^ca samāwātin fī yawmayni wa-awḥā fī kulli samā’in amrahā)

(And in two Days He [God] formed seven heavens, and assigned an order to each, Q 41:12);

(d) (fakharaja ^calā qawmihi minal-miḥrāb fa’awḥā ilayhim an sabbiḥū bukratan wa-^cashiyyā)

(He [Zachariah] went out of the sanctuary to his people and signalled to them to praise God morning and evening, Q 19: 11);

(e) (wa-’inna ash-shayāṭīna layūḥūna ilā awliyā’ihim liyujādilūkum wa-’inn aṭa^ctumūhum innakum lamushrikūn)

(The evil ones incite their followers to argue with you: if you obey them, you too will become idolaters, Q 6: 121).

In the first context above, the Qur’ānic word ‘waḥy – revelation’ expresses its ‘basic’ Qur’ānic meaning, i.e. ‘revelation – wal-ladhī awḥaynā ilayka min al-kitābi huwa al-ḥaqq – The Book We [God] have revealed to you [Prophet] is the truth, Q 35:31’ (Badawi and Abdel-Haleem 2008: 1016). This is justified by the fact that in this context, the Qur’ānic term ‘awḥaynā - revealed’ is collocated with the term ‘al-nabiyīn – Prophets’ (see also Q 6:19; Q 6:50; Q 6:93; Q 6: 106, Q 6:145; Q 7:59; Q 7:117). However, in the second context, the same expression ‘awḥaytu’ is collocated with the Qur’ānic expression ‘al-ḥawāriyīna – the disciples’, so the meaning implied in this context is ‘inspired’, i.e. ‘al-waḥy – revelation’ in this specific context communicates the meaning of ‘al-ilhām – inspiration’ (see also Q 16: 68; Q 99:5). In third context, the Qur’ānic word ‘awḥā’ is collocated with the word ‘samā’ – heaven’, so the meaning

implied here is that God assigned His order to each of the seven heavens. In the fourth context, interpreting the meaning of ‘awḥā ilayhim – signalled to them’ requires exploring the situational context in which the expression ‘awḥā’ is used. The preceding Qur’ānic verses (Q 19: 1-10) account for story of the Prophet Zachariah, who secretly prayed to his Lord to grant him a successor. God brought Zachariah good news of a son whose name will be Yaḥyā - John. Zachariah said, ‘give me a sign, Lord’. God replied, ‘your sign is that you will not be able to speak to anyone for three full days and nights’. Then, Zachariah went out of the sanctuary to his people and signalled to them (as he was not able to speak) to praise God morning and evening (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 191). Commenting on the Qur’ānic expression ‘awḥā ilayhim’ in this specific context, Al-Rāzī explains that:

The expression ‘awḥā ilayhim’ in this context does not mean ‘speak/reveal to his people’, as Zachariah did not have the ability to speak at this time. Rather, the expression ‘awḥā ilayhim’ is used in this context to mean ‘signal to his people’, through either sign or written language. Through either of these means, Zachariah’s people will get the message that God brought Zachariah the good news that he would be granted a successor, so both Zachariah and his people would be happy (Al-Rāzī 1995, 11: 191).

Al-Rāzī further adopts an ‘inter-textual’ interpretation by referring his readers to another Qur’ānic verse: ‘qāla rabbi ij^{al} lī āyah qāla āyatuka allā tukallima an-nāsa thalāthata ayyāmin illā ramzā – He [Zachariah] said, ‘My Lord, give me a sign’. Your sign’, [the angel] said, ‘is that you will not communicate with anyone for three days, except by gestures, Q 3: 41) (ibid). Ibn Kathīr and Mujāhid agree and emphasize two situational aspects:

(a) The place: ‘kharaja ^{alā} qawmihi minal-miḥrāb - He [Zachariah] went out of the sanctuary to his people’ means the ‘He [Zachariah] went out of the sanctuary to his people’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 99; Mujāhid 1931, 1: 384)

(b) The expression ‘awḥā ilayhim - He [Zachariah] signalled to his people’ means that ‘he gave them a quick signal’ (ibid).

In the fifth context, the Qur'ānic expression 'yūḥūna' is collocated with the word 'ash-shayāṭīn – the evil ones'. Thus, the meaning implied here is that Satans incite their followers 'bilwaswasah wat-tazyīn – the devil dances on one's shoulders).

4.3.3 The 'Emotive' Meaning: 'khushū^c - Complete Submission'

For Muslims, one of the Qur'ānic polysemous expressions which arouses various emotive overtones is the word 'khushū^c - complete submission'. According to Al-Aṣḥānī (1970) and Ibn Manẓūr (1956), central to the Qur'ānic term 'al-khushū^c' is the expression of emotion. In the view of Al-Aṣḥānī, 'al-khushū^c – complete submission to God' is linguistically associated with both fear of and submission to God (see (a) and (e) below). The place of these two feelings is *the heart* (Al-Aṣḥānī 1970, 2: 197). Al-Aṣḥānī further explains that the moment one's heart is aware of God, parts of the body become submissive to God. This is justified by the Prophetic saying, 'idhā ḍara^ca al-qalbu khasha^cat al-jawāriḥu – once the heart is submissive to God, parts of the body are subsequently the same' (ibid). Similarly, Ibn Manẓūr indicates that 'al-khushū^cu qarībun minal-khuḍū^ci illā anna al-khuḍū^ca fil-badani wa-huwa al-iqrāru bil-istiḥdā'i wal-khushū^cu fil-badani waṣ- ṣawti wal-baṣari wal-wajhi – al-khushū^c is close in meaning to al-khuḍū^c - submission to God. However, submission to God is merely associated with the body, whereas al-khushū^c is associated with many aspects. These include submission to God of the body, the voice, the sight, and the face (Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 4: 212) (see (a), (b) and (c) and (d) below). Ibn Manẓūr further indicates that Arabs use the expression 'ikhtasha^ca – to be completely submissive to God' to describe the one who 'ṭa'ṭa'a ṣaḍrahu wa-tawāḍa^ca – bowed his/her chest and behaved modestly' (ibid). Therefore, the term 'al-khushū^c' communicates two central senses, one of which is related to the heart, while the other is associated with parts of the body. These are: (i) the heart being completely submissive to God's greatness, and (ii) parts of the body being fully adhered to God's instructions. Since the former is closely related to the heart, it can safely be argued that central to 'al-khushū^c' is the expression of the emotion and feelings. It's interesting to notice that this emotive overtone is expressed through the adherence of parts of the body to the divine instructions.

The expression 'al-khushū^c - complete submission' extends in its various Qur'ānic contexts to communicate many emotive shades of meaning. Before exploring this emotional world in the Qur'ān, emotion as a category of culture will first be highlighted. In the words of Wierzbicka:

Every culture offers not only a linguistically embodied grid for the conceptualization of emotions, but also a set of 'scripts' suggesting to people how to feel, how to express their feelings, how to think about their own and other people's feelings (Wierzbicka 1999: 31).

In the Qur'ān this emotional meaning is extended, as in the expression 'khushū^c - complete Submission', which expands in its Qur'ānic context to express five distinct shades of meaning:

(a) The 'Central' Meaning: (humility; fear of God; stillness; and looking at the place where Muslims prostrate), as in

(qad aflaḥa al-mu'minūn al-ladhīna hum fī ṣalātihim khāshī^cūn)

([How] prosperous are the believers! Those who pray humbly, Q 23: 1-2);

Ibn Kathīr, Mujāhid, Al-Rāzī, and Al-Dāmaghānī all agree that (khāshī^cūn) in this context communicates the meanings of fear of God, staying still and humble to Him, attempting as much as possible not to be distracted, looking at the place where Muslims prostrate, contemplating the Qur'ān whether through listening or through reading and showing obedience (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 206-207; Mujāhid 1931, 2:429; Al-Rāzī 1995, 2: 172; Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 158). Amazingly, the Qur'ān attaches similar senses to mountains. Consider the Qur'ānic verse below:

(law anzalnā hadhā al-Qur'āna ^calā jabilin lara'aytahu khāshī^can mutaṣaddī^can min khashyatil-lāh)

(If We had sent this Qur'ān down to a mountain, you [Prophet] would have seen it humbled and split apart in its awe of God.... Q 59: 21).

Ibn Kathīr wonders: 'if this is the case with a colossal mountain in case the Qur'ān is revealed to it, then how do some believers lack al- khushū^c - awe of God though they have realized God's Greatness and understood God's Holy Scripture? (Ibn Kathīr (1983, 4: 300). Therefore, adds Ibn Kathīr, believers should always be completely submissive to and fearful of God (ibid).

(b) (khushū^c al-baṣar – Eyes' Complete Submission), as in

(yawma yukshafu^c an ṣāqin wayud^cawna ilā as-sujūdi falā yastaṭī^cūn khāshi^catan abṣāruhum tarhaquhum dhillah wa-qad kānū yud^cawna ilā as-sujūdi wa-hum sālimūn)
(On the Day [Day of Judgement] when matters become dire, they [disbelievers] will be invited to prostrate themselves, but will be prevented from doing so, and their eyes will be downcast and they will be overwhelmed with shame: they were invited to prostrate themselves when they were safe [but refused], Q 68:42-43);

Ibn Kathīr interprets (khāshi^catan abṣāruhum) as 'their eyes would be humble because of both the sins they had done in life and their arrogance '(Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 356).

Similarly, consider the Qur'ānic verse below:

(qulūbun yawma'idhin wājifah abṣāruhā khāshi^cah – [On the Day of Judgement] hearts will tremble and eyes will be downcast Q 79: 8-9);

'khāshi^cah' in this context is interpreted as 'humble because of the horrors disbelievers will suffer' (ibid: 408).

(c) (khushū^c aṣ-ṣawt – Voice Complete Submission), as in

(yawma 'idhin yattabi^cūna ad-dā^ciyya lā ^ciwaja lahu wa-khasha^cat al-aṣwātu lir-raḥmāni falā tasma^cu illā hamsā)

(On that Day [Day of Judgement], people will follow the summoner from whom there is no escape; every voice will be hushed for the Lord of Mercy; only whispers will be heard, Q 20: 108-109);

There are two probable interpretations of (al-aṣwāt – voices) in this Qur'ānic verse. These are: (1) 'waṭ'u al-aqdāmi – footsteps' (Mujāhid 1931, 1: 403), and (2) 'aṣ-ṣawtu al-khafiyy wa-waṭ'ul-aqdām – whispers and footsteps' (Ibn Kathīr, 1983, 3: 144-145). The second interpretation seems to be more probable. This is justified by the use of the cataphoric reference 'aṣ-ṣawt - voice' which conforms to the use of 'hamsā – whisper'.

(d) (khushū^c al-wajh – Face Submission), as in

(wujūhun yawma'idhin khāshi^cah ^cāmilatun nāṣibah taṣlā nāran ḥāmiyah tusqā min ^caynin āniyah laysa lahum ta^cāmun illā min ḍari^c lā yusminu wa-lā yughnī min jū^c wujūhun yawma'idhin nā^cimah lisa^cyihā rāḍiyah fī jannatin ^cāliyah)

(On that Day [Day of Judgement], there will be downcast faces, toiling and weary, as they enter the blazing fire and are forced to drink from a boiling spring, with no food for them except better dry thorns that neither nourish nor satisfy hunger. On that Day, there will also be faces radiant with bliss, well pleased with their labour, in a lofty garden, Q 88, 1-10);

Muslims believe that on the Day of Judgement, there will be two types of faces, i.e. two types of people: (1) those are humiliated. Their faces will be downcast, since they are the disbelievers, and (2) those who will be extremely pleased with their labour;

their faces will be radiant; those are the believers. The polysemous expression 'khāshī^cah' in this situational context communicates the meaning of 'dhalīlatun, khāḍī^catun, mahīnah - completely humiliated' (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 4:535).

(e) (al-khawfu min allāh – Fear of God), as in

(fastajabnā lahu wa-wahbnā lahu Yaḥyā wa-ʾaṣlahnā lahu zawjahu innahum kānū yusārī^cūna fil-khayrāt wa-yad^cūnanā raghaban wa-rahaban wa-kānū lanā khāshī^cīn – We [God] answered him [Zachariah])

(We gave him John, and cured his wife of barrenness – they were always keen on doing good deeds. They called upon Us out of longing and awe, and humbled themselves before us, Q 21:90).

The above Qur'ānic verse describes Zachariah and his wife, who were always aware of God. They were always truthful to and fearful of God (see also 4.4.2 above). Ibn Kathīr mentions four probable interpretations of the polysemous expression 'khāshī^c īn' in this context. These are: (1) truthful to God, (2) true believers in God, (3) fearful of God, and/or (4) humble to God (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3:168). The third interpretation seems to be more probable, because of the use of the anaphoric reference 'rahaban', which communicates the meaning of awe.

4.3.4 The 'General' Meaning: 'al-kitāb – The Book'

The term 'general' meaning is used to refer to the general theme running throughout the Qur'ānic chapter. This type of meaning is often repeated in several parts of the Qur'ānic chapter. Commenting on the stylistic significance of this Qur'ānic feature, Abdel-Haleem explains that:

Though this technique may appear to bring repetition of the same theme or story in different parts of the chapter, but as the Qur'ān is above all a book of guidance, each verse adds to the fuller picture and to the effectiveness of the guidance (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xix).

Similarly, following Drāz (1969/2001), who heavily relies on the general meaning in interpreting Q2, i.e. the Cow Chapter, Al-Ghazali emphasizes that:

It occurred to me that I should delve into the depths of each verse with a view to ascertaining its connection to what is before and after, and acquainting myself with the entire chapter as a cohesive and coherent whole (Al-Ghazali 1998: 2).

Likewise, pointing to the significance of exploring the general meaning involved in interpreting Qur'ān chapters, Shaḥātah (1976:7) argues that 'understanding the general meaning of the Qur'ānic chapter is more helpful than tracking the meaning of each Qur'ānic verse as the latter does not provide the interpreter with the overall meaning involved'. This overall exegesis can be applied to the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān. An example of how this general meaning influences the way by which a certain polysemous expression extends to communicate distinct senses in the Qur'ān would be the use of the polysemous expression 'al-kitāb – the book' in its various Qur'ānic contexts. Consider the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (alif lām mīm dhālika al-kitābu lā rayba fīhi hudan lil-muttaqīn)

(Alif Lam Mim. This is the Scripture in which there is no doubt, Q 2:1-2);

(b) (wa-'idh ātaynā Musā al-kitāba wal-furqāna la^callakum tahtadūn)

(Remember when We [God] gave Moses the Scripture, and the means to distinguish [right and wrong], so that you might be guided, Q 2: 53);

(c) (qul yā ahla al-kitābi ta^cālāw ilā kalimatin sawā'in baynanā wa-baynakum allā na^cbuda illā allāha wa-lā nushrika bihi shay'ā wa-lā yattakhidhu ba^cḍunā ba^cḍan arbāban min dūnil-lāh fa'in tawallaw faqūlū ishhadū bi'anna muslimūn)

(Say, 'People of the Book, let us arrive at a statement that is common to us all: we worship God alone, we ascribe no partner to Him, and none of us takes others beside God as lords.' If they turn away, say, 'Witness our devotion to Him, Q 3: 64);

(d) (kullu ‘ummatin tud^cā ilā kitābihā al-yawma tujzawna mā kuntum ta^cmalūn)

(You will see every community kneeling. Every community will be summoned to its record: ‘Today you will be repaid for what you did, Q 45:29).

The key to decoding the specific sense involved in the use of the polysemous expression ‘al-kitāb – the book’ in all Qur’ānic verses above is the theme running throughout each chapter. In the first context, confirms Ibn Kathīr, ‘al-kitāb’ is a reference to the Qur’ān (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 38). The same modifier ‘lā rayba fīhi – in which there is no doubt’ is also used to refer to the Qur’ān in ‘alif lām mīm tanzīlul-kitābi lā rayba fīhi min rabbil-^cālamīn – This Scripture, free from all doubt, has been sent down from the Lord of the worlds, Q 32:2) (ibid). In the second context, the reference to Moses makes it clear that the polysemous expression ‘al-kitāba’ is a reference to the Torah. In the third context, argues Ibn Kathīr, the expression ‘ahla al-kitābi – People of the Book’ is a reference to both the Christians and the Jews. Therefore, ‘al-kitāb’ in this context refers to both the Bible and the Torah (ibid: 319). In the fourth context, the central theme is the Day of Judgement when every community will be summoned to its record. Thus, the sense involved in using the polysemous expression ‘al-kitāb’ in this context is human beings’ records in which all deeds are registered.

4.3.5 The ‘Cultural’ Meaning

The ‘cultural’ meaning is used here to refer to this type of expressions in which language and culture are amalgamated. Therefore, understanding the shades of meaning involved in using this type of meaning requires widening the scope of analysis to include both language and culture. For instance, according to Al-Dāmaghānī, the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘sujūd’ extends in its various contexts in the Qur’ān to express the meanings below (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 230):

(a) The Basic Meaning: (as- sujūd – Prostrating), as in

(fasjudū lil-lāhi wa-^cbudū)

([People] Prostrate to God and worship, Q 53:62)

(b) (aṣ- ṣalāh – performing prayers), as in

(wa-lil-lāhi yasjudu man fīs-samāwāti wal-arḍ)

(And to God alone, all that are in heaven and earth fall in prostration, Q 13:15);

(c) (as-sājidūn al-^cābidūn – the worshippers), as in

(wa-taḡalubuka fīs-sājidīn)

([God] sees your movements among the worshippers, Q 26:219);

(d) (al-inqiyād wal’istislām – Complete Obedience and Submission), as in

(wan-najmu wash-shajaru yasjudān)

(And the stars and the trees submit to His [God’s] designs, Q 55:5);

(e) (ar-rukū^c – Bowing), as in

(wadkhulū al-bāba sujjadā)

([People of Moses] And enter the gate bowing humbly, Q 7:161);

4.4 Linguistic Context

Before setting out to suggest some linguistic tools which prove to be helpful in identifying the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur’ān, the notion of the linguistic context will first be highlighted. This is intended to be a general theoretical framework in which the below linguistic tools should be located. The notion of ‘linguistic context’ can be defined as:

A general term used in linguistics to refer to specific parts of an utterance (or text) near or adjacent to a unit which is the focus of attention. The occurrence of a unit (a word) is partly or wholly determined by its context, which is

specified in terms of the unit's relations, i.e. the other features with which it combines as a sequence (Crystal 1980/2008: 108).

Considering the statement above, two remarks are made. First, the meaning of a given word is conditioned by the context in which this word is used. Second, identifying the specific sense involved in using an expression requires investigating the linguistic relationships which occur between this expression and the adjacent units. Ullmann agrees and claims that 'no one would deny the crucial importance of context in the determination of word-meanings' (Ullmann 1962: 49). Following Darmesteter, Ullmann argues that examining the verbal context in which an expression is used requires investigating 'the various elements of the sentence, their distribution and their collocations' (ibid; Darmesteter 1946). These, emphasizes Ullmann, help 'modify the meaning of individual words' (ibid). Similarly, Ravin and Leacock and Ḥassān (1979: 316) agree and argue that 'the context alters the sense of the words found in it' (Ravin and Leacock 2000: 5; Ḥassān 1979: 316). For instance, consider the distinct senses of the polysemous verb 'addā – performed' in the linguistic contexts below:

(a) *addā zaydun daynahu* – Zayd *repaid/settled/paid* his debt;

(b) *addā zaydun aṣ-ṣalāta* – Zayd performed the prayer;

(c) *addā ra'īsul-jumhūriyyah al-yamīn ad-distūriyyah* – The president took the constitutional oath;

(d) *addā mushrifī wājibahu ʿalā akmali wajh* – My supervisor did his duty to the best of his abilities;

In the examples above, the linguistic context plays a central role in decoding the specific senses involved in using 'addā' in each context. The code to determine the specific sense in these examples is the 'collocational relation'. That is to say, being collocated with 'dayn' in the first context signals the sense of 'paid/repaid/settled'. In the second context, 'addā' is collocated with 'aṣ-ṣalāh', so it extends to communicate the meaning of 'performed'. In the third context, 'addā' is collocated with 'al-yamīn',

which signals the sense of oath-taking. In the fourth context, the same expression is collocated with ‘wājib’, so the sense involved here is ‘doing duty’. To sum up, exploring the linguistic context is a crucial tool in identifying the specific sense involved in using a polysemous word. Therefore, tools of textual analysis at the linguistic level should be explored.

4.5 Linguistic Tools of Text Analysis

4.5.1 ‘Collocational Relations’ and ‘Oppositeness’

Both ‘collocational relations’ and ‘antonymy’ are crucial in decoding the specific sense involved in using polysemy in the Qur’ān. For instance, consider the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ in the Qur’ānic verses below:

(yawma tabyaḍḍu wujūhun wa-taswaddu wujūh fa’ammā alladhīna iswaddat wujūhuhum akafartum ba^ḥda ‘īmānikum fadhūqū al^ḥadhāba bimā kuntum takfurūn wa-‘ammā alladhīna ibyaḍḍat wujūhuhum fafī raḥmatil-lāhi hum fīhā khālidūn)

(On the Day [Day of Judgement] when some faces brighten and others darken, it will be said to those with darkened faces, ‘How could you reject your faith after believing? Taste the dormant for doing so’, but those with brightened faces will be in God’s Grace, there to remain, Q 3:106-107).

Al-Dāmaghānī, Ibn Kathīr, Al-Sayūṭī, Ibn al-^ḥImād, and Al-ṣābūnī agree that the specific sense involved in using the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘raḥmah – mercy’ in the Qur’ānic context above is ‘jannah – paradise’ (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 199; Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 336; Al-Sayūṭī 1999, 1: 443; Ibn al-^ḥImād 1977:74; Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 216). This interpretation is both accepted and justified. Two justifications for this interpretation can be provided:

(a) The Qur’ānic verses above make a comparison between two types of people, representing two opposite situations, on the Day of Judgement. The first are those

who disbelieved in God and the Prophets after they were believers. Those, confirms the Qur'ān, will be in hell and their faces will be dark on that Day. On the other hand, on that Day, the Qur'ān also confirms that believers will be rewarded with God's 'Mercy'. Based on the use of the antonyms 'hell' and 'paradise', the first interpretation that comes to the mind in this context is that God's Mercy in this specific context is a reference to the paradise, where 'believers will remain forever' (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 336);

(b) Notice also that the Qur'ānic word "raḥmah – mercy" in this context is collocated with the Qur'ānic adjective 'khālidūn', which is frequently collocated with 'al-jannah – paradise' in the Qur'ān. For example, 'wal-ladhīna āmanū wa-^ḥamilū aṣ-ṣāliḥāti 'ulā'ika aṣḥābu al-jannati hum fīhā khālidūn – And those who believe and do good deeds will be the inhabitants of the Garden, there to remain, Q 2: 82' (see also Q 2:25; Q 3:15; Q 3:136; Q 3:198; Q 4:13; Q 4:57; Q 4:122; Q 14:23).

4.5.2 The General Meaning and the 'Anaphoric' Signals

Both the general meaning and the 'anaphoric' signals can also be applied to the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 3.3.1; 4.3.4). For instance, consider the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'raḥmah – mercy' in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(am ^ḥindahum khazā'īnu raḥmati rabbika al-^ḥazīzil-wahhāb)

(Do they [disbelievers] possess the treasures of your Lord's Bounty, the Mighty, the All Giving?, Q 38:9).

The central theme in the Qur'ānic verses which precede the above verse, i.e. Q 38: 1-8, is that God relieves Muḥammad by telling him that he is not the first Prophet in whom some of his community disbelieve. Previous Prophets had suffered from the same situation. Therefore, the central theme running throughout these verses is the notion of Prophecy as a guide to people. Notice also, the lexical 'anaphoras' which precede the polysemous expression 'raḥmah – mercy' in this context, e.g. (mundhir – a

warner), ('unzila- revealed), and (adh-dhikr - The Qur'ān), all of which communicate the sense of prophecy. Therefore, it is not surprising to notice that Al-Dāmaghānī, Al-Sayūṭī and Ibn al-^cImād agree that the polysemous expression 'raḥmah' in this specific context communicates the meaning of 'an-nubuwah – Prophecy' (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 200; Al-Sayūṭī 1999: 443; Ibn al-^cImād 1977:75). Another example to show the value of 'anaphoric signals' in decoding the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān would be the Qur'ānic polysemous word (aṭ-ṭārīq – the path). This word has expanded in its Qur'ānic context to communicate two distinct shades of meaning (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 294-295). These are:

(a) (aṭ-ṭārīq – The Path), as in

(wa-laqad awḥaynā ilā Musā an asri bi^cibādī faḍrib lahum ṭarīqan fil-baḥri yabasā) (We revealed to Moses, 'Go out at night with My servants and strike a dry path for them across the sea, Q 20: 77).

(b) (as-samā' - The Sky), as in

(wa-laqad khalaqnā fawqakum sab^ca ṭarā'iqā wa-mā kunnā ^can al-khalqī ghāfilīn)

(We [God] created seven levels above you: We are never unmindful about Our creation, Q 23: 17).

Notice the anaphoric signal (faḍrib – and strike) in the first Qur'ānic verse, which is often collocated with (aṭ-ṭārīq – the path), and the anaphoric signals (khalaqnā – created) and (fawqakum – above you) in the second one, which refer to the type of creation made above people, i.e. the sky. Thus, anaphoric signals are crucial in decoding the intended meanings.

4.5.3 'Cataphoric' Signals

In addition to the 'anaphoric' signals, 'cataphoric' ones are also valuable tools in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 3.3.1). For instance, consider the Qur'ānic verse below:

(fanẓur ilā āthāri raḥmatil-lāhi kayfa yuḥyīl-arḍa ba^cda mawtihā)

([Prophet] Look, then, at the imprints of God's Mercy, how He restores the earth to life after death Q 30: 50).

Notice the cataphoric signals (yuḥyīl-arḍa ba^cda mawtihā – restores the earth to life after death). These signals invoke the conceptual implication of (al-maṭar - the rain). Therefore, Al-Dāmaghānī, Al-Sayūṭī, and Ibn al-^cImād all agree that the polysemous expression (raḥmah) in this specific context communicates the meaning of (al-maṭar – rain) (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 200; Al-Sayūṭī 1999: 443; Ibn al-^cImād 1977: 74-75). Another example to approve the value of 'cataphoric signals' in decoding the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān would be the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'āyah' in the context below:

(alam takun āyātī tutlā^calaykum fakuntum bihā tukadhdhibūn)

(Were my messages [God's messages] not recited over and over to you [disbelievers] and still you rejected them, Q 23: 105).

It can be argued that the Qur'ānic expression 'āyah' in the context above communicates the meaning of 'the Qur'ān'. This is justified by the cataphoric signal 'tutlā' which collocates with 'the Qur'ān' in some other Qur'ānic contexts. For instance, consider the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (wa-'an atluwa al-qur'āna faman ihtadā fa'innamā yahtadī linafsihi wa-man ḍalla faqul innamā anā minal-mundhirīn)

(I am [Prophet] commanded to recite the Qur'ān. Whoever chooses to follow the right path does so for his own good. [Prophet] Say to whoever deviate from it, 'I am only here to warn', Q 27:92);

(b) (inna alladhīna yatlūna kitāba allāhi wa-'aqāmū aṣ-ṣālāta wa-'anfaqu mim mā razaqnāhum sirran wa-^calāniyah yarjūna tijāratan lan tabūr)

(Those who recite God’s Scripture, keep up the prayer, give secretly and openly from what We [God] have provided for them, may hope for a trade that will never decline, Q 35:29).

In the Qur’ānic verses above, the words ‘atluwa – I recite’ and ‘yatlūna – those who recite’ are collocated with ‘al-qur’ān’ and ‘kitāba allāh’, i.e. the Qur’ān. This clearly justifies the above argument that the use of the ‘cataphoric signal’ ‘tutlā’ colours the Qur’ānic expression ‘āyah’ in the context above, i.e. Q 23: 105 with the meaning of ‘the Qur’ān’.

4.5.4 Grammatical Aspects

Both Nida and Taber and Goddard argue that grammatical analysis is a crucial tool in decoding the meaning of an expression (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 33-55; Goddard 1998: 19). To justify their view, Nida and Taber invite their readers to consider the grammatical relationships involved in using the phrases below (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 35-36):

(a) The will of God

(b) The God of Peace

Nida and Taber explain that although the above phrases share the same grammatical construction: ‘two nouns connected by of, i.e. A of B’, the two grammatical structures result in different grammatical relationships, and; therefore, they communicate different meanings (ibid: 35). In the first grammatical construction, the relationship between ‘God’ and ‘will’ is clearly ‘God’. That is to say, it is ‘God’ who ‘wills’. Thus, the grammatical relationship involved is that of ‘B’ (ibid: 36). However, in the second phrase, the relationship between ‘God’ and ‘Peace’ is ‘A’. That is to say, what is understood is ‘God who causes or produces peace’ (ibid).

It can be argued that the above tool, i.e. the grammatical analysis of the relationship between the constituents of the sentence, is both viable and useful in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur’ān. For instance, consider the distinct

shades of meaning involved in the use of the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'buyūt - homes' in the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (yā ayyuhā alladhīna āmanū lā tadkhulū buyūta-nabiyyi illā an yu'dhana lakum
ilā ta^cāmin ghayra nāzirīna innāhu)

(Believers, do not enter the Prophet's apartments for a meal unless you are given permission to do so; do not linger until [a meal] is ready, Q 33: 53);

(b) (fī buyūtin adhina allāhu an turfa^ca wa-yudhkara fihā ismuhu yusabbiḥ lahu fihā
bilghuduwi wal-āṣāl)

(In mosques which God has ordained that they may be raised high and that His name be remembered in them, with men in them celebrating His Glory morning and evening, Q 24: 36);

In the first Qur'ānic verse above, the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'buyūt' is in a genitive case with the expression 'an-nabiyy'. 'Genitive' is defined as 'the grammatical relationship which typically expresses a possessive relationship, e.g. the boy's book' (Crystal 1980/2008: 210). The possessor in this relationship is 'an-nabiyy – the Prophet' and the possessed is 'buyūt'. Thus, the meaning communicated in this context is apartments. However, in the second context above, the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'buyūt' is in a genitive relationship with 'allāh – God'. The possessor in this relationship is 'allāh – God' and the possessed is 'buyūt. Therefore, the meaning expressed in this context is 'mosques'.

Another example to show the value of the grammatical analysis in decoding the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān would be the polysemous expression 'tawbah – repentance' in the the Qur'ānic contexts below:

(a) (wa-idh qāla mūsā liqawmihi yā qawmi innakum ḡalamtum anfusakum
bit-tikhādhikum al-^cijla fatūbū ilā bārī'ikum)

(Moses said to his people, ‘My people, you have wronged yourselves by worshipping the calf, so repent to your Maker and kill [the guilty among] you, Q 2:54);

(b) (laqad tāba allāhu [‘]alā an-nabiyyi wal-muhājirīna wal-‘anṣār alladhīna ittaba[‘]ūhu fī sā[‘]atil-[‘]usrah)

(In His mercy God has turned to the Prophet, and the emigrants and helpers who followed him in the hour of adversity, Q 9:117);

(c) (falam mā tajallā rabbuhu liljabali ja[‘]alahu dakkā wa-kharra mūsā ṣa[‘]iqā falam mā afāqa qāla subḥānaka tubtu ilayka wa-‘anā awwalul-mu‘minīn)

(When his Lord [Moses’s God] revealed Himself to the mountain, He made it crumble: Moses fell down unconscious. When he recovered, he said, ‘Glory be to You! To You I turn in repentance! I am the first to believe’, Q 7:144).

In the first context above, the polysemous expression ‘fatūbū – so repent’ is followed by the prepositional phrase ‘ilā bārī’ikum - to your Maker’, i.e. your God. Thus, the object of the preposition ‘ilā – to’ in this context is ‘God’. Accordingly, the meaning of ‘tūbū’ in this context is ‘repent’. However, in the second context above, the polysemous expression ‘tāba’ is followed by the prepositional phrase ‘[‘]alā an-nabiyy wal-muhājirīna wal-‘anṣār alladhīna ittaba[‘]ūhu – the Prophet, and the emigrants and helpers who followed him’. Thus, the objects of the preposition ‘[‘]alā’ in this context are ‘an-nabiyy wal-muhājirīna wal-‘anṣār alladhīna ittaba[‘]ūhu’ and the subject is ‘God’. Accordingly, the polysemous expression ‘tāba’ in this context expresses the meaning of ‘tajāwaza [‘]an/ghafara – forgave’. In the third context, both the grammatical aspects involved and the situational context result in a third distinct shade of meaning involved in translating the polysemous expression ‘tubtu’ in this context. On the one hand, similar to the first context above, the expression ‘tubtu – repented’ is followed by the prepositional phrase ‘ilayka – to You [God]’. Therefore, the subject is ‘Moses’ and the object is ‘God’. Up to this point, the meaning of ‘tubtu’ in this context is ‘repented’.

However, the situational context in which this Qur'ānic verse was revealed makes this option less likely. Earlier to the third context above, the Qur'ān narrates the story of Moses, who said to his Lord [God], 'My Lord, show Yourself to me: let me see you'. God replied, 'You will never see Me, but look at the mountain: if it remains standing firm, you will see Me. When God revealed Himself to the mountain, He made it crumble: Moses fell down unconscious. When he recovered, he said, 'Glory be to You! To You I turn in repentance! I am the first to believe' (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 103). In this situational context, the more likely interpretation of 'tubtu ilayka' seems to be 'raji^ctu^can ṭalabī – never ask to see You again'. This conforms to Al-Dāmaghānī, who interprets the expression 'tubtu' in this context as (ar-rujū^c ^can ash-shay' – never do the same thing again) (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 90). To sum up, because of both the grammatical aspects and the situational context, the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'tawbah' extends in its linguistic as well as cultural context to communicate three distinct shades of meaning. These are: (i) repentance, (ii) forgiveness, and (iii) never to do the same thing again.

4.5.5 Metaphoric Interpretation

Newmark argues that 'all polysemous words are potentially metaphorical' (Newmark 1988: 104). He identifies three distinct aspects of linguistic metaphors. These are:

(a) 'The transferred sense of a word'. For instance, consider the polysemous word 'native' in the examples below (Oxford Dictionary of English, Soanes and Stevenson (eds.) 1998/2005:1171):

1. He is a native New Yorker;
2. Eagle owls aren't native to Britain;
3. Scotland's few remaining native pinewoods;

In these examples, the 'primary' meaning attached to the polysemous expression 'native', i.e. 'associated with the place or circumstances of a person's birth' was

metaphorically transferred to express the meaning of '(of animal or plant) of indigenous origin or growth' (ibid);

(b) 'The personification of an abstraction', e.g. 'modesty forbids me' (Newmark 1988:104);

(c) 'The description of something in terms of another'. For instance, consider the polysemous expression 'qasat – hardened' in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(alam ya'ni lil-ladhīna āmanū an takhsha^ca qulūbuhum lidhikril-lāh wa-mā nazala min al-ḥaqqi wa-lā yakūnū kal-ladhīna 'ūtūl-kitāba min qabl faqasat qulūbuhum wa- kathīrun minhum fāsiqūn)

(Is it not time for believers to humble their hearts to the remembrance of God and the Truth that has been revealed, and not to be like those who received the Scripture before them, whose time was extended but whose hearts hardened and many of whom were lawbreakers?, Q 57:16).

According to Ibn Manẓūr, (al-qaswatu aṣ-ṣalābatu fī kulli shay' - al-qaswatu is a general word which applies to any hard thing'), e.g. ḥajarun qāsin: ṣalb – a hard rock' (Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 15: 180). Similarly, in the Qur'ānic verse above, God reminds believers that their hearts should humble on hearing the Qur'ān, because this is the truth. If believers do not emotively respond to the Qur'ān, their hearts will be as hard as those who received, but rejected the Scripture before them (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 272). Thus, the polysemous expression 'qasat – hardened' has metaphorically been extended to communicate the meaning of 'qaswatul-qulūb – hearts without sympathy'.

The Qur'ān is ample with metaphoric interpretations, which is regarded as a key feature of Qur'ān rhetorics (Abdul-Raof 2001: 121). The three types of metaphor suggested by Newmark above can all be identified in the Qur'ān. Consider the examples below:

4.5.5.1 The Transferred Sense of a Physical Word

An example of this type of metaphor in the Qur'ān would be the use of the polysemous expression 'yadd – hand', which expands in the Qur'ānic contexts below to express various meanings. These are (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 502):

(a) (al- jāriḥatu bi^caynihā – hand as a part of the body), as in

(was-sāriqu was-sāriqatu faqṭa^cū aydiyahumā jazā'an bimā kasibā nakālan minal-lāhi wal-lāhu^c azīzun ḥakīm)

(Cut off the hands of thieves, whether they are man or woman, as punishment for what they have done– a deterrent from God: God is almighty and wise, Q 5:38);

(b) (al-fi^cl – the act), as in

(tabbat yadā abī lahabin wa-tabb)

(May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined, Q 111:1);

(c) (al-qudrah al-ilāhiyyah – the Divine Power), as in

(inna alladhīna yubāyi^cūnaka innamā yubāyi^cūna allāha yadul-lāhi fawqa aydīhim)

(Those who pledge loyalty to you [Prophet] are actually pledging loyalty to God Himself– God's hand is placed on theirs, Q 48:10);

(d) (al-^caṭā' – the act of giving), as in:

(wa-qālat al-yahūdu yadul-lāhi maghlūlah ghullat aydīhim wa-lu^cinū bimā qālū bal yadāhu mabsūṭatāni yunfiqū kayfa yashā')

(The Jews have said, 'God is tight-fisted,' but it is they who are tight-fisted, and they are rejected for what they have said. Truly, God's hands are open wide: He gives as He pleases, Q 5:64).

The first context above is a reference to the legal punishment that should be applied to the thief, whether they be man or woman, i.e. cutting off their hands. Thus, the meaning expressed in this context is the real one, i.e. the hand as a part of the body. The second context is a situational reference to one of the paternal uncles of Muḥammad, whose name was ‘Abd Al-‘Aziyy Ibn ‘Abd Al-Muṭṭalibb’. He was also called ‘Abā lahab’ because his face was always radiant (Ibn Kathīr 1983: 4: 493). Abū Lahab used to harm Muḥammad through both language and action (ibid). In this sense, the polysemous expression ‘yadd – hand’ extends metaphorically in this specific context to communicate the meaning of ‘al-fi‘l – the act’. The third context is a cultural reference to ‘bay‘at al-Riḍwān – The Pledge of Faith and Allegiance’, in which Muḥammad and his followers took an oath to remain steadfast and fight disbelievers unto death (Asad 1980/2003: 784). This event took place towards the end of the sixth year of Hijrah, when Muḥammad and about one thousand and four hundred of his followers decided to perform (‘umrah - the lesser pilgrimage /the pious visit) to Mecca. However, the Meccans opposed the entry of the pilgrims by force. Therefore, Muḥammad sent ‘uthmān Ibn ‘affān as an envoy to negotiate with the Meccans. On hearing a rumour that ‘uthmān Ibn ‘affān had been murdered by the Meccans, Muḥammad and his followers assembled at Ḥudaybiyyah, sat under a wild acacia tree and took an oath to be one hand against disbelievers (ibid). In this cultural scene, describes Abdel-Haleem, ‘loyalty to accept the Prophet’s decision was pledged by everybody placing their right hands on top of the Prophet’s (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 335). Ibn Kathīr interprets ‘yadul-lāhi fawqa aydīhim - God’s hand is placed on theirs’ to mean ‘huwa ḥāḍirun ma‘ahum yasma‘u aqwālahum wa-yarā makānahum wa-ya‘lamu ḍamā’irahum fahuwa al-mubāyi‘u biwāsīṭatil-rasūl – God is present with them, listens to what they say, sees where they are, totally knows what is in their hearts; He is a part of the agreement through the Prophet’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4:164). Similarly, in an informative footnote, Asad agrees and explicates what is metaphorically implied in this historical event:

Beyond this historical allusion, however, (yadul-lāhi fawqa aydīhim - God’s hand is placed on theirs) implies that as one’s faith in God’s

message-bearer is to all intents and purposes synonymous with a declaration of faith in God Himself, so does one's willingness to obey God necessarily implies a willingness to obey His message-bearer. This phrase does not merely allude to the hand-clasp with which all of the Prophet's followers affirmed their allegiance to him, but is also a metaphor of His being a witness to their pledge (Asad 1980: 786).

Thus, in this sense, the polysemous expression 'yadd – hand' extends metaphorically in this cultural context to communicate the meaning of 'al-qudrah al-ilāhiyyah – the Divine Power'

The fourth context is a reference to the Jews, who, mentions the Qur'ān, have said, (yadul-lāhi maghlūlah)
(God is tight-fisted).

Al-ṣābūnī comments, 'wa qālat al-yahūdu yadul-lāhi maghlūlah - The Jews have said, 'God is tight-fisted' means 'inna allāha bakhīlun yaqturu ar-rizqa ^ᶜalā al-^ᶜibād - God is tight-fisted with people' (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 344). In this sense, the polysemous expression 'yadd – hand' extends metaphorically in this specific context to communicate the meaning of 'al-^ᶜaṭā' – the act of giving'.

4.5.5.2 The Personification of an Abstraction

Consider the Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) ('ūlā'ika alladhīna an^ᶜama allāhu ^ᶜalayhim minan-nabiyīna min dhurriyyati ādama wa-mimman ḥamalnā ma^ᶜa nūḥin wa-min dhurriyyati ibrahīma wa-isrā'ila wa-mimman hadaynā wa-jtabaynā idhā tutlā ^ᶜalayhim āyātu ar-raḥmāni kharrū sujjadan wa-bukiyyā)

(These were the prophets God blessed– from the seed of Adam, of those We carried in the Ark with Noah, from the seed of Abraham and Israel– and those We guided and

chose. When the revelations of the Lord of Mercy were recited to them, they fell to their knees and wept, Q 19: 58);

(b) (famā bakat ^calayhimu as-samā'u wal-arḍu wa-mā kānū munzarīn)

(Neither heavens nor earth shed a tear for them [People of Pharaoh], nor were they given any time, Q 44:29).

The first context above is a Qur'ānic reference to the Prophets who were blessed by God from the seed of Adam: Noah, to the seed of Abraham and Israel, to Jesus, and, as Muslims believe, ending with Muḥammad. Those always fell to their knees and wept once the revelations of the Lord were recited to them (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 111). In this sense, the meaning communicated in the use of the polysemous expression 'bakat – wept' in this context is the real one, i.e. human-beings who shed tears. However, the second context is a Qur'ānic narration of the people of Pharaoh, to whom God sent Moses, saying, 'Hand the servants of God over to me! I am a faithful messenger who has been sent to you, Q 44:18. However, the people of Pharaoh rejected Moses's message. Therefore, Moses cried to his Lord, 'these people are evildoers', (Q 44:22). God replied, 'Escape in the night with My servants, for you are sure to be pursued. Leave the sea behind you parted and their army will be drowned', (Q 44: 23-24); 'neither heavens nor earth shed a tear for the people of Pharaoh' (Q 44:29). In this rhetorical as well as cultural context, heavens and earth were personified to be assimilated to another scene in which human-beings shed tears.

4.5.5.3 Description of Something in Terms of Another

Consider the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'al-ẓulumāt – the darkness' in Qur'ānic verses below:

(a) (al- ḥamdu lil-lāhi alladhī khalāqa as-samāwāti wal-arḍ wa-ja^cala aẓ- ẓulumāti wan-nūr thumma al-ladhīna kafarū birabbihim ya^cdilūn – Praise belongs to God who

created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light; yet the disbelievers set up equals to their Lord, Q 6:1);

(b) (allāhu waliyyul-ladhīna āmanū yukhrijuhum min-aḏ-ḏulumāti ilā an-nūr wal-ladhīna kafarū awliyā'uhum aṭ-ṭāghūtu yukhrijunahum min an-nūri ilaḏ-ḏulumāt 'ulā'ika aṣḥābu an-nāri hum fihā khālidūn - God is the ally of those who believe: He brings them out of the depths of darkness and into the light. As for the disbelievers, their allies are false gods who take them from the light into the depths of darkness, they are the inhabitants of the Fire, and there they will remain, Q 2:257).

In the first context above, it is clear that the Qur' polysemous expression 'aḏ-ḏulumāt – the darkness' expresses its basic meaning, i.e. darkness in the sense of night as an antonymy of day. This is justified by the reference to the nature, e.g. 'as-samāwāti – the heavens' and 'al-arḏ - the earth'. Al-ṣābūnī comments, 'wa ja'ala aḏ-ḏulumāti wan-nūr' means 'khalāqa al-layl wan-nahār yata'āqabāni fil-wujūd – God made darkness and light systematically follows one another' (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 371). In this sense, the polysemous expression 'aḏ-ḏulumāt' in this specific context communicates the real meaning, i.e. the darkness. However, in the second context above, the same expression extends metaphorically to communicate the meaning of 'al-kufr – disbelief as the flat negation of the concept of īmān – truth' (Izutsu 2004: 19). This interpretation is also justified by the use of the cataphoric signal 'kafarū – disbelieved' which clearly emphasizes this meaning. Ibn Kathīr comments, 'yukhrijuhum min aḏ-ḏulumāti ilā an-nūr' means that 'Allāh yukhrij ^ᶜibādihī al-mu'minīn min ḏulumāt al-kufr wash-shakk war-rayb ilā nūril-ḥaqq al-wāḏiḥ al-jaliyy - God brings believers out of the darkness of disbelief and doubt to the clear light of truth' (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 270) (see also Al-Sayūṭī 1999, 1: 449; Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 311; Ibn al-^ᶜImād 1977:150).

Another example of the metaphorical description of something in terms of another in the Qur'ān is the use of the polysemous root 'ḥa-yā – life /alive' in the Qur'ānic contexts below:

(a) (qulil-lāhu yuḥyīkum thumm yumītukum thumma yajma^cukum ilā yawmil-
qiyāmati lā rayba fīhi wa-lakinna akthara an-nāsi lā y^clamūn)

([Prophet], say, 'It is God who gives you life, then causes you to die, and then He gathers you all to the Day of Resurrection of which there is no doubt, though most people do not comprehend, Q 45:26);

(b) (awa-man kāna maytan fa'aḥyaynāhu wa-ja^calnā lahu nūran yamshī bihi fin-nāsi
Kaman mathaluhu fiḏ-ẓulumāt laysa bikhārijin minhā kadhālika zuyyina lil-kāfirīna mā
kānū ya^cmalūn)

(Is a dead person brought back to life by Us, and given light with which to walk among people, comparable to someone trapped in deep darkness who cannot escape? In this way the evil deeds of the disbelievers are made to seem alluring to them, Q 6: 122).

In the first context above, the polysemous expression 'yuḥyīkum – gives you life' communicates its 'primary' meaning, i.e. life as an antonym to death. This is justified by the use of the cataphoric signal 'yumītukum – causes you to die'. Ibn Kathīr interprets 'qulil-lāhu yuḥyīkum thumm yumītukum' to mean that 'Allāh yukhrijukum minal-^cadam ilal-wujūd - God gives you life from nonentity' (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 135). However, the polysemous expression 'aḥyaynāhu – brought him back to life' in the second context above extends metaphorically to express the meaning of 'hadaynāhu ilal-īmān – guided him to the truth' (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 150; Ibn al-^cImād 1977: 294). This is also justified by Mujāhid, who interprets 'awa man kān maytan fa'aḥyaynāhu' to mean 'ḏāllan fahadaynāhu – he went astray, then We [God] guided him to the truth' (Mujāhid 1931, 1:222). Al-ṣābūnī agrees and comments, 'awa man kāna maytan fa'aḥyaynāhu' means 'awa man kāna bimanzilatil-mayyit a^cmā al-baṣīrah kāfirān ḏāllan fa'aḥyā allāhu qalbahu bil-īmān wa-'anqadhahu mina-ḏalālāti bil-qur'ān – The disbeliever is like the one who is dead, blind-sighted and strayed from the path; only through belief, God gives life to his heart' (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 406).

4.6 Language and Culture

In addition to tools of text analysis at the linguistic level, attempts to decode the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān should also include tools of translating culture. That is to say, the central argument in the sections below is that text analysis in the process of translation in general, and the translation of polysemy in particular, is to a large extent a cultural as well as a linguistic act. This is attributed to the close relationship between language and culture (see 1.2.2.2; 2.5.4; 4.3.5).

Kramersch offers three justifications for the strong correlation between language and culture (Kramersch 1998: 3). These are:

(a) Language is the expression of the cultural reality. In other words, language expresses cultural facts, cultural competence, people's attitudes, beliefs, and emotions. These, argues Kramersch, are among the key components of culture;

(b) Language is the representation of the cultural reality. That is to say, language is represented in people's behaviour at both the verbal and non-verbal level, how they view the world, how they react to the world around them. These types of behaviour, adds Kramersch, 'embody' the cultural reality;

(c) Language 'symbolizes' the cultural reality. In other words, language provides the linguistic signs, at both the spoken and written level, with which the cultural reality is communicated. Users of language, explains Kramersch, utilize these to express their identity. If, for any reason, these symbols are rejected, users regard this as a rejection of their social identity and their culture.

Seeking to draw a distinction between the 'social' and the 'cultural' in the study of language, Halliday and Hasan argue that the starting point should be an establishment of what they call 'systems of meaning', which they define as 'systems operating through some external form of output that we call a sign' (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 4). Language, add Halliday and Hasan, is 'one among a number of systems of meaning that, taken all together, constitute human culture' (ibid). In this sense, the term 'cultural' is an inclusive term which extends to cover both the 'social' and the 'cultural'. However, explain Halliday and Hasan, the term 'social' expresses two

meanings at the same time. In one sense, it may refer to the 'social system', e.g. the social classes, social status, social gatherings, social institutions, etc. In this sense, 'social' is both relevant to the field of sociology and, 'simultaneously synonymous with the term 'cultural' (ibid). However, in terms of studying the relationship between users of language and / or investigating the immediate 'context of situation', the term 'social' is the central concept (ibid: 5).

Considering Kramsch's insights above, it is clear that Kramsch is more concerned with the cultural dimension of language in its entirety. However, it is also important to draw a distinction between the 'social' and the 'cultural' dimension in the process of translation. This distinction helps achieve a better understanding of the difference between two basic notions: the 'context of situation' and the 'context of culture'. To sum up, the 'social' dimension in language involves an examination of the relationship between the participants in the text, whereas the 'cultural' dimension implies an examination of 'culture' in its entirety.

In this context, the central goal in the sections below is to examine both the 'social' and the 'cultural' aspects involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān. The former is represented in the 'context of situation' in which the Qur'ānic verse is revealed. This can be explored through both (i) examining 'asbāb al-nuzūl – occasions of revelation' and (ii) exploring the relationship between the participants. The latter is represented in the 'context of culture', which reflects the whole way of life.

4.7 Polysemy in a Socio-Cultural Context

4.7.1 'Context of Situation'

One of the central tools in decoding the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān is the 'context of situation' (see 2.5.2). In the view of Crystal, examining the 'context of situation' requires looking at the notion of meaning as a 'multiple phenomenon'. That is to say, one of the aspects of meaning is relevant to 'features of the external world', whereas the other aspects relate to the linguistic analysis, whether at the level of phonetics, grammar, or semantics. In this sense, explains Crystal, there is a correlation between both language and the 'external-world

features' of the text (Crystal 1980/2008: 109-110). For instance, consider the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'al-fitnah – persecution' in the Qur'ānic context below:

(wa-qātilū fī sabīlil-lāhi al-ladhīna yuqātilūnakum wa-lā ta^ctadū inna allāha lā yuḥibul-mu^ctadīn wa-qtulūhum ḥaythu thaqiftumuhum wa-khrijūhum min ḥaythu akhrajūkum wal-fitnatu ashaddu minal-qatl wa-lā tuqātilūhum ^cinda al-masjidil-ḥarām ḥattā yuqātilūkum fīh fa'in qātalūkum faqtulūhum kadhālika jazā'ul-kāfirīn)

(Fight in God's cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits: God does not love those who overstep the limits. Kill them wherever you encounter them, and drive them out from where they drove you out, for persecution is more serious than killing. Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they fight you there. If they do fight you, kill them– this is what such disbelievers deserve– Q 2: 190-191).

In the Qur'ānic context above, God addresses the believers and orders them to fight in God's cause those who fight them, i.e. the polytheists. Two important remarks are made here:

(a) Fighting disbelievers in Islām is allowed only when disbelievers initiate fighting. In other words, fighting is allowed only when it is a case of self-defence. This is clearly emphasized by the cataphoric signal 'wa-lā ta^ctadū inna allāha lā yuḥibul-mu^ctadīn - do not overstep the limits: God does not love those who overstep the limits';

(b) Fighting in the Qur'ān is always collocated with 'fī sabīlil-lāhi – in God's cause'. This obviously indicates that fighting in Islam is merely intended to spread the religion, and not for any other material purpose, e.g. collecting money or controlling more lands (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 123).

In this situational context, God orders the believers to drive the polytheists out of the place where the polytheists had driven them out. He also commands believers not to

fight the polytheists at the Sacred Mosque [in Mecca, Saudi Arabia] unless the disbelievers initiate fighting. Only in this case, believers are allowed to fight and kill the polytheists at the Sacred Mosque. Accordingly, it is clear that the polysemous expression ‘al-fitnah – persecution’ in this specific context communicates the intended meaning of ‘ash-shirk – polytheism’ (Al-Sayūṭī 1999, 1: 444; Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 347-348; Ibn al-‘Imād 1977: 122). Ibn Kathīr narrates that Abu al-‘āliyyah, Sa‘īd Ibn Jubayr, Al-Ḥasan and Qitādah all agree that ‘al-fitnatu ashaddu minal-qatl’ means ‘ash-shirku ashaddu min al-qatl – polytheism is more serious than killing’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 199). Similarly, Mujāhid interprets ‘al-fitnatu ashaddu minal-qatl’ to mean ‘irtidād al-mu‘min ilā al-wathan ashaddu min an yuqtala maḥqan – the believer’s apostasy to disbelief is more serious than being severely killed’ (Mujāhid 1931, 1: 98; see also Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 1: 122).

Similarly, consider the Qur’ānic polysemous word ‘aḏ-ḏulm – injustice’ in the contexts below:

(a) (wat-taqū yawman turja‘ūna fīhi ilā allāh thumma tuwafā kulu nafsin mā kasabat wa-hum lā yuḏlamūn - [People] Beware of a Day when you will be returned to God: every soul will be paid in full for what it has earned, and no one will be wronged, Q 2: 281);

(b) (al-ladhīna āmanū wa-lam yalbisū īmānahum biḏulm ‘ulā’ika lahumul-amnu wa-hum muhtadūn - It is those who have faith, and do not mix their faith with idolatry, who will be secure, and it is they who are rightly guided, Q 6: 82).

The first context is a Qur’ānic reminder to the Day of Judgement, on which all people, as Muslims believe, will be shown their deeds, whether good or bad. The Qur’ān states, ‘yawma’idhin yaṣḏuru an-nāsu ashtātan liyuraw a‘mālahum fa-man ya‘mal mithqāla dharratin khayran yarah wa-man ya‘mal mithqāla dharratin sharran yarah - On that Day [Day of Judgement], people will come forward in separate groups to be

shown their deeds: whoever has done an atom's-weight of good will see it, but whoever has done an atom's-weight of evil will see that, Q 99: 6-8'. In this context, God reminds people that no one will be wronged on this Day. Thus, the meaning communicated by the use of the Qur'ānic polysemy 'tuẓlamūn – be wronged' in this specific context is 'injustice', which is the basic meaning of 'aẓ-ẓulm in Arabic. However, in the second Qur'ānic verse above, the same polysemous expression 'ẓulm' extends in its Qur'ānic context to communicate the meaning of 'ash-shirk – polytheism'. In the words of Al-ṣābūnī:

Lammā nazalat hādhihi al-āyah ashfaqa minhā aṣḥāb al-nabiyy ṣallā allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama faqālū 'wa'ayyūnā lam yaẓlim nafsahu faqāla ṣallā allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama 'laysa kamā taẓunnūn wa innamā huwa kamā qāla luqmānu li'ibnihi 'ya bunayyia lā tushrik bi allāhi inna ash-shirka laẓulmun ʿaẓīm, Q 31:13 – When this Qur'ānic verse had been revealed, companions of the Prophet, Peace Be Upon Him, felt anxiety, so they wondered, 'Who among us have not wronged himself?' The Prophet replied, 'Not as you think. This is the meaning expressed by Luqmān, who counselled to his son, 'My son, do not attribute any partners to God: attributing partners to Him is a terrible wrong, Q 31: 13' (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 1: 394).

Notice here that the context of situation is central in decoding the specific sense involved in using the Qur'ānic polysemy 'aẓ-ẓulm' in this context. The addresser in this cultural situation is Muḥammad, speaking to his companions. Seeking to relieve their anxiety, Muḥammad adopts the tool of intertextuality by referring them to another Qur'ānic verse, i.e. Q 31: 12, where there is a reference to Luqmān, who counselled to his son, 'My son, do not attribute any partners to God: attributing partners to Him is a terrible wrong.' Mujāhid agrees and interprets 'wa-lam yalbisū imānahum biẓulm' to mean 'ʿibādatil-awthān – worshipping idols' (Mujāhid 1931, 1: 219). Notice also that Muḥammad approved the tool of intertextuality in interpreting the ambiguous meanings in the Qur'ān.

4.7.2 'Context of Culture' (see 2.5.4; 4.3.5; 4.6)

The notion of culture is so broad that it is difficult to do this analysis without categorising this broad notion of culture into different 'forms'. Accordingly, 'patterns' of culture, as suggested by both sociologists and translation theorists, should first be highlighted. This categorisation helps to locate each of the samples below in a relevant category of culture and it also opens doors for further detailed studies in the translation of a specific category of culture in the Qur'ān, e.g. the translation of terms of nature in the Qur'ān, the translation of terms of behaviour in the Qur'ān, etc.

In the view of Williams, two 'forms' of culture can be distinguished: (i) the 'idealist' and (ii) the 'materialist'. The former is manifested in all cultural practices which reflect 'the whole way of life', e.g. practices which are relevant to languages, styles of art, different types of intellectual work, cultural events. The latter represents the 'whole social order' within which specific forms of culture are manifested. This peculiar type of culture is therefore viewed as both a component and a product of the overall social order. This form is clearly manifested in the multicultural societies where there is an overall social order together with specific forms of cultures (Williams 1981:11). Williams further argues that culture as a whole is a 'signifying system' within which several 'sub-signifying systems are included:

It would be wrong to suppose that we can ever usefully discuss a social system without including, as a central part of its practice, its signifying systems, on which, as a system, it fundamentally depends. For a signifying system is intrinsic to any economic system, any political system, any generational system and, most generally to any social system (ibid: 207).

To sum up, Williams (1981) views culture as a general and inclusive 'signifying' system within which various other 'signifying' systems can be identified. Examples of these are the political system, the legal system, the linguistic system, the economic system and the system of thought or ideology. This categorization is useful in terms of looking at the overall cultural system and its sub-components. However, Williams does not

provide his readers with more details in these sub-categories included in the study of 'culture'.

An important attempt to categorize 'forms of culture' in translation was done by Newmark, who drew on Nida too. In his view, forms of culture can be categorised as follows (Newmark 1988: 95):

(a) Ecology: included in this category are expressions related to flora, fauna, winds, plains and hills, e.g. (ar-rayḥān – scented plants; see Q 55-12; cf. Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 213).

(b) Material Culture, i.e. 'Artefacts': This can be divided into four sub-sections:

(1) Expressions which are related to **food**, e.g. (ath-thamarāt – fruits; see Q 2: 22; cf. Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 94);

(2) Expressions which are related to **clothes**, e.g. (sarābīl – garments; see Q 16:81; Q 14: 50; cf. Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 234);

(3) Expressions which are related to **houses** and **towns**, e.g. (buyūt – houses; see Q 2:189; cf. Al- Dāmaghānī 1983: 81-83);

(4) Expressions which are related to **transport**, e.g. (al-jamal – the camel; see Q 7: 40, cf. Al- Dāmaghānī 1983: 107);

(c) Social Culture: included in this category are expressions which are relevant to work and leisure, e.g. (hanī'an – in satisfaction, see Q 52:19, cf. Al- Dāmaghānī 1983: 478);

(d) Organisations, Customs, Activities, Procedures and Concepts: these can be divided into three categories:

(1) Political and administrative, e.g. (ḥizb – ally, see Q 5:56; cf. Al- Dāmaghānī 1983: 126-127);

(2) Religious, e.g. (masjid – mosque, see Q 2:149; cf. Al- Dāmaghānī 1983: 231-232);

(3) Artistic, e.g. calligraphy in the Qur'ān (cf. Abdel-Haleem 1999/2011: 28-29).

(e) Gestures and Habits, e.g. (awḥā – signalled, see Q 19:11)

Recently, Katan looks in more detail at some of the 'forms' of culture (Katan 1999/2004: 49-56):

(a) Environment: this is defined as 'who or what can be seen, heard, or felt through the senses, e.g. seas, rivers and mountains' (ibid: 54);

(b) Behaviour: this is used to express how 'organizations and individuals react to and operate on the environment through their behaviour' (ibid). Behaviour is further divided into 'verbal', e.g. a verbal protest and 'non-verbal', e.g. physical acts;

(c) Capabilities/Strategies/Skills: these refer to the skills and knowledge which result in the desired behaviour, e.g. presentation skills required to deliver a verbal protest (ibid);

(d) Beliefs: these refer to the 'mental concepts, theoretical constructs, held to be true or valid, and are formed in response to perceived needs' (ibid: 55). For instance, Americans believe that a clear presentation is the best way to convince the delegates, whereas the Brazilians believe that the direct action is the key factor in convincing others (ibid);

(e) Values: these are 'the basic unconscious organization principles that make up who we are' (ibid), e.g. justice, altruism and democracy;

(f) Identity: this 'form' of culture can be identified at the level of the continent, country, region, and language. In this sense, it relates to the geographical and political borders (ibid: 84).

Having discussed the concept of culture and some of its constituent forms, the notion of polysemy in the Qur'ān will now be located within the wider context of culture. Below are some examples of polysemy in the Qur'ān at the cultural level:

4.7.2.1 Kinship Terms: ‘akh – brother’

Each culture has its own distinctive cultural practices. In the view of Hossam Ed-deen, central to the forms of the Arab culture is the system of kinship (Hossam Ed-deen 2001: 396). The reason for this is that a central feature of the Arab culture lies in travelling, wandering, meeting and separation (ibid). Therefore, Arabic is abundant in kinship expressions which expand, narrow, or undergo a semantic transfer in their diverse linguistic and cultural contexts (ibid: 299) (see 3.3.3.4). This is true and can also be applied to polysemy in the Qur’ān. For example, consider the Qur’ānic polysemous expression ‘akh – brother’, which extends in its various Qur’ānic contexts to communicate six culture-sensitive meanings (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 24-25). These are:

(a) (akh – brother), as in

(wa-awḥaynā ilā mūsā wa-akhīhi an tabawwa’ā liqawmikumā bimiṣra buyūtan wa-j[‘]alū buyūtakum qiblah wa-‘aqīmū aṣ-ṣalāta wa-bishshir al-mu’minīn - We revealed to Moses and his brother: ‘House your people in Egypt and make these houses places of worship; keep up the prayer; give good news to the believers, Q 10: 87);

(b) (al-akh minal-qabīlah – an intimate fellow from the same tribe), as in

(kadhdhabat [‘]ādun al-mursalīn idh qāla lahum akhūhum hūdun alā tattaqūn innī lakum rasūlun amīn)

(The people of Ad called the messengers liars. Their brother Hūd said to them, ‘Will you not be mindful of God? I am a faithful messenger sent to you, Q 26: 123-125);

(c) (at-tābi[‘] - The Follower), as in

(inna al-mubadhdhirīna kānū ikhwāna ash-shayāṭīni wa-kāna ash-shayṭānu lirabbihi kafūrā) (Those who squander are the brothers of Satan, and Satan is most ungrateful to his Lord, Q 17: 27);

(d) (al-akh fī dīnil-islām – brother in the religion of Islam), as in

(innamā al-mu'minūna ikhwah fa'aṣliḥū bayna akhawaykum wat-taqū allāha la'allakum turḥamūn)

(The believers are brothers, so make peace between your two brothers and be mindful of God, so that you may be given mercy, Q 49: 10);

(e) (aṣ-ṣāhib – the Friend / the Colleague), as in

(yā ayyuhā al-ladhīna āmanū ijtanibū kathīran min aḏ-ḏanni inna b'ḏa aḏ-ḏanni ithm walā tajassasū walā yaghtab ba'ḏukum ba'ḏā ayuḥibu aḥadukum an ya'kula laḥma akhīhi maytā fakarihtumūh)

(Believers, avoid making too many assumptions– some assumptions are sinful– and do not spy on one another or speak ill of people behind their backs: would any of you like to eat the flesh of your dead brother? No, you would hate it, Q 49: 12);

(f) (al-akh fī al-ḥubb wal-mawaddah – Compassionate Brotherhood in Paradise), as in

(inna al-muttaqīna fī jannātin wa-uyūn idkhulūhā bisalāmin āminīn wa-naza'nā mā fī qulūbihim min ghillīn ikhwānan 'alā sururīn mutaqābilīn)

(The righteous will be in Gardens with springs. “Enter them in peace and safety!”, and We [God] shall remove any bitterness from their hearts: [they will be like] brothers, sitting on couches, face to face, Q 15: 45-47);

Now, the ‘basic’ meaning of ‘akh’ in Classical Arabic is ‘man waladahu abūka wa-ummika aw aḥadihimā – a man or boy in relation to other sons and daughters of his parents’ (Al-Bustānī 1980: 6). This is the meaning communicated in the first context above. This meaning has figuratively been transferred to other Qur'ānic contexts (see

(b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) above). The result is that the Qur'ānic polysemous expression 'akh' has expressed a multiple layer of meanings, some of which carry positive connotations, whereas others are not. For instance, in (b), (d), (e), and (f) above, the polysemous expression 'akh' is used to communicate positive meanings of compassion, love and intimacy, which are clearly associated with the basic meaning. However, in (c), the same expression carries negative connotations, represented in following Satan, i.e. like a brother to Satan. Accordingly, this positive as well as negative transfer has resulted in, to use Nida's words, 'a cultural speciality' (Nida 1981: 41). This metaphoric usage has also 'heightened the emotive value of the communication' (ibid). However, the translator of the Qur'ān has insisted on using the equivalent 'brother' in all contexts despite this emotive variation. The result is, in the words of Nida, a 'loss of impact', which the 'sensitive' translator should avoid (ibid). For example, in the second context above, 'intimate fellow' is suggested as a substitute of 'brother'. Similarly, in the third context, 'followers' are suggested as a substitute of 'brothers'. However, 'brother' seems to be the optimal option in other contexts ((d), (e) and (f) above), because the Qur'ānic polysemy 'akh' in these contexts carries a sense of semantic generality. It is also interesting to notice that the word 'brother' in English extends metaphorically in its cultural context to communicate some other shades of meaning in addition to its central meaning. Examples of this metaphoric usage are (Soanes and Stevenson 2006: 219):

(a) (pl. also brethren) Christian Church a (male) fellow Christian: a member of a fundamentalist Protestant denomination, e.g. *the Plymouth Brethren*;

(b) *Brothers in arms*: soldiers fighting together on the same side;

(c) A male associate or fellow member of an organization: *the time is coming brothers, for us to act*;

(d) A thing which resembles or is connected to another thing: *the machine is almost identical to its larger brother*.

This metaphoric transfer in the target language seems to facilitate the task of the translator of the Qur'ān in dealing with contexts (b), (d), (e) and (f) above, in which positive connotations are communicated. However, in case the translator of the

Qur'ān opts for the general equivalent 'brother' in all contexts, the audience should be informed of this metaphoric transfer. This can be done through paraphrasing or informative footnotes. For example, in (f) above, through paraphrasing, Abdel-Haleem explains to his audience that the righteous 'will be like brothers' in Paradise (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 163). Similarly, in translating the expression 'akh' in (e) above, Al- Hilali and Khan provides the reader with an informative footnote:

Narrated by Abū Hurairah, Allāh's Messenger, Peace Be Upon Him, said, "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for others' faults, and do not spy on one another, and do not be jealous of one another and do not hate one another and do not desert (stop talking to) one another. And O Allāh's worshippers! Be brothers (Al- Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 410).

4.7.2.2 Expressions of Beliefs: 'al-kufr – unbelief'

One of the expressions which have witnessed a remarkable semantic development in the Qur'ān is the Arabic root 'ka-fa-ra'. According to Izutsu, the basic meaning of the verb 'ka-fa-ra' in the Pre-Islamic period was 'to be ungrateful / to show ingratitude' (Izutsu 20004: 18). This is the meaning communicated in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(wa-idh ta'adhdhana rabbukum la'in shakartum la'azīdannakum wa-la'in kafartum inna^ᶜadhābī lashadīd)

(Remember that your Lord promised, 'If you are thankful, I will give you more, but if you are thankless, My punishment is terrible indeed, Q 14: 7);

Ibn Kathīr interprets 'wa-la'in kafartum – if you are thankless' to refer to 'kufr an-ni^ᶜmah – being ungrateful to God's blisses' (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 2: 452). However, the Arabic root 'ka-fa-ra' has obviously expanded in its Qur'ānic context to communicate some other meanings. These are (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 405-406; Izutsu 2004: 18-19):

(a) (al-kufr billāh – Unbelief in God), as in

(lā ikrāha fid-dīn qad tabayyana ar-rushdu min al-ghayy faman yakfur biṭ-ṭāghūti wa-yu'min billāhi faqad istamsaka bil^ᶜurwatil-wuthqā lā infiṣāma lahā wa-allāhu samī^ᶜun^ᶜalīm)

(There is no compulsion in religion: true guidance has become distinct from error, so whoever rejects false gods and believes in God has grasped the firmest hand-hold, one that will never break. God is all hearing and all knowing, Q 2: 256; see also Q 2: 6; Q 2: 88, Q 2: 91; Q 2: 99; Q 4: 137; Q 9: 123);

The meaning of 'al-kufr – unbelief' in the context above is 'al-kufr khilāf al-īmān – unbelief as an antonym of belief in God' (al-Bustānī 1980: 542). Also, this Qur'ānic meaning has often been collocated with the expression 'Allāh – God'. For instance, 'inna alladhīna kafarū wa-mātū wa-hum kuffār 'ulā'ika ^ᶜalayhim la^ᶜnatul-lāhi wal-malā'ikati wan-nāsi ajma^ᶜīn - As for those who disbelieve and die as disbelievers, God rejects them, as do the angels and all people, Q 2: 161'.

(b) (an-nukrān – disbelief), as in

(wa-lammā jā'ahum kitābun min ^ᶜindil-lāhi muṣaddiqun limā ma^ᶜahum wa-kānū min qabli yastaftihūna ^ᶜalā alladhīna kafarū falammā jā'ahum mā ^ᶜarafū kafarū bihi fala^ᶜnatul-lāhi ^ᶜalal-kāfirīn)

(When a Scripture [the Qur'ān] came to them [the Jews at the time of Muḥammad] from God confirming what they already had, and when they had been praying for victory against the disbelievers, even when there came to them something they knew [to be true], they disbelieved in it: God rejects those who disbelieve, Q 2: 89).

Al-ṣābūnī comments on ‘falammā jā’ahum mā ʿarafū kafarū bihi - even when there came to them something they knew [to be true], they disbelieved in it’ to mean ‘falammā buʿitha Muḥammad alladhī yaʿrifūhu ḥaqqa al-maʿrifah kafarū birisālatihi – when Muḥammad, whom the Jews know very well, was sent as a messenger, they disbelieved in his mission’ (Al- Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 1: 76).

(c) (al-barā’ah – a declaration of disassociation), as in

(wa-qāla ash-shayṭānu lammā quḍiyya al-amru inna allāha waʿadukum waʿda al-ḥaqqi wa-waʿadtukum faʿakhlafukum wa-mā kāna lī ʿalaykum min sulṭān illā an daʿawtukum fastajabtum lī falā talūmūnī wa-lūmū anfusakum mā anā bimuṣrikhikum Wā-mā antum bimuṣrikhiyy inni kafartu bimā ashraktumūni min qabl inna aẓ- ḏālimīna lahum ʿadhābun alīm)

(When everything has been decided [on the Day of Judgement], Satan will say [to those who followed him in life], ‘God gave you a true promise. I too made promises but they were false ones: I had no power over you except to call you, and you responded to my call, so do not blame me; blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor can you help me. I reject the way you associated me with God before.’ A bitter torment awaits such wrongdoers, Q 14: 22).

Al-ṣābūnī interprets ‘inni kafartu bimā ashraktumūni min qabl’ to mean ‘kafartu biʿishrākikum lī maʿa allāhi fiṭ-ṭāʿah – I now declare my rejection to the way you associated me with God in obedience’ (Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 2: 95). To sum up, the polysemous expression ‘al-kufr’ has been extended in its Qurʾānic context to express three distinct meanings: (i) unbelief in God, (ii) ingratitude to God’s blisses and (iii) rejection of association with God.

In conclusion, the present chapter has emphasized the close relationship between polysemy in the Qur'ān and the notion of context at both levels of language and culture. At the linguistic level, three types of meaning can be identified: the 'metaphoric' meaning, the 'collocated' meaning, and the 'overall' meaning. At the cultural level, three aspects of meaning can be distinguished: the 'emotive' meaning, the 'situational' meaning and the 'cultural' meaning. It has been argued that an optimal treatment of the issue of polysemy in the Qur'ān requires paying attention to both language and culture of the text, with particular emphasis on the culture of the Qur'ān. In this context, some tools of textual analysis at both the linguistic and cultural level have been suggested. At the linguistic level, seven tools have been suggested: collocational relations, oppositeness, overall meaning, 'anaphoric signals', 'cataphoric signals', grammatical aspects and metaphoric interpretation. At the cultural level, two tools have been proposed: 'context of situation' and 'context of culture'. These tools have proved to be useful for decoding the specific sense involved in translating polysemy in the Qur'ān.

Chapter Five

Culture-Specific Expressions in Qur'ān Translation

'Languages articulate the cultures in which they are used, and so my examination of language needs also to take into account the broader picture' (Bassnett 2011(b): 3).

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, it has been argued that an effective communication of the meaning involved in translating polysemous expressions in the Qur'ān requires widening the scope of analysis to include the wider circle of culture. It has also been observed that some polysemous expressions are culture-sensitive. In this sense, investigating the cultural factors involved in the process of translation in general and in Qur'ānic translation in particular should be looked upon as an essential requirement.

The challenge represented by the translation of culture-specific expressions is two-fold. On the one hand, similar to the translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān, the translator is required to analyze the source text as both a linguistic and cultural entity. On the other hand, the target text is 'embedded within its network of both source and target cultural signs' (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990/1995:11-12). Thus, a major challenge is not only that these expressions are closely bound to a certain culture. Rather, the challenge is in the idea that the competent translator should search for optimal methods by which these expressions can functionally be communicated to an audience in a different culture. In short, translating culture-specific expressions is a problematic issue at both the cultural and the functional level.

In this context, the present chapter is intended to examine both the cultural and functional aspects involved in the translation into English of culture-bound expressions in the Qur'ān. To achieve this goal, three procedures will be adopted:

(a) The selected expressions will be contextualised within both their situational and cultural contexts (see 5.6). The basic premise at this stage is that a concrete realization

of 'the role of culture in constructing, perceiving and translating reality' is an essential translational requirement (Katan 1999/2004:1);

(b) Due to the inevitable 'translation loss' resulting from the cultural differences between the source and target text, methods of translation necessary to compensate for this loss will also be discussed. In the words of Dickins et al, 'Compensation, in one or another of its many forms, is absolutely crucial to successful translation (Dickins et al 2002: 40). In particular, 'explicitation', in addition to some other compensatory translation methods, e.g. 'introductions', 'marginal notes', 'footnotes', 'cross-references' and 'the glossary' will be suggested (see 5.3). These are intended to be a guide for future translators of the Qur'ān in their attempts to resolve the ambiguity involved in understanding these expressions in the target culture. The basic premise at this stage is that the 'functional' approach in translation studies has remarkably resulted in a shift from the tendency to consider the source text as merely a linguistic entity to an alternative orientation, where the function of the translation in the target culture is prioritized (Snell-Hornby 2006: 49) (see 5.2). The central argument postulated in the present chapter is that avoiding the communication failure that arises as a result of the cultural differences between Arabic and English in the translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān requires communicating the cultural implications involved in using these expressions at both the cultural and the functional level to the audience in the target culture. In other words, communicating the cultural implications involved in using culture-specific expressions requires that the translator should play the role of the 'cultural mediator';

(c) Approaches to the notion of mediation-/intervention in translation will be examined and illustrated (see 5.7.1). Also, 'domesticating' and 'foreignizing' the target text will be investigated. The ultimate goal at this stage is to explore these methods as one of the indicators to the translator's ideology (see 5.7.2).

5.2 The 'Cultural' and the 'Functional' in Translation Studies

In this context, crucial to the current treatment of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān are two central theories, which are raised in the course of the 'cultural turn' in translation studies. These are: (i) theories of translating culture and (ii) 'functional'

theories of translation (cf. Katan 1999/2004; Tymoczko 2007: 223-228; Munday 2001/2012: 110-135).

The end of the eighties witnessed the emergence of what is commonly known as 'the cultural turn' in translation studies (cf. Snell-Hornby 2006: 47-67). Highlighting the influence of this trend on translation studies, Katan argues that 'the words 'culture' and 'translation' are being increasingly linked' (Katan 1999/2004: 7). The notion of 'cultural translation' or in the words of Katan 'translating cultures', can be defined as follows:

Those practices of literary translation that mediate cultural differences, try to convey extensive cultural background, or set out to represent another culture via translation. In this sense, 'cultural translation' is counterposed to a 'linguistic' or 'grammatical' translation that is limited in scope to the sentence on the page (Sturge 1998/2009: 67).

Examples of the issues raised in the course of this trend are, but are not restricted to: 'dialect and heteroglossia, literary allusions, culturally specific items such as food or architecture, differences in the contextual knowledge that surrounds the text and gives it meaning' (ibid).

In this context, the translator is viewed as the one who performs two tasks. First, he/she is the one who intervenes in the text (see 3.5). Second, the translator is the 'mediating agent' between cultures (Katan 1999/2004: 16). Central to the latter role is the communication of the cultural dimension involved in a certain linguistic interaction in a way 'appropriate to the language and cultural frameworks involved' (ibid). In short, translation is not only a process of linguistic transfer, but it is also a medium of cultural interaction. Following Taft, Katan looks in more detail at the role of the translator as a 'cultural mediator':

A cultural mediator is a person who facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups who differ with respect to language and culture. The role of the mediator is performed by interpreting the expressions, intentions, perceptions, and expectations of each cultural

group to the other, that is, by establishing and balancing the communication between them. In order to serve as a link in this sense, the mediator must be able to participate to some extent in both cultures. The mediator must be to a certain extent bicultural (Taft 1981: 53).

Hatim and Mason agree and argue that in viewing the translator as a cultural mediator, two types of mediation are involved: (i) translators as negotiators between two distinct cultures and (ii) translators as 'privileged readers' of the source text (Hatim and Mason 1990: 223). The first type of mediation clearly conforms to Taft's view above. However, the second type of mediation deserves our attention. In this type of mediation, Hatim and Mason argue that in their work as 'privileged readers', translators read the source text with one main goal in mind: producing a target text and this is what distinguishes the translator from the ordinary reader. That is to say, translators 'read in order to produce, decode in order to re-encode' (ibid). In doing so, i.e. in using the information they have of the source text to produce the target text, their processing is more comprehensive and more conscious than the ordinary reader. What is implied in this pragmatic vision is that the translator is required not only to read, but also to explore the purpose for which sentences are used, what we may call 'reading with a purpose'. This pragmatic approach is the potential challenge facing the translator. In short, two essential dimensions are involved in 'translating cultures'. These are:

- (a) Translation is a means of cultural interaction;
- (b) The translator is the one who 'mediates' between different cultures.

Conducting the role of 'a mediator' between two cultures is not an easy task. The translator is required to carry out many tasks. Central to these are:

- (a) Contextualising the source text at both levels of language and culture. This is what Appiah (2000) refers to as 'thick translation' (see 2.6.3);
- (b) Opting for a functional equivalent to the source text message, i.e. an equivalent which can easily be perceived in the target culture (see 2.6.2);

In short, a successful accomplishment of the above tasks requires an awareness not only of aspects of similarities as well as differences between the source and target culture but also of the 'functional' approaches to translation.

Insights raised in the 'functional' approach to translation originated in Germany with Holz-Mänttari (1984), Reiss and Vermeer (1984/2013), Vermeer (1989/2000) and Paul Kussmaul (2004), (see Snell-Hornby 2006: 51-52). Holz-Mänttari's 'translational action model' is based on two theories: (i) action theory and (ii) communication theory (Munday 2001/2012: 120). In this sense, this model views translation as (i) 'translational action from a source text' and (ii) 'out-come oriented human interaction' (ibid). In addition, central to this model is the functional transfer of cultural references in translation:

[It] is not about translating words, sentences or texts but is in every case about guiding the intended co-operation over cultural barriers enabling functionally oriented communication (Holz-Mänttari 1984: 7-8, translated by Munday 2001/2012:120).

Therefore, this approach gives priority to 'producing a target text that is functionally communicative for the receiver' (Munday 2001/2012: 121). In other words, it is the responsibility of the translator to opt for a functional equivalent which suits the audience in the target culture (ibid).

Similarly, Reiss and Vermeer emphasize both the cultural and the functional dimensions in translation. With respect to the former, they argue that:

A language is part of a culture. Cultures use language as their conventional means of communicating and thinking. Culture encompasses a society's social norms and their expression (Reiss and Vermeer 1984/2013: 24).

Therefore, they argue that the translator should be both bilingual and bicultural (ibid: 25). Reiss and Vermeer view translation as 'an offer of information' in the target text which imitates another offer of information in the source text (ibid: 72). In this sense, translation for them is not a transfer of words and texts. Rather, it is a 'form of action' in which the target text is produced under new linguistic, cultural and functional conditions (ibid: 33).

Central to the above argument that translation should be looked upon as a 'form of action' is the theory of 'skopos' (Reiss and Vermeer 1984/2013: 85-92; Vermeer 1989/2000: 221-232). 'Skopos' can be defined as 'a technical term for the aim or purpose of translation' (Vermeer 1989/2000: 221). This goal is determined by the needs and expectations of the 'client who commissions the action' (ibid). In short, translation is an action with a specific purpose, which is determined by the client / the reader, leading to the production of the target text (ibid). Accordingly, the translator is 'the expert' who performs this goal-oriented translational action (ibid: 222). Similarly, giving priority to the target over the source culture in the process of translation and looking at translation as an action, argues Kussmaul:

The aim and purpose of a translation is determined by the needs and expectations of the reader in his culture. Vermeer called this the 'skopos', and the so-called 'faithfulness to the original', equivalence in fact, was subordinated to this skopos. This gave us a real sense of release, as if translation theory had at last been put on its feet (Kussmaul, 2004: 223, cited from Snell-Hornby 2006: 51).

Not only did Kussmaul prioritize the 'function' of the translation in the target culture, but also they looked upon at the notion of 'culture' as being 'central' in translation (Snell-Hornby 2006: 52). Accordingly, they defined the text as 'the verbalized part of a socio-culture; the text is embedded in a given situation, which is itself conditioned by its socio-cultural background' (ibid). Thus, translation for Hönig and Kussmaul basically depends on 'the function of the text in the target culture, where there is the alternative of either preserving the original function of the source text, or change the function to adapt to the specified needs of the target culture' (ibid).

Based on the above views, the essential dimensions involved in adopting the functional approach to translation studies can be summarized as follows:

(1) Translation is an 'action': translation as a process in which actors are involved, i.e. a social action.

(2) This 'action' has a specific purpose;

(3) This 'action' is conditioned by the needs and expectations of the audience;

(4) This 'action' examines the text in its socio-cultural Context.

Now, the Qur'ān is ample with culture-specific expressions which, in the words of Abdul-Raof, 'cannot be disseminated without translating their language and culture to other target languages and cultures' (Abdul-Raof 2005: 91). Therefore, methods by which the cultural and the functional implications involved in the translation into English of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān are communicated to the target reader should also be examined.

5.3 Methods of Communicating Cultural Differences

The intricate relationship between meaning and communication has been at the centre of interest of various semanticists and translation theorists. For instance, Lyons argues that:

It has appeared obvious to many semanticists that there is an intrinsic connection between meaning and communication, such that it is impossible to account for the former except in terms of the latter (Lyons 1977, 1: 32).

Similarly, Schäffner argues that translating a text is mainly a process of communication which results in the production of text (Schäffner 1995: 1). In this context, central to the sections below are two methods. These are:

(a) 'Explicitation';

(b) Additional Information.

5.3.1 'Explicitation'

In the view of Vinay and Darbelnet, one of the functions of translation lies in the 'thoughtful comparison of two languages which allows a more effective identification of the characteristics and behaviour of each' (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958/1995: 8). Thus, the difference lies not only in the sense the expression communicates in both language, but also in the way it is presented in the language (ibid: 9). For instance, users of the French use action verbs without the need to express a directional indication. Therefore, the

sentence 'He went north to Berlin' resists literal translation when translated from English into French. Accordingly, Vinay and Darbelnet comes to the conclusion that 'translation allows us to clarify certain linguistic phenomena which otherwise would remain undiscovered (ibid).

In this context, Vinay and Darbelnet define 'explicitation' as 'a stylistic translation technique which consists of making explicit in the target language what remains implicit in the source language because it is apparent from either the context or the situation' (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958/1995: 342). Similarly, Nida argues that three techniques of adjustment can be adopted in the process of translation. These are: (a) 'additions', (b) 'subtractions' and 'alterations' (Nida 1964/2003: 227-238). He further classifies 'additions' into some types, one of which is 'amplification from implicit to explicit status' (Nida 1964/2003: 228). In Nida's view, 'amplification' should be adopted when 'important semantic elements carried implicitly in the source language may require explicit identification in the receptor language' (ibid).

In addition, Klaudy identifies three categories of 'explicitation' (Klaudy 1998/2009: 106-107):

(a) 'Obligatory explicitation': this is the type which takes place as a result of the semantic and-/or syntactic differences between the source and the target text. It is obligatory because the translator is obliged to explicitate to avoid the semantic and-/or syntactic deformity;

(b) 'Optional explicitation': An example of this type would be the translator's 'stylistic preferences'. It is optional because the target text would be grammatically correct whether the translator opts for 'explicitation' or not;

(c) 'Pragmatic explicitation': this is the type resulting from the cultural differences between the source and target cultures. In this case, argues Klaudy, 'translators often need to include explanations in translation' (ibid);

In this respect, the current research is confined to the ‘pragmatic explicitation’ involved in the translation into English of cultural references in the Qur’ān. For instance, consider Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa-laqaḍ hammat bihi wa-hamma bihā lawlā an ra’ā burhāna rabbihi kadhālika linaṣrifa^ᶜ anhu as-sū’a wa-lfaḥshā’ innahu min ᶜibādīnā al-mukhlaṣīn)

(She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her if he had not seen evidence of his Lord – We did this in order to keep evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of our chosen servants, Q 12:24).

The cultural context above represents a reference to one aspect of Joseph’s narration in the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān narrates that the woman in whose house Joseph was living tried to seduce him. According to Al-ṣābūnī, ‘hammat bihi – made for him’ means that the woman was determined to seduce him [Joseph] and ‘hamma bihā - he would have succumbed to her’ means ‘mālat nafsuḥu ilayhā bimuqtaḍā aṭabī^ᶜah al-bashariyyah wa-ḥaddathathu nafsuḥu bin-nuzuli ᶜinda raghatihā ḥadīthu nafsin dūna ᶜamdin aw qaṣḍ fa-bayna al-hamayni farqun kabīr – Instinctively, he internally inclined to do what she liked, without determination or intention to do the evil. Thus, there is a big difference between the two tendencies’ (Al-ṣābūnī1997, 2: 47). The Qur’ān narrates that the divine protection kept this evil and indecency away from Joseph, for he was a completely devoted servant. Accordingly, various interpreters argue that the polysemous expression ‘as-sū’ – the evil’ in this situational context extends to express the meaning of ‘az-zinā – adultery’ (cf. Al-Sayūṭī 1999, 1: 442; Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 250; Ibn al-ᶜImād 1977: 58; Al-ṣābūnī1997, 2: 47). This seems to be the reason why Al-Hilali and Khan interfere and explicitate the meaning of (as-sū’ wa-lfaḥshā’) in this context as ‘devil and illegal sexual intercourse’ (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 193):

(And indeed she did desire him, and he would have inclined to her desire, had he not seen the evidence of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely he was one of Our chosen (guided) slaves).

Central to the principles of discourse ‘explicitation’ are two types of textual relations: ‘cohesion’ and ‘coherence’ (see 1.2.2.2; 3.3.1) (Blum-Kulka 1986: 17). The

former can be defined as ‘an overt relationship holding between parts of the text, expressed by language specific markers’ (ibid). These ‘overt’ linguistic relationships relate the grammatical system of the language (ibid: 18). On the other hand, ‘coherence’ can be defined as ‘a covert potential meaning relationship among parts of a text, made overt by the reader or listener through processes of interpretation’ (ibid: 17). It should be noted that for reasons relevant to the purpose of the current chapter (see 5.1), the discussion will be confined to ‘coherence’ as a key strategy in making explicit what is implicit in the Qur’ān.

‘Coherence’, or in the words of Abdel-Haleem ‘intertextuality’ is looked upon as a central tool in interpreting the Qur’ān (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx) (see 1.2.2.2). Asked about the best method in interpreting the Qur’ān, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 661-728) replies:

Inna aṣaḥ aṭ- ṭuruq fī dhālika an yufassar al-qur’ānu bil-qur’āni famā ‘ujmila fī makānin fa’innahu qad fussira fī mawḍi’ in ākhar wa-mā ‘ukhtuṣira min makānin faqad bussita fī mawḍi’ in ākhar, fa’in a^cyāka dhālika fa^calayka bis-sunnah fa’innahā shāriḥatun lil-qur’ān wa-muwaḍḍiḥatun lahu – The most authentic method of interpreting the Qur’ān is that different Qur’ānic verses explain each other; what is generalized in one context is specified in another; what is stated briefly in one context is explicated at length in another. In case this ails you, you should consult the Prophetic Tradition because it explains the Qur’ān (Ibn Taymīyah 1986, 2:231).

Abdel-Haleem (2004/2008: xxx) agrees and opts for explanatory footnotes in which different Qur’ānic verses should be connected. This, he argues, is a very useful technique in resolving the ambiguity involved in understanding the meaning of some Qur’ānic passages (ibid). For instance, consider the Qur’ānic verse below:

(am turīdūna an tas’alū rasūlakum kamā su’ila mūsā min qablu wa-man yatabaddal al-kufra bil’īmān faqad ḍalla sawā’a as-sabīl)

([Believers] Do you wish to demand of your messenger something similar to what was demanded of Moses? Whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has astrayed far from the right path, Q 2: 108).

In the Qur'ānic verse above, God commands believers to follow Muḥammad as he is the one who carries the divine mission to them. God also warns believers not to ask Muḥammad what Moses had been asked before. However, it is not clear in this Qur'ānic verse what disbelievers asked Moses before. Therefore, Abdel-Haleem refers the target reader to (Q 2: 55) and (4: 153), where the answer to this question is provided:

(wa-'idh qultum yā Mūsā lan nu'mina laka ḥattā narā allāha jahratān fa-'akhadhatkum aṣ-ṣā'iqatu wa-'antum tanzurūn)

(Remember when you [disbelievers] said, 'Moses, we will not believe you until we see God face to face.' At that, thunderbolts struck you as you looked on, Q 2: 55).

5.3.2 Additional Information

In addition to making explicit in the target text what is implicit in the source text, some problematic issues in translation justify providing the target reader with additional information. Nida and Reyburn discuss some of these issues. Two of these are closely relevant to the current research (Nida and Reyburn 1981: 71-72):

- (a) 'Significantly different interpretations of the text';
- (b) 'Zero expressions': These are expressions to which there is no equivalent in the target language (Nida and Reyburn 1981: 75).

With respect to the first issue above, Nida and Reyburn argue that in case a text is differently interpreted, it is the responsibility of the translator to provide the target reader with additional information relevant to the major differences between these interpretations. He/she should not provide the reader with all probable interpretations as this burdens the reader and makes it an over-translation rather than a translation

(ibid: 72). This issue is very important and applies to Qur'ān translation. In the words of Abdel-Haleem:

Over the years, a large body of commentaries on the Qur'an has accumulated, and differences in interpretation can be observed both between the various traditions within Islam and between different periods in history (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxi).

Abdel-Haleem further emphasizes that examining 'asbāb an-nuzūl – the circumstances of revelation' is one of the most effective ways to deal with the issue of misunderstanding which may arise as a result of differences in interpreting a given Qur'ānic verse. For instance, in interpreting the Qur'ānic verse: 'wa-qtulūhum ḥaythu thaqiftumūhum – [Believers] kill them [the disbelievers] wherever you encounter them, Q 2: 191', it should be noted that this Qur'ānic verse was revealed when 'the Muslims were concerned as to whether it was permitted to retaliate when attacked within the sacred precincts in Mecca when on pilgrimage. [In this specific context] They are here given permission to fight back wherever they encounter their attackers, in the precinct or outside it' (ibid: 21). Thus, this Qur'ānic verse should not be generalized to mean that Muslims are allowed to kill disbelievers 'wherever they are found'. Rather, it was revealed in a specific circumstance (ibid).

The second problematic issue is the case of dealing with 'zero expressions'. To this translational problem, Nida and Reyburn suggest that the translator can resort to 'borrowing', but at the same time 'there must be some adequate explanation in a glossary, and all important borrowed proper names should be identified in an index' (Nida and Reyburn 1981: 76). Baker (1992/2011: 33) agrees and offers an example: the English-Arabic translation of the word 'cap' in the below sentence (ibid: 34-35):

(For maximum effect, cover the hair with a plastic cap or towel)

(lilḥuṣūl ^calā fa^{cc}āliyyah muṭlaqah yugḥaṭā ash-sha^cru biwāsiṭat "kāb" ay qubba^cah bilāstikiyyah tugḥaṭī as-sha^cr aw biwāsiṭat minshafah.)

Baker makes three important remarks (ibid: 35):

- (a) Because the word ‘cap’ is a lexical gap in Arabic, the loan word has been followed by some explanatory information;
- (b) This explanation is based on the use of a general word, i.e. hat - qubba^ḥah bilāstikiyyah;
- (c) An inverted comma has been used to mark the loan word.

Qur’ān translators have sometimes opted for ‘borrowing’ either ‘for a stylistic effect, i.e. to introduce the flavour of the source culture’, or because there is no cultural equivalent to the source language expression (ibid: 32). An example of the former would be the Qur’ānic expression ‘qinṭār’. Though this expression can functionally be translated as ‘a great amount of wealth’, Al-Hilali and Khan insist on borrowing the expression in their translation of the Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa-min ahlil-kitābi man in ta’manhu biqinṭārin yu’addihi ilayka)

(Among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is he who, if entrusted with a Qinṭār (a great amount of wealth), will readily pay it back to you, Q 3: 75).

An example of the latter would be the expression ‘imām’ to which there is no equivalent in the target culture (see 4.7.2.1). Therefore, Ali opts for ‘borrowing’ in the translation of the Qur’ānic verse below (Ali 1934/1987: 52):

(wa-idh ibtalā ibrahīma rabbuhu bikalimātin fa’atammahunna qāla innī jā^ḥiluka lin-nāsi imāma qāla wa-min dhurriyyatī qāla lā yanālu ^ḥahdiya aẓ- ḡalimīn)

(And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commands which he fulfilled. He [God] said, ‘I will make thee an Imām to the Nations. He [Abraham] pleaded: ‘And also Imāms from my offspring’. He [God] answered, ‘But my promise is not within reach of evil-doers, Q 2: 124).

However, in both cases, the target reader should be provided with some explanatory notes which help to understand the meaning involved in the use of the ‘borrowed’ expression both linguistically and culturally.

Where can this compensatory information be located? Nida and Reyburn argue that this explanatory information should not be limited to the marginal notes, as some may imagine. Rather, this explanatory information can be included in one of the suggested locations below (ibid; 77-78):

(a) 'Section headings': These immediately precede the content of the message. They should differ in font and size in order not to be confused with the text itself. They should also be identificational, not explanatory;

(b) 'Cross-references': These are used to connect the relevant sections throughout the text. They can be used in three distinct locations:

- (1) Immediately below the section heading in case the reference is to a parallel passage;
- (2) In a footnote if the reference is to a relevant or explanatory passage in another location in the text and it is important for understanding;
- (3) In an index appended to the target text.

(c) 'Marginal Notes': These are important to explain historical and-/or social differences between the source and target text. They are also essential in case the source text has different interpretations;

(d) 'Identification or Explanation of Frequently Recurring Objects or Events': These are essential for the key expressions which frequently occur in the source text and which need to be explained to the target reader. This procedure is significant in the translation of the culture-specific expressions and the technical terms. These expressions can be explained in more detail in the index appended to the target text;

(e) 'Table of Contents': Some information can be added here in case of dealing with various books or volumes;

(f) 'Index': This is essential for looking in more detail at the key words mentioned in the source text and which are necessary for understanding the source text message;

(g) 'Introductions': These are important for introducing the main themes and-/or issues discussed in the target text, providing the target reader with a historical background, and-/or providing information about the author, the time and-/or the place of writing.

The suggested locations above are all examples of 'paratexts'. These can be defined as 'those liminal devices and conventions, both within the book (peritext) and outside it (epitext), that mediate the book to the reader' (Macksey 1987/1997: xviii). These conventions 'surround the text and extend it, precisely in order to present it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its reception and consumption in the form of a book' (Genette 1987/1997: 1). Most of the suggested locations above are useful for Qur'ān translation. For instance, providing the target reader with some introductory notes in which information about the time, the place, the theme and-/or the significance of revelation is presented is a central part in Abdel-Haleem's (2004/2008) and Saheeh International Translation (Al-Mehri, ed.). Emphasizing the significance of (al-Fātiḥah – the Opening Chapter), Abdel-Haleem writes:

This sūrah is seen to be a precise table of contents of the Qur'ānic message. It is very important in Islamic worship, being an obligatory part of the daily prayer, repeated several times during the day (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 3).

Similarly, stressing the importance of the historical context in understanding (al-Baqarah – the Cow Chapter), Saheeh International Translation argues: 'in order to understand the meaning of this Sūrah, we should know its historical background' (Al-Mehri, ed. 2010: 30).

In addition, most Qur'ān translators have resorted to providing the target reader with explanatory footnotes. These footnotes have abundantly been used for different purposes: (i) to communicate the emotive overtones of an expression and-/or a Qur'ānic chapter, (ii) to make a comparison between the source language expression and its equivalent in the target language, (iii) to inform the target reader of some additional information necessary to understand what an expression means, and-/or (iv) to create a link between a given Qur'ānic verse and a Prophetic statement. In the below paragraphs, examples of these are provided.

Emphasizing the emotive dimension involved in understanding (al-Fātiḥah – the Opening Chapter), Ali writes:

In our spiritual contemplation the first words should be those of praise. If the praise is from our inmost being, it brings us into union with God's will. Then our eyes see all good, peace, and harmony. Evil, rebellion and conflict are purged out (Ali 1934/1987: 14).

In the same Qur'ānic chapter, Ali makes a comparison between (al-Raḥmān) and (al-Raḥīm) in Arabic and their equivalents in English: (the Most Gracious) and (the Most Merciful) respectively:

The Arabic intensive is more suited to express God's attributes than the superlative degree in English. The latter implies a comparison with other beings, or with other times or places, while there is no being like unto God, and He is independent of Time and Place (ibid).

Realizing the abstract nature of the Qur'ānic expression (al-ghayb – the thing which is not seen, Al-Hilali and Khan argue that this expression expands to include various meanings: 'belief in God, Angels, Holy Books, God's Messengers, Day of Resurrection and the Divine Preordainments' (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 15). Similarly, Saheeh International explains the meaning of one of the titles of the Qur'ān chapters: (al-Furqān): 'The Criterion, which is another name for the Qur'ān and means that which distinguishes truth from falsehood and right from wrong (al-Mehri, ed. 2010: 298).

Commenting on God's command not to set up rivals unto God: (falā taj'alū lil-lāhi andādan wa-'antum ta^llamūn – Do not, knowing this, set up rivals to God, Q 2: 22), Al-Hilali and Khan links this Qur'ānic meaning to Muḥammad's Prophetic saying:

Narrated by ^lAbdullah: I asked the Prophet, 'What is the greatest sin in consideration with God? He [Muḥammad] said, 'That you set up a rival to God though He [God] alone created you (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 17).

Some Qur'ān translators have also adopted Cross-References to link the relevant Qur'ānic verses and/or to shed more light on the meaning of a given expression (see

5.3.1). Though there are some dictionaries on Islam (cf. Netton 1992/1997) and some dictionaries on the Qur'ān (cf. Badawi and Abdel-Haleem 2008), providing the target reader with an explanatory glossary which explicates the meanings involved in translating some Qur'ānic expressions seems to be an urgent need. Having discussed both (i) the 'cultural' and 'the functional' in translation and (ii) methods of providing the target reader with explanatory information, the issue of the translation into English of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān will now be raised. In treating this issue, the first step would be to locate these expressions within a specific 'level' of culture.

5.4 Hall and Trager's 'Tripartite' Theory of Culture

The sociologist Edward Hall and the linguist George Trager established an influential theory of culture. This theory is based on their observation as to the way Americans deal with the theme of time. In this way, time can be handled in terms of three manners: 'formal', i.e. the daily way of dealing with time, 'informal', e.g. 'later' or 'in a minute' and 'technical', e.g. the way scientists and technicians deal with time (Hall 1959: 87). Similarly, culture can be analyzed in terms of three levels: the 'formal', the 'informal' and 'the technical' (ibid: 86-87). The former level of culture is 'taught by precept and admonition' (ibid: 91). In other words, at this level, patterns and/or norms of culturally appropriate or normal behaviour are formally instructed. These formal patterns 'are always learned when a mistake is made and someone corrects it' (ibid). Thus, at this level of culture, this formal instruction is always 'binary', e.g. 'boys do that or boys do not do that', 'yes, you can or no you cannot', 'this is right or this is wrong', etc. (ibid: 91-92). For example, in correcting children's language, parents might say 'Not goed! Went' (ibid: 91). Some Islamic rituals fall into this formal level. For instance, in teaching the young how to pray, the criterion is to follow the same way Muḥammad had prayed.

Applying this level to the practice of translation, Katan argues that Vermeer's definition of culture, i.e. 'Culture consists of everything one needs to know, master and feel, in order to assess where members of a society are behaving acceptably or deviantly in their various roles', should be included in this category (Katan 1998/2009: 72; translated in Snell-Hornby 2006: 55).

The 'informal' level involves the acquisition of some cultural practices 'without the knowledge that they are being learned at all or that there are patterns or rules governing them' (Hall 1959: 92). In other words, this level of culture is unconsciously acquired. For instance, through team-work and co-operative learning, e.g. in a community centres, the child unconsciously acquires some social skills and appreciates the value of participating as a member in the group. In short, at this level, cultural activities and / or practices are 'unconsciously' acquired (ibid: 93).

The third level of culture, argues Hall, is the 'technical' one. This level involves the transmission of explicit 'technical' expressions from the teacher to the student (ibid: 94). A good example of this technical teaching is in the armed services, where a lot of techniques are taught (ibid). Another example is the 'technical' medical expressions used in hospitals and clinics, e.g. 'child life specialist', 'nurse practitioner', 'medical students', etc. Applying this level to the process of translation, Katan argues that the language of the text at this technical level has a 'clear WYSIWYG – What You See is What You Get' referential function (Katan 1998/2009: 70). In other words, the task of the translator at this level is to communicate the meaning(s) involved in the source text 'with the minimum loss' (ibid). Examples of issues raised at this level are: (i) 'the inventions of alphabets and the writing of dictionaries', (ii) 'the development of natural languages and literatures', (ii) 'the spread of religions and cultural values' (ibid: 71). The main task of the translators at this level is the communication of the meanings expressed in both the text itself and the culture-specific expressions used within (ibid). An example of this type of expressions, explains Katan, are the 'culturemes', which can be defined as 'formalized, socially and juridically embedded phenomena that exist in a particular form or function in only one of the two cultures being compared' (Katan 2009: 79). Following Newmark (1988), Katan argues that these expressions cover a large number of semantic fields, e.g. geography and technology (ibid: 80). They are problematic in translation because the translator needs to think about some strategies by which the translation loss involved is compensated.

Katan also discusses four strategies by which these 'culturemes' can be translated (ibid):

(a) 'Exoticising Procedures': These are procedures preserve the flavour of the source culture, e.g. 'borrowing';

(b) 'Rich Explicatory Procedures': These are techniques by which these expressions can be explained to the target reader (see 5.3 above);

(c) 'Recognised Exoticism': Examples of this category are Geneva (English), Genève (French), Genf (German) and Ginevra (Italian);

(d) 'Assimilative Procedures': These refer to procedures in which a functional equivalent in the target culture is opted for. For instance, 'Qiblah' in Qur'ānic Arabic is often functionally translated as 'prayer direction' (see 5.6.1).

In the light of the insights above, religion as a key component of the Islamic culture has been treated in terms of both 'formal' and 'technical' levels of culture explained above. Because culture-specific expressions fall into the 'technical' level of culture, the discussion below will be confined to this 'technical' level. The Qur'ān is abundant in 'technical' culturemes that should be explained to the target reader in a different cultural reality. For example, consider the Qur'ānic expressions (al-Ḥajj – the major pilgrimage) and (al-^ᶜumrah – the minor pilgrimage) in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(wa-'atimmū al- Ḥajja wal-^ᶜumrata lil-lāh)

(Complete the pilgrimages, major and minor, for the sake of God, Q 2: 196).

Islam has two types of pilgrimage: the major and the minor. The former is referred to as (Ḥajj – the major pilgrimage) and the latter is described as (^ᶜumrah – the minor pilgrimage). Ali informs the target reader of the difference between both as follows:

The Ḥajj is the complete pilgrimage, of which the chief rites are during the first ten days of the month of Zul-Ḥajj. The ^ᶜumrah is a less formal pilgrimage at any time of the year. In either case, the intending pilgrim commences by putting on a simple garment of unsewn cloth in two pieces when he is some distance yet from Mecca. This putting on the pilgrim garb (iḥrām) is symbolical of his renouncing the vanities of the world (Ali 1934/1987: 77).

It is possible to map Hall and Trager's model of culture above onto culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation. The below categories are representative of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. Fifty seven examples representing different cultural categories have first been selected, then categorised according to the cultural category under which each expression can be listed. These categories are based on Hall and Trager (1959), Newmark (1988: 95; see 4.7.2) and Katan (1999/2004: 49-56; see 4.7.2).

An example from each category has been selected and analysed from a cultural perspective.

5.5 Categories of ‘Technical’ Culture-Specific Expressions in the Qur’ān

Based on Hall (1959: 83-118; see 5.4), Newmark (1988: 95; see 4.7.2), and Katan (1999/2004:49-90; see 4.7.2), ‘technical’ culture-specific expressions in the Qur’ān can be classified into the following forms of culture:

(a) Expressions which are related to the field of theology, i.e. the study of religions and/or beliefs. Examples of this category are: (ʿumrah – the minor pilgrimage/the pious visit to Mecca), as in (Q 2: 196; Q 2: 158), (al-qiblah/the prayer direction), as in (Q 2: 142-145), (al-Qur’ān – The Koran), as in (Q 17: 9); (Q 18: 54), and (al-hadiy – sacrifice), as in (Q 2: 196; Q 5: 2; Q 5: 97; Q 48:25);

(b) Expressions which are related to Social Culture. These can be divided into two sub categories:

(1) Social Customs, e.g. (al-maw’ūdah – the female infant buried alive), as in (Q 81:8);

(2) Family Expressions, e.g. (al- ʿiddah – a prescribed waiting period), as in (Q 65: 1), (yu’lūn – those who swear they will not approach their wives), as in (Q 2: 226), (ʿawrah – privacy), as in (Q 24: 58), (aḏ-ḏihār – saying to the wife, ‘you are to me like my mother’s back), as in (Q 33: 4) and (al-hajr – forsaking wives in beds), as in (Q 4: 34).

(c) Expressions which are related to behaviour. These can be divided into three sub categories:

(1) Physical Behaviour, e.g. (at-tayammum – wiping hands and faces with clean sand), as in (Q 5:6), (al-wuḏū’ – washing faces and hands up to the elbows, wiping heads and washing feet up to the ankles), as in (Q 5:6) and (al-ghusl – washing the whole body), as in (Q 4: 43);

(2) Linguistic Behaviour, e.g. ‘adh-dhikr – remembering God’, as in (Q 3:191); (Q 13: 28); (Q 3: 41), and ‘at-tasbīḥ - glorifying God’, as in (Q 32: 15);

(3) Moral / Ethical Behaviour, e.g. (ghaḍḍul-baṣar – lowering glances), as in (Q 24: 30) and (ḥifẓul-farj – guarding private parts), as in (Q 23: 5); (Q 24: 30).

(d) Expressions which are related to aḥkām al-Qur’ān – Qur’ān legal terms, e.g. (al-Qiṣāṣ - legal retribution), as in (Q 2: 178), (ḥadd az-zinā – extramarital sexual intercourse), as in (Q 24: 2), (ḥadd as-sariqah – found guilty of theft), as in (Q 5:38), (ḥadd al-qadhif – those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses), as in (Q 24:4) and (ḥadd al-ḥirābah – [metaphorically] waging war against allāh and His messenger; doing mischief in land), as in (Q 5:33).

(e) Expressions which are related to material culture. These can be categorised into three sub-categories:

(1) Clothing, e.g. (khimār – long veil), as in (Q 24:31), and (tabarruj – the female displaying herself), as in (Q 33:33);

(2) Food and Drinks, e.g. (laḥm al-khinzīr – the flesh of swine), as in (Q 2:173), and (al-khamr – the wine), as in (Q 2:219);

(3) Cultural Places, e.g. (Makkah – the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia), as in (Q 48: 24; Q 3: 96-97), (al-bayt/-al-Ka^cbah – The Sacred House in Mecca), as in (Q 5: 97; Q 2:), (Masjid/Baytil-lāh – the mosque), as in (Q 9: 18); (Q 2: 114), (al-Masjid al- Ḥarām – The Sacred Mosque in Mecca), as in (Q 2:144; Q 2: 149), (al- Masjid al-Aqṣā – al-Aqṣā Mosque), as in (Q 17: 1), (Ghār Ḥirā’ - Ḥirā’ Cave), as in (Q 96: 1), (Ghār Thawr - Thawr Cave), as in (Q 9: 40), (aṣ-ṣafā wal-Marwā – Two hills adjacent to the Ka^cbah between which a pilgrim and visitor should walk up and down in commemoration of what Hagar did in search of water for her baby, Ishmael), as in (Q 2: 158) (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 18), and (al-Muzdalifah – One of the sites of the pilgrimage between Arafat Mountain and Mina – a plain called Muzdalifah in Mecca), as in (Q 2:198).

(f) Expressions which are related to Nature, e.g. (aṭ-ṭal^c – clusters of dates), as in (Q 50:10; Q 6:99), (al-^cishār – pregnant camels), as in (Q 81: 4) and (al-jamal – the camel), as in (Q 7: 40).

(g) Culture-Specific Times, e.g. (laylat al-Qadr – the night when the first revelation of the Qur’ān was sent down), as in (Q 97: 1), (al-isrā’ wal-mi^crāj – The Journey when

Muḥammad travelled at night from Mecca to Jerusalem), as in (Q 17: 1), (ṣalāt al-jum^cah - Friday Prayer), as in (Q 62: 11) and (al-ashḥār – the last few hours before the dawn), as in (Q 3: 17; Q 51: 18).

(h) Culture-Specific Figures, e.g. (Muḥammad), as in (Q 48: 29); (Q 3:144); (Q 53:2); (Q 81:22), (Abu-Bakr), as in (Q 9: 40), (Zayd), as in (Q 33: 37), (ʿāʾishah), as in (Q 24: 11-18), (Luqmān), as in (Q 31: 12-19), (Abrahah Al-Ashram), as in (Q 105:1), and (Imām), as in (Q 2: 124).

(i) Culture-Specific Linguistic Behaviour. This can be divided as follows:

(1) Culture-Specific Language, e.g. (Arabic), as in (Q 12: 2); (Q 13: 37); (Q 20: 113); (Q 39: 28); (Q 41: 3); (Q 42: 7); (Q 43: 3) and (Q 46: 12);

(2) Linguistic Behaviour, e.g. (al-laghw – any linguistic behaviour in which idle talk is used), as in (Q 5: 89); (Q 2: 225); (Q 23: 3); (Q 25: 72); (Q 28: 55) and (Q 52: 23);

(3) Greetings and Invocations. These can be divided into:

(3.1) (Salām – greeting saying peace), as in (Q 51: 25);

(3.2) (al-ḥamdu-lillāh – All Praise Be to Lord), as in (Q 1: 1; Q 7: 43; Q 34: 1 and Q 45: 36);

(3.3) (al-Basmallah – saying bismil-lāh ar-raḥmān ar-raḥīm/ saying in the Name of Allāh, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy), as in the beginnings of all Qurʾān chapters except for Q 9;

(3.4) (mā shāʾa allāh lā quwatta illā billāh – saying ‘this is God’s Will, there is no power not [given] by God), as in (Q 18: 39);

(3.5) (ʿaʿūdhu bil-lāhi min ash-shayṭāni ar-rajīm, saying ‘I seek refuge with God against the rejected Satan), as in (Q 7: 200; Q 41: 36);

(3.6) (in shāʾa Allāh – saying God willing), as in (Q 18: 23);

(j) Culture-Specific Emotive Overtones, e.g. (tabattal – devote yourself wholeheartedly to God), as in (Q 73: 8).

5.6 A Contextual Analysis of Some Culture-Specific Expressions in the Qur'ān

In the following sections, a contextual view of the cultural aspects involved in the translation into English of some culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān is presented. An example representing each of the above categories (see 5.5) will be analysed in the light of its 'context of situation' and/or its 'context of culture'. The ultimate goal is to communicate the cultural implications involved in the translation of these expressions to the audience in a different cultural reality.

5.6.1 Theological Expressions: (al-qiblah – the prayer direction towards Ka'bah in Mecca)

(sayaqūlu as-sufahā'u mina an-nāsi mā wallāhum ^ᶜan qiblatihim al-latī kānū ^ᶜalayhā qul lil-lāhi al-mashriqu wal-maghribu yahdī man yashā'u ilā širāṭin mustaqīm)

(The foolish people will say, 'What has turned them away from the prayer direction they used to face?' Say, 'East and West belong to God. He guides whoever He wills to the right way, Q 2:142).

In the above Qur'ānic verse, the translator of the Qur'ān encounters a typical culture-sensitive expression, which can be categorized into the theological expressions of the Qur'ān, i.e. the Qur'ānic term 'qiblah – the prayer direction'. This expression was mentioned several times in the Qur'ān: (Q 2:143); (Q 2:144); (Q 2:145); (Q 10:87). 'Qiblah' is a cultural reference to the direction to which Muslims orient themselves in their ṣalāh – prayers. That is to say, Muslims all over the world turn their faces in the direction of Ka'bah in Mecca to perform their ritual prayers:

(fawallī wajhaka shaṭra al-masjidi al-ḥarāmi wa-ḥaythumā kuntum fawallū wujūhakum shaṭrahu)

([Muḥammad] Turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque [in Mecca]: wherever you [believers] may be, turn your faces to it, Q 2:144).

In Mosques all over the world, this direction is often marked by a niche, called ‘Miḥrāb’ in Arabic, in the wall of a mosque. This niche indicates the direction of the Kaʿbah in Mecca (see below):



Figure 5.1 Prayer Direction in Sulṭān Ḥasan Mosque in Cairo, Egypt

[<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=qibla>]

At the cultural level, a successful communication of the cultural aspects involved in the translation of ‘Qiblah’ in the above Qur’ānic verse, i.e. Q 2: 142, requires examining the verse in the ‘context of situation’ in which it was revealed (see 2.5). The Key to this would be to know (asbāb an-nuzūl—occasions of revelation). According to Ibn Kathīr, when Muḥammad emigrated from Mecca to Madīnah, he turned his face in prayers to the direction of Jerusalem for about seventeen months. However, Muḥammad always hoped to be allowed to orient himself in prayers to the direction of the Kaʿbah in Mecca. The reason for this wish was that Muḥammad’s heart was attached to the Kaʿbah as it was originally built by Abraham and Ishmael:

(wa’idh yarfaʿu Ibrāhīmu al-qawāʿida minal-bayti wa-Ismāʿīlu rabbanā taqabbal minnā innaka anta as-samīʿu al-ʿalīm)

(And [mention] as Abraham and Ishmael built up the foundations of the House [they prayed], 'Our Lord, accept [this] from us. You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing, Q 2:127).

Accordingly, Muḥammad was always praying to God to allow him to face the Ka^ʿbah in prayers:

(qad narā taqalluba wajhika fis-samā' falanuwalliyannaka qiblatan tarḍāhā)

(Many a time We have seen you [Prophet] turn your face towards Heaven, so We are turning you towards a prayer direction that pleases you, Q 2:144).

After about seventeen months of emigration to Madīnah, God accepted Muḥammad's prayers and allowed him to orient himself in prayers to the direction of the Ka^ʿbah. As a result, the 'sufahā' – the foolish disbelievers' ironically asked: why did Muḥammad change the direction of his prayer? (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 166-167)?

Different interpretations of some Qur'ān expressions lead to ambiguity and make the task of the translator more challenging (see 5.3.2). This applies to the interpretation and translation of the expression 'as-sufahā' in the Qur'ānic verse above (Q 2:142). According to Al-Rāzī, the expression 'as-sufahā' in this context has four different interpretations. Ibn ^ʿabbās and Mujāhid interpret the term (as- sufahā' – the foolish) as the Jews (see also Mujāhid, 1, 1931: 90), whereas al-Barā', al- Ḥasan and al-Aṣṣamm interpret it as 'the polytheists'. A third interpretation is introduced by al-Sādī who interprets the term as 'the hypocrites', while al-Qāḍī interprets the same expression as a general expression referring to all disbelievers, including the Jews, the polytheists and the hypocrites. al-Qāḍī presents two evidences for this interpretation: (i) at the linguistic level, the use of (al-alif and al-lām) in (as-sufahā) denotes the generality in meaning, and (ii) from an intertextual perspective, on relating this Qur'ānic verse to another: (wa-man yarghabu ^ʿan millata Ibrahīma illā man safiha nafsahu - And who would be averse to the religion of Ibraham except one who makes a fool of himself, Q 2:130), this meaning is clearly assigned (Al-Rāzī 1995, 3: 102). This fourth interpretation expressed by al-Qāḍī seems to be more probable because it is

evidenced by both the Qur'ān itself and the language, two factors which are crucial in the interpretation of the Qur'ān. Thus, on the revelation of the above Qur'ānic verse, all disbelievers ironically wondered why Muḥammad had changed the direction of his prayers. As a reply to this question, God commanded Muḥammad to say: 'lil-lāhi al-mashriqu wal-maghribu yahdī man yashā'u ilā ṣirāṭin mustaqīm - East and West belong to God. He guides whoever He wills to the right way' (Q 2:142). Thus, in the light of *asbāb an-nuzūl* – occasions of revelation, the pragmatic meaning of the term 'Qiblah', i.e. Muslims' direction of prayers towards the Ka^c bah in Mecca, can easily be determined.

At the functional level, two Qur'ān translators have managed to successfully communicate the above cultural implications to the target reader: Abdel-Haleem (2004) and Ali (1934/1987). In an informative footnote, Abdel-Haleem provides the target reader with the cultural atmosphere in which the above Qur'ānic verse was revealed: '[this Qur'ānic verse] refers to the change in the Muslims' prayer direction from Jerusalem to Mecca in the second year of the Hijrah' (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 16). Similarly, Ali looks in more detail at the wisdom behind the change of the 'Qiblah – prayer direction' from Jerusalem to the Ka^c bah in Mecca:

Qibla= the direction to which Muslims turn in prayer. In the early days, before they were organised as a people, Muslims followed as a symbol for their Qibla the sacred city of Jerusalem, sacred both to the Jews and the Christians, the people of the Book. This symbolised their allegiance to the continuity of God's revelation. When despised and persecuted, Muslims turned out of Mecca and arrived in Medina. At this stage, the Prophet [Muḥammad] began to organise his people as an independent nation and the Ka^c bah was established as the Qibla, thus going back to the earliest centre, with which the name of Abraham was connected (Ali 1934/1987: 57).

To sum up, the translation into English of the Qur'ānic expression 'qiblah' carries some cultural as well as emotive implications: (i) Muḥammad's emotive tendency to orient himself in prayers to the Ka^c bah in Mecca, (ii) God's permission to Muḥammad to turn his face to the direction he loves, (iii) the disbelievers' ironical questions asked to Muḥammad and Muslims as a result of this divine change, (iv) God's emotional as well as instructional support to Muḥammad, and (v) drawing a line

of distinction between those who have a firm belief in what is revealed to Muḥammad and those who do not:

(wa-mā ja^calnā al-qiblata al-latī kunta ^calayhā illā lina^clama man yattabi^cu ar-rasūla mimman yanqalibu ^calā ^caqibayhi)

(We [God] only made the direction the one you used to face [Prophet] in order to distinguish those who follow the Messenger from those who turn on their heels, Q 2:143).

5.6.2 Pre-Islamic Social Customs: (al-maw'ūdah – a female infant buried alive)

(wa-'idhā al-maw'ūdatu su'ilat bi'ayyi dhanbin qutilat)

(When the baby girl buried alive is asked, for what sin she was killed, Q 81: 8-9).

The above Qur'ānic verses are an example of the Qur'ān, not in its 'context of situation', but in its cultural context. The expression (al-maw'ūdah – the female infant buried alive) is a cultural reference to a pre-Islamic Arabian custom in which the female infant was buried alive. The main argument established in the below discussion is that an investigation of the cultural aspects involved in the translation of the term (al-maw'ūdah) requires highlighting two central features: (i) the cultural implications and (ii) the psychological shades of the expression.

According to Al-Rāzī, there are two narrations explaining the manner by which this barbaric pagan custom was performed. The first narration is that, having known that the new-born is a female, the father in pre-Islamic Arabia left the new-born till she was six or seven years old. Till this age, this young girl helped her father care for the animals, e.g. she-camels and sheep. When the girl was about seven years old, the father took the young girl to a well where he pushed her in and then buried her with dirt until the well was at the same level to the ground. The second narration is that when a pregnant mother was about to give birth, she used to dig a hole near which she would give birth. If the new-born was a boy, the mother would happily take him home. However, if the new-born was a girl, the mother would immediately throw the female infant in the hole and then bury her alive (Al-Rāzī 1995, 16:70).

There were two reasons why the female infant was buried alive in pre-Islamic Arabia. The first motive for this primitive custom was fear of shame. That is to say, it was common at times of war between two tribes or a conquest of a tribe over another to capture girls and abuse them. This was considered by people in pre-Islamic Arabia as a great humiliation. The second motive was fear of poverty. That is to say, people of pre-Islam Arabia were afraid that having many girls would lead to high costs of living and; consequently, economic crises would take place (ibid: 71). The Qur'ān disapproved this line of thought in two Qur'ānic verses: (i) (wa-lā taqtulū awlādakum khashyata imlāqin naḥnu narzuqhum wa-'iyyākum inna qatlahum kāna khiṭa'an kabīrā – And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We [God] shall provide for them and for you – killing them is a great sin, Q 17:31), and (ii) (wa-lā taqtulū 'awlādakum min 'imlāqin naḥnu narzuqukum wa-'iy-yāhum – And do not kill your children in fear of poverty – We [God] will provide for you and them, Q 6:151). In the view of Ibn Taymiyah, the Qur'ānic verse: (wa-'idhā al-maw'ūdatu su'ilat bi'ayyi dhanbin qutilat – And when the girl [who was] buried alive was asked: For what sin she was killed? Q 81:8-9) gives a clear evidence of two Islamic rulings. These are:

- (a) (lā yajūzu qatlu an-nafsi illā bidhanbin minhā - killing the human soul is utterly prohibited, except for a committed sin) (see also Q 17:33; Q 25:68);
- (b) It is strictly forbidden to kill children even at times of war, i.e. the Qur'ānic verse implicitly rejects killing any soul: a child, a woman or a man 'illā bi al-ḥaqq – except by right, Q 17:33' (Ibn Taymiyah 1986, 6: 99).

Similarly, Muḥammad's Prophetic tradition strongly rejects killing sons or daughters for fear of poverty. According to Al-Bukhārī, 'narrated by 'Abdul-lāh: I said, 'O Allah's Apostle! Which sin is the greatest?' He said, 'To set up a rival unto Allāh, though He alone created you.' I said, 'What next?' He said, 'To kill your son lest he should share your food with you.' I further asked, 'What next?' He said, 'To commit illegal sexual intercourse with the wife of your neighbour.' (Al-Bukhārī 1977, VIII: 20-21). In short, the term (al-maw'ūdah – the female infant buried alive) is replete with unique cultural implications, which should be communicated to the target reader in a different cultural reality.

With respect to the psychological dimension involved in translating ‘al-maw’ūdah’ in the Qur’ān, it is essential to consider the graphic picture portrayed in the Qur’ānic verse below:

(wa-’idhā bush-shira aḥaduhum bil-’unthā zalla wajhuhu muswaddan wa-huwa kaẓīm. Yatawārā minal-qawmi min sū’i mā bush-shira bihi ayumsikuhu ‘alā hūnin am yadussuhu fit-turāb alā sā’a mā yaḥkumūn)

(In his shame he hides himself away from his people because of the bad news he has been given. Should he keep her and suffer contempt or bury her in the dust? How ill they judge!, Q 16: 58-59).

The above Qur’ānic verse states that in pre-Islamic Arabia once the father was informed that the infant was a girl, his heart was filled with grief and gloom and his face was immediately darkened. According to Al-Qurṭubī, the term ‘muswaddan – becomes dark’ in the above context points to the state of melancholy and gloom which the father experienced once he received this ill news. That is to say, Arabs describe the one facing an ordeal, saying ‘his/her face becomes dark’. Consequently, the father suppresses his grief, hides himself from people, suffers from a sense of shame this girl infant may cause him in the future. Accordingly, he has two bitter choices: either to keep this infant girl alive and suffer from the shame she may cause in the future or to bury her alive. Sorrowfully, the father goes to the second option (Al-Qurṭubī 1997, 10:116).

At the functional level, Asad, Ali, and Abdel-Haleem show an awareness of the cultural implications involved in the use of the expression (Asad 1980/2003:933; Ali 1934/1987: 1694; Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 411). Asad seems to be more concerned with the description of the cultural world in which the word (al-maw’ūdah) is used:

The barbaric custom of burying female infants alive seems to have been fairly widespread in pre-Islamic Arabia, although perhaps not to the extent as has been commonly assumed. The motives were twofold: the fear that an increase of female offspring would result in economic burdens, as well as fear of the humiliation frequently caused by girls being captured by a hostile tribe and

subsequently preferring their captors to their parents and brothers. (Asad 1980/2003: 933).

However, he gives no reference to the psychological shades attached to the meaning the word. In contrast, Abdel-Haleem partially communicates both aspects: (i) the cultural and (ii) the psychological. In a brief explanatory footnote, he gives a definition to the custom of 'al-wa'd' in Pre-Islam Arabia: 'the pagan Arab habit of female infanticide' (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 411). Seeking to inform the target reader of the psychological aspects involved, Abdel-Haleem also refers the target reader to Q 16: 58-59 (see above) (ibid). However, Abdel-Haleem does not look in more detail at the cultural or psychological connotations involved. More details of the motives beyond, the manner of and the emotive overtones associated with performing this social custom should have been given. Ali gives no reference to the cultural or the psychological aspects involved. Alternatively, he shows interest in informing the target reader of the fact that on the Day of Judgement this female infant victim will have the ability to defend herself. It is also on the same Day that the one who committed this crime would encounter his/her dreadful fate. Thus, the divine justice will surely take place. In the words of Ali:

In this world of sin and sorrow, much unjust suffering is caused, and innocent lives sacrificed, without a trace being left, by which offenders can be brought to justice. A striking example before the Quraysh was female infanticide: cf. Q 16:58-59. The crime was committed in the guise of social plausibility in secret collusion, and no question was asked here. But in the spiritual world of justice, full questions will be asked, and the victim herself – dumb here- will be able to give evidence, for she had committed no crime herself. The proofs will be drawn from the very means used for concealment (Ali 1934/1987: 1694).

It should be noted that the translator may go into details of the cultural dimension involved in using a certain expression, but it is not always clear what is needed by the audience. Explanatory information is not always welcome. Too much information may even mean that the reader does not read the footnotes. This does not mean that the priority in translation should be given to the purpose of translation rather than to the

audience. Attention should be paid to both factors. Further research should be done to determine the needs and expectations of the receivers. In the words of Gutt,

If we ask in what respects the intended interpretation of the translation should resemble the original, the answer is: in respects that make it adequately relevant to the audience, that is, that offer adequate contextual effects; if we ask how the translation should be expressed, the answer is: it should be expressed in such a manner that it yields the intended interpretation without putting the audience to unnecessary processing effort (Gutt 1991: 101-102).

5.6.3 Legal Expressions: (al-^ᶜiddah – a prescribed waiting period)

(yā ‘ayyuhā an-nabiyyu idhā ṭallaqtum an-nisā’a faṭalliqūhunna li^ᶜiddatihinna wa-’ahṣū al-^ᶜiddata wat-taqū allāha rabbakum)

(Prophet, when any of you [Muslims] intend to divorce women, do so at a time when their prescribed waiting period can properly start, and calculate the period carefully: be mindful of God, your Lord, Q 65:1).

The above Qur’ānic verse is a vivid example of the Qur’ān in its legal context. According to Ali, the general meaning of the term (al-^ᶜiddah) is ‘a prescribed period’. This general sense is communicated in the Qur’ānic verse: (wa-litukmilū al-^ᶜiddata walitukabbirū allāha ^ᶜalā mā hadākum wa-la ^ᶜalakum tashkurūn - and for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He had guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful Q 2:185), where there is a reference to the ‘prescribed period for fasting’ (Ali 1934/1987: 1562). Similarly, the expression (al-^ᶜiddah - a prescribed waiting period) in the above Qur’ānic verse, i.e. Q 65:1, is a cultural reference to a specific number of days of a legal waiting period before a divorced or widowed woman can remarry (Netton 1992/1997:116). The central argument established in the below discussion is that the cultural meaning involved in translating the expression (al-^ᶜiddah - a prescribed waiting period) requires that the translator should inform the target

reader of three related aspects: (i) *asbāb an-nuzūl* – occasions of revelation, (ii) legal rulings of *al-ʿiddah*, and (iii) the cultural significance of the expression as used in the Islamic society.

At the cultural level, examining the pragmatic meaning of the expression (*al-ʿiddah*) involves exploring ‘*asbāb an-nuzūl* – occasions of revelation’. According to Al-Bukhārī, the above Qurʾānic verse, i.e. Q 65:1, was revealed when ʿAbdu allāh Ibn ʿUmar, who is one of the Prophet’s companions and the son of ʿUmar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, divorced his wife during her menstrual period. ʿUmar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb mentioned this to Muḥammad. Consequently, Muḥammad flew into a rage and said, ‘*liyurjiʿuhā thumma yumsikuhā ḥattā taṭhur thumma taḥīḍu fataṭhur faʿin badā lahu an yuṭalliquhā falyuṭalliquhā qabla an yamassahā fatilka al-ʿiddatu al-latī amara bihā allāh* – [Muḥammad] O Omar, Order him [ʿAbdu allāh Ibn ʿUmar] to take her back and keep her till she is clean and then to wait till she gets her next period and becomes clean again, whereupon, if he wishes to keep her, he can do so, and if he wishes to divorce her, he can divorce her before having sexual intercourse with her: that is the prescribed period which God has fixed for the women intended to be divorced’ (Al-Bukhārī 1977, II:129-130; see also Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 330). Two important remarks are made here:

(a) From a legal perspective, the ‘*ʿiddah*’ is a ‘period of retreat that must be observed by the wife whose husband has repudiated her before she can marry’ (Sourdel and Sourdel-Thomine 2007:69).

(b) According to Ibn Kathīr, Ibn ʿUmar said, ‘Muḥammad read ‘*yā ayyuhā an-nabiyyu idhā ṭallaqtum an-nisāʾa faṭalliqūhunna: fī qabli ʿiddatihinna* – [God] O Prophet, when any of you [Muslims] intend to divorce women, do so: before the commencement of their *ʿiddah* – prescribed waiting period’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 330). Ibn ʿUmar added ‘*faṭalliqūhunna liʿiddatihinna* - divorce them before [the commencement of] their prescribed waiting period means ‘*aṭ-ṭuhr min ghayri jimāʿ* – purification without having sexual intercourse’ (ibid). That is to say, the husband in Islam must neither divorce his wife during her menstrual period nor do so in a state of purification immediately after having sexual intercourse. He must leave his wife till she completes her menstrual

period and then be purified without approaching her. Only then, the husband can keep or divorce her. Muḥammad said, ‘idhā ṭahurat fal-yuṭalliqq aw yumsik – Only when the wife is purified [without having a sexual intercourse] can the husband keep or divorce her’ (ibid).

Moving to explore the rulings of (al- ʿiddah - a prescribed waiting period) as stated in the Qurʾān, rulings of al- ʿiddah can be classified into four cases: (i) ʿiddah for wives who have menstrual periods, (ii) ʿiddah for wives who do not have their menstrual period because they are either old or young, (iii) ʿiddah for pregnant wives and (iv) ʿiddah in case of the husband’s death. For the first case above, the Qurʾān says, (wa-lmuṭallaqātu yatarabbaṣna biʿanfusiḥinna thalāthata qurūʿin walā yaḥillu lahunna an yaktumna mā khalaqa allāhu fī arḥāmihinna in kunna yuʿminna bil-lāhi wal-yawmil-ākhirī - Divorced women must wait for three monthly periods before remarrying, and, if they really believe in God and the Last Day, it is not lawful for them to conceal what God has created in their wombs, Q 2: 228). Therefore, the prescribed waiting period for divorced women who have menstrual periods is a number of three periods. For both the second and third case above, the Qurʾān says, (wal-lāʾi yaʿisna minal-maḥīḍi min nisāʾikum inn irtabtum faʿiddatuhunna thalāthatu ashhurin wal-lāʾī lam yaḥiḍna wa-ʿulātual-aḥmāli ajaluhunna an yaḍaʿna ḥamlahunna – If you are in doubt, the period of waiting will be three months for those women who have ceased menstruating and for those who have not [yet] menstruated; the waiting period of those who are pregnant will be until they deliver their burden, Q 65: 4). Regarding the fourth case above, the Qurʾān says, (wal-ladhīna yutawafūna minkum wa-yadharūna azwājan yatarabbaṣna biʿanfusiḥinna arbaʿata ashhurin wa-ʿashrā – If any of you die and leave widows, the widows should wait for four months and ten nights, Q 2: 234). Accordingly, communicating the various rulings involved in using the ‘ʿiddah - a prescribed waiting period’ to the target reader requires that the translator should refer the audience to other Qurʾānic verses legislating for the term. These are all mentioned in two Qurʾānic chapters: ‘The Cow, i.e. Q 2’ and ‘The Divorce, i.e. Q 65’. Abdel-Haleem observes this and argues that the provision to the target reader of footnotes that illustrate the notion of Qurʾānic intertextuality should be looked upon as an essential method towards both enlightening the audience and resolving the ambiguity of some Qurʾānic verses (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: xxx; see 5.3.1).

For Muslims, the rulings mentioned above are culturally significant for all: the wife, the husband and the new-born. According to Al-ṣābūnī, the wisdom behind prohibiting divorce while the wife is having her menstrual period is to prevent prolonging the period of ^ᶜiddah', which causes harm to the wife. Also, prohibiting sexual intercourse in the stage of the purification results in avoiding pregnancy, i.e. if pregnancy takes place, the ^ᶜiddah will be for pregnancy, not for menstrual. This is obviously harmful to the wife. As for the husband, having a menstrual period may cause the husband to make a hasty decision for divorce. For the new-born, these rulings are valuable for (ḥifẓul-ansāb – preserving the descendants), i.e. these rulings decisively result in a definite parentage (Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 3:387). In an informative footnote, Ali adds another advantage of ^ᶜiddah:

Islam tries to maintain the married state as far as possible, especially where children are concerned, but it is against the restriction of liberty of men and women in such vitally important matters as love and family life. It will check hasty action as far as possible, and leaves the door to reconciliation open at many stages. Even after divorce a suggestion of reconciliation is made (see Q 2:228-234); a period of waiting for three months courses is prescribed in order to see if the marriage conditionally dissolved is likely to result in an issue. But this is not necessary where the divorced woman is virgin (see Q 33:49). It is definitely declared that men and women shall have similar rights against each other (Ali 1934/1987: 90).

In short, considering the semantic implications of the concept of (al-^ᶜiddah), its rulings and its cultural significance, it can safely be argued that this expression is charged with unique cultural connotations which should functionally be communicated to the target reader experiencing a different cultural reality. Accordingly, the translator of the Qur'ān is advisable both (i) to inform the target reader of these cultural implications through either paraphrasing or informative footnotes, and (ii) to refer the audience to other Qur'ānic verses which construe the expression and resolve its cultural ambiguity.

5.6.4 'Behaviour' Expressions

The following examples (5.6.4.1, 5.6.4.2 and 5.6.4.3) belong to both the 'formal' and the 'technical' levels of culture. However, because the current research examines culture-specific expressions from a translation perspective, the focus will be on the treatment of these expressions as 'technical' cultural expressions in the process of translation. Emphasis will not be laid on the sociological aspects involved in the use of these expressions. Rather, attention will be paid to the cultural dimensions involved in translating these Qur'ānic expressions to the target reader in a different culture.

5.6.4.1 Physical Behaviour: (at- tayammum – wiping hands and faces with clean sand)

(yā ayyuhā al-ladhīna āmanū lā taqrabū aṣ-ṣalāta wa-'antum sukārā ḥattā ta^llamū mā taqūlūn wa-lā junuban illā ^lābirī sabīl ḥattā taghtasilū wa-'in kuntum marḍā aw ^lalā safarin aw jā'a aḥadun minkum minal-ghā'iṭi aw lāmastum an-nisā'a falam tajidū mā'an fatayammamū ṣa^ldan ṭayyiban famsaḥū biwujūhikum wa'aydiyakum inna allāha kāna ^lafuwwan ghafūrā)

(You who believe, do not come anywhere near the prayer if you are intoxicated, not until you know what you are saying; nor if you are in a state of major ritual impurity—though you may pass through the mosque – not until you have bathed; if you are ill, on a journey, have relieved yourselves, or had intercourse, and cannot find any water, then find some clean sand and wipe your faces and hands with it. God is always ready to pardon and forgive, Q 4: 43).

The expression 'at-tayammum' in the above Qur'ānic verse is a typical example of a culture-specific physical behaviour. 'at-tayammum' is evidenced in both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, i.e. the standard Prophetic traditions: speech, acts and approval. It is also agreed upon by all Islamic schools of thought (Al-Qaraḍāwī 2008: 255). To explore the cultural dimension involved in translating this expression, three relevant questions will be answered. These are: (i) what is 'at- tayammum'? , (ii) how is it done? And (iii)

on what conditions do Muslims do ‘at-tayammum’? In the light of these three aspects, the cultural implications involved in using the expression are revealed.

‘At-tayammum’ can be defined as ‘aṭ-ṭahārah ar-ramziyyah al-badīlah lilghusl wa-lilwuḍū’ ʿinda fuqd al-mā’ ḥaqīqatan aw ḥukman – a symbolic purification legislated [by God] as a substitute of both washing the whole body and doing ablution in case there is no water either as a reality or as a judgement’ (ibid). In the light of this definition, three aspects are emphasized:

(a) ‘At-tayammum’ is a symbolic act. That is to say, it is a type of ablution which is done when one seeks to be clean, but no water is available (Abdul-Raof 2004:93);

(b) ‘At-tayammum’ can only be done when there is no water. Thus, the one who would like to do ‘at-tayammum’ must first seek water. Only when he/she does not find water can they do ‘at-tayammum’ (Ibn Kathīr 1983: 1:433);

(c) ‘At- tayammum’ is a legal alternative of both washing the whole body and ablution. Accordingly, ‘at-tayammum’ allows the Muslim to do the same worships which must be preceded by ablution and / or washing the whole body in Islam. Thus, after doing ‘at-tayammum’, Muslims can pray, touch and / or read the Qur’ān, remember God, or circulate around the Ka’bah (al-Qaraḍāwī 2008: 268). Similarly, what obliterates ablution, e.g. ritual impurity or bleeding also obliterates al-tayammum.

How should ‘at-tayammum’ be done? According to Al-Bukhārī, narrated by ‘Abdul-Raḥmān Ibn Abzay: A man came to ʿUmar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb and said, ‘I became ‘junub’ – I have got a major ritual impurity, but no water is available’. ʿAmmār Ibn Yāsir said to ʿUmar, ‘Do you remember that you and I became ‘junub’ – have got a major ritual impurity, while both of us were together on a journey and you did not pray, but I rolled myself on the ground and prayed? I informed the Prophet [Muḥammad] about it, and he said, ‘It would have been sufficient for you to do like this. The Prophet [Muḥammad] then lightly stroked the earth with his hands, and then blew off the dust and passed his hands over his face and hands’ (Al-Bukhārī 1977, 1: 201). Based on this, ‘at-tayammum’ should be done in three steps. First, both hands are stroke gently on clean dust. Then, dust is blown from both hands. Finally, hands are passed on the face and the two hands (see also Abdul-Raof 2004: 93). Netton adds that one can also use

clean sand, stone or even snow in doing al-tayammum (Netton 1992/1997:248). Abdel-Haleem agrees and in an explanatory footnote he enlightens the target reader that the term (aṣ-ṣaʿīd) means ‘dust, earth, soil or sand’ (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 55).

What are the conditions on which Muslims can do ‘at-tayammum’? In the light of the above Qur’ānic verse, four conditions are set. These are: (i) those who are ill; (ii) those who are on a journey; (iii) coming from a place where one relieves him/herself, and/or (iv) touching women. According to Al-Qaraḍāwī, what is agreed upon by all Islamic schools of thought as a necessary condition for allowing the Muslim to do at-tayammum is the unavailability of water (Al-Qaraḍāwī 2008: 259). Interestingly, Al-Qaraḍāwī also discusses three conditions at which a confirmation that water is not available is issued. These are: (i) having an obstacle that prevents one from reaching water, e.g. facing an enemy or fierce animals; (ii) the need to use water for drinking, i.e. little water is available and if a person uses it for ablution, he/she will run out of drinking water and they may die. In this case, preserving the self is prior to doing ablution and (iii) using water may cause harm to the person, e.g. he / she has a certain disease to which water should not be used (ibid: 261-262).

At the cultural level, Ali seeks to communicate some of the cultural implications involved in the translation into English of ‘at-tayammum’. In a footnote, he provides the target reader with some supplementary information:

The strictest cleanliness and purity of mind and body are required [in Islam], especially at the time of prayer. But there are circumstances when water for ablutions is not easily obtainable, especially in the dry conditions of Arabia, and then washing with dry sand or clean earth is recommended. Four such circumstances are mentioned in (Q 4:43): the two last when washing is specially required; the two first when washing may be necessary, but it may not be easy to get water. For a man, when he is ill, cannot walk out far to get water, and a man on a journey has no full control over his supplies. In all four cases, where water cannot be got, cleaning with dry sand or dry earth is recommended. This is called Tayammum (Ali 1934/1987: 194).

Ali’s informative footnote is based on both the above Qur’ānic verse (Q 4: 43) and Muḥammad’s statement - Ḥadīth: ‘*alayka biṣ-ṣaʿīd fa’innahu yakfīk* – [In case you are ill, on a journey, have relieved yourselves, or had intercourse, and cannot find any

water] Perform at-tayammum with clean sand and wipe your faces and hands with it. Indeed, this is sufficient for you' (Al-Bukhārī 1976/1979, 1: 204-205). However, Ali does not provide the target reader with any information relevant to the way by which 'at-tayammum' should be done, an aspect which has successfully been communicated in an explanatory footnote by Al-Hilali and Khan:

Strike your hands on the earth and then pass the palm of each on the back of the other and then blow off the dust from them and then pass (rub) them on your face, this is called Tayammum (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 84).

Different translators may have different goals. However, due to the cultural gap between Arabic and English, the translator of the Qur'ān is advised to provide the audience with some supplementary information which helps to explain the cultural significance involved in the use of the term. In this regard, the target reader can be provided with some details on what is meant by at-tayammum, the time when this cultural practice can be done, the way by which at-tayammum is performed and the symbolic as well as physical aspects involved in performing this cultural practice.

5.6.4.2 Linguistic Behaviour: (in shā'a allāh – God willing)

(wa-lā taqūlanna li-shay'in innī fā^cilun dhālika ghadan illā an yashā'a Allāh)

([Prophet] do not say of anything, 'I will do that tomorrow' without adding, 'God willing', Q 18: 23).

In the view of Crystal, a central function of pragmatics is that it investigates the factors, expressed in language, that organize human behaviour in social interaction. In other words, users of language follow several social rules governing what they say. For instance, one cannot normally tell a joke in funerals because this is socially and ethically not accepted (Crystal 1987/1997: 120). Similarly, Grice argues that participants in a conversation work together so that 'talk exchanges are characteristically, to some degree at least, co-operative' (Grice 1975: 45). In other words, the process of interaction between the speaker and the listener usually has a specific purpose or 'at least a mutually accepted direction' (ibid). This purpose may be

specific from the beginning of the conversation or it may evolve during it (ibid). In this sense, a 'co-operative principle' controls the process of communication.

On the basis of this assumption, Grice distinguishes four 'maxims of co-operation' (ibid: 45-47):

1. 'Maxim of Quantity': 'Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of exchange; do not make your contribution more informative than is required';
2. 'Maxim of Quality': 'Do not say what you believe to be false; do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence';
3. 'Maxim of Relation/Relevance': 'Be relevant'
4. 'Maxim of Manner: 'Avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity; be brief; be orderly'.

The surface expressions of pragmatic functions vary from one language to another. Also, there are queries as to whether the above principles hold across different languages and/or cultures (Baker 2011: 244-245). On the one hand, Grice argues that the co-operative principle and its maxims are controlled by rational behaviour. He offers some examples (Grice 1975: 47):

1. Quantity: If you are assisting me to mend a car, I expect you to hand me four, rather than two or six;
2. Quality: If I need sugar as an ingredient in the cake, I do not expect you to hand me sugar;
3. Relation: If I am mixing ingredients for a cake, I do not expect to be handed a book;
4. Manner: I expect a partner make it clear what contribution he is making.

Thus, on the assumption that 'talkers will in general proceed in a manner that these principles prescribe', Grice argues that the co-operative principle and its maxims are

universal (ibid: 47-48). However, some other linguists express their scepticism. For instance, Thomson points to the below possibility:

[a] certain type of implicature, say quality implicature, is never used by the speakers of a particular language, or that the contexts in which a type of implicature will be used differ from one language community to the next (Thomson 1982: 11).

In this context, it is argued that certain phrases in Arabic are very culture-specific. One of these is 'in shā'a allāh – God willing', an expression which strengthens the view that cross-linguistic pragmatic equivalence is difficult to achieve. For Muslims, using 'in shā'a allāh – God willing' whenever speaking or writing about the future is an essential matter. Muslims believe that using this expression is a divine instruction which was issued from God to Muḥammad, and accordingly to Muslims. For religious factors (see below), Arabic seems to be more tolerant of large quantity, which has an effect on both maxims of manner and quantity. At the former level, speakers of Arabic need to resolve the ambiguity involved in the use of 'in shā'a allāh – God willing'. This requires explaining the cultural implication involved in the use of this expression to the audience who experiences a different cultural reality. At the latter level, users of Arabic, at both levels of writing and speaking, prefer to add 'in shā'a allāh – God willing' whenever they express their future plans. This cultural usage also relates to genre. The expression 'in shā'a allāh – God willing' seems to be more frequent in religious texts at both levels of writing and speaking than in other genres. The Arabic root 'sh-ā-'a' and the theme of God's will have been used in the Cow Chapter (Q 2) more than sixteen times (cf. Q 2:20; Q 2: 70; Q 2: 90; Q 2: 105; Q 2: 142; Q 2:212; Q 2: 213; Q 2:220; Q 2:247; Q 2: 251; Q 2: 253, Q 2: 255; Q 2: 261; Q 2: 268; Q 2: 269; Q 2: 272; Q 2: 284). To look in more detail at this cultural dimension involved in the translation into English of 'in shā'a allāh – God willing' in the Qur'ān, the Qur'ānic verse above (Q 18: 23) will be examined within its 'asbāb an-nuzūl – occasions of revelation'.

According to Ibn Kathīr, the above Qur'ānic verse was revealed to Muḥammad when Quraysh – Meccan disbelievers had sent Al-Naḍr Ibn Al-Hārith and ^ʿUqbah Ibn Abī Mu^ʿayṭ to some Jews in Madinah. Quraysh – Meccan disbelievers ordered al-Naḍr Ibn Al-Hārith and ^ʿUqbah Ibn Abī Mu^ʿayṭ to describe what Muḥammad said and did to

these Jews. Meccan disbelievers expected that since the Jews are *ahlu kitāb* - people of the book, they can judge whether Muḥammad's sayings and acts are ones of prophets or not. The Jews told Al-Naḍr Ibn Al-Hārith and ʿUqbah Ibn Abī Muʿayṭ to ask Muḥammad three questions. If he answers these, then surely he is a prophet. The three questions were related to three different issues: (i) *ʿaṣḥāb al-kahf* – the Sleepers': what happened to them? ; (ii) *ʿrajulun ṭawwāf balagha mashāriqa al-arḍi wa- maghāribahā: mā kāna nabaʾahu* - the man who wandered around the earth: both East and West: what happened to him? And (iii) *ʿar-rūḥ* - the soul: what is it? Al-Naḍr Ibn Al-Hārith and ʿUqbah Ibn Abī Muʿayṭ came back to Quraysh – Meccan disbelievers and informed them of the three questions. Consequently, Quraysh – Meccan disbelievers decided to go to Muḥammad and challenge him. They asked Muḥammad the three questions. Muḥammad replied to them, 'I will answer you tomorrow' without saying *ʿin shāʾa allāh* – God willing'. Muḥammad waited for the divine revelation to know the answers to the three questions. However, the divine revelation stopped for fifteen days to the extent that the Jews started to say that Muḥammad does not know the answers to the three questions. They said, 'Muḥammad promised to answer the three questions tomorrow and now it is fifteen days'. Finally, Muslims believe that the angel Jibrīl was sent to Muḥammad with answers to the three questions (see Q 18). These answers constituted a large part of 'the Cave chapter' (see Q 18: 8-99). This cultural event has remarkably influenced the linguistic behaviour of a lot of Muslims all over the world. Muslims do not often promise, speak about, or plan for the future without saying *ʿin shāʾa allāh* – God willing'. Muslims are highly affected with the pragmatic meaning involved in this Qurʾānic verse.

At the functional level, Abdel-Haleem shows an awareness of the necessity of contextualising this Qurʾānic verse within its occasion of revelation. Realizing the cultural sensitivity of the expression (*in shāa allāh* – God-willing), he intelligently provides the audience with an illuminating footnote:

This verse was revealed when the Prophet was challenged by the Meccans, prompted by the Jews, to explain the story of the Sleepers and the other two stories, he promised to do it 'tomorrow', but

did not receive revelation about it for some days afterwards (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 185).

In short, realizing the pragmatic meaning involved in translating ‘in shā’a allāh – God willing’ in the Qur’ān requires analyzing the above Qur’ānic verse in the light of its situational context.

5.6.4.3 Ethical Behaviour: (ghaḍḍul-başar - lowering glances)

(qull lilmu’minīna yaghuḍḍū min abşārihim wa-yaḥfazū furūjahum dhalika azkā lahum inna allāha khabīrun bimā yaşna[‘]ūn wa-qull lilmu’mināti yaghuḍḍna min abşārihinna wa-yaḥfazanna furūjahunna wa-lā yubdīna zīnatahunna illā mā ṣāhara minhā wa-lyadribna bikhumurihinna [‘]alā jiyūbihinna)

([Prophet], tell believing men to lower their glances and to guard their private parts: that is purer for them. God is well aware of everything they do. And tell believing women that they should lower their glances, guard their private parts, and not display their charms beyond what [it is acceptable] to reveal; they should let their headscarves fall to cover their necklines, Q 24: 30-31).

In the Qur’ānic verses above, three culture-sensitive behaviouristic expressions are involved. These are: (i) ghuḍḍul-başar – lowering glances, (ii) ḥifẓul-farj – guarding private parts, and (iii) aḍ-ḍarb bil-khimār [‘]alā al-jiyūb – drawing coverings over necklines. Before proceeding to examine the cultural implications involved in analyzing these expressions as used in the Qur’ānic verse above, it is important to note that this chapter (Q 24) was revealed at a time when disbelievers started to spread slanders against Muḥammad and his wife [‘]ā’ishah to ‘sow the seeds of discord among Muslims and to undermine their discipline’ (ibid:285). Muḥammad was severely attacked by the hypocrites when he married Zainab who was the wife of Zayd Ibn Ḥārithah, who is Muḥammad’s adopted son (see Q 33: 37). Accordingly, the hypocrites abusively made up some false stories to defame Muḥammad. Similarly, a serious slander was made on [‘]ā’ishah’s honour by hypocrites and, in particular by [‘]Abdul-lāh Ibn ‘Ubayy (see Q 24:11-26). It is in the light of these two events that the significance of the moral

instructions revealed to Muḥammad and his companions throughout the chapter (Q 24) are appreciated:

(sūratun anzalnāhā wa-faraḍnāhā wa-ʿanzalnā fihā āyātin bayyinātin laʿallakum tadhakkarūn)

([This is] a chapter We [God] have sent down and made [that within it] obligatory: We [God] have sent down clear revelations in it, so that you [believers] may take heed, Q 24: 1).

Mujāhid comments: 'faraḍnā fihā al-ʿamr bil-ḥalāl wan-nahiy ʿan al-ḥarām - in this chapter God] commanded what is allowed and what must be avoided' (Mujāhid (1931, 2: 436).

According to Ibn Kathīr, 'ghaḍḍul-baṣar – lowering glances' means that believers (both male and female) must avert their eyes from what is unlawful. That is to say, the male believer is not allowed to lustfully look at 'al-ʿajnabiyah - the foreign woman whom he can marry' and vice versa. The wisdom behind this is that this vision seeds lust in one's heart, which may accordingly result in doing adultery. In case one unintentionally looks at what is prohibited, he / she must quickly avert their eyes (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 243). Al-Bukhārī agrees and adds that this glance is a way to 'zinā al-ʿaynayn - eyes adultery' (Al-Bukhārī 1980, 4:212).

Narrated by Abū Hurayrah, Muḥammad said: 'kutiba ʿalā ibn ādam ḥaḍḍahu min az-zinā adraka dhālika lā maḥālah: fazinā al-ʿaynayni an-naẓar wa-zinā al-lisāni an-nuṭq wazinā al-ʿudhunayn al-ʿistimāʿ wa-zinā al-yadayn al-baṭsh wa-zinā ar-rijlayni al-khuṭā wan-nafsu tumannā wa-tashtahī wa-lfarju yuṣaddiku dhālika aw yukadhdhibuh – God wrote [in the Preserved Tablet] that the son of Adam [human beings] will certainly do adultery: no way. Adultery of the eyes is done through looking [at the unlawful]; adultery of the tongue is done through uttering [what is unlawful]; adultery of ears is done through listening [to what is unlawful], adultery of hands is done through touching [what is unlawful] and adultery of legs is walking [to what is unlawful]; the self aspires and lusts and one's private parts confirm or decline' (ibid).

The Qur'ān also says: 'wa-lā taqrabū az-zinā innahu kāna fāḥishatan wa-sā'a sabīlā – And do not go anywhere near adultery: it is an outrage, and an evil path, Q 17:32). Notice here the verb 'taqrabū – go near' which signifies the necessity of avoiding all that may lead to doing adultery, e.g. touching, kissing, looking at, or using sign language. Al- ṣābūnī comments on the use of this verb: 'avoiding even approaching is more significant than avoiding acting because it indicates avoiding all means that may lead to doing adultery' (Al- ṣābūnī 1997, 2:153) (see also Q 24:21). In brief, believers are strongly commanded to lower their eyes to close the door against doing adultery.

Similarly, believers (both male and female) are also ordered to guard their private parts. According to Ibn Kathīr, guarding one's private parts are done through two acts: (i) avoiding adultery (see also Q 23:5-7; Q 33:35), and (ii) guarding private parts from being seen (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 243). Narrated in Ibn Ḥanbal, Muḥammad said: 'iḥfaḏ ʿawratika illā min zawjataka aw mā malakat yamīnuka – guard your private parts from all except your wife or your slaves (see Q 4:25)' (Ibn Ḥanbal 1994, 7:238). This ethical behaviour brings about three highly spiritual effects: (i) a purer heart; (ii) a more illuminated insight and (iii) a pious believer (ibid).

A third divine command, which was issued to female believers, is not to reveal their charms to 'al-ajnabiyy – men whom they can marry', except for what is necessarily revealed: face and hands (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 3: 244). Ibn Masʿūd, a close companion of Muḥammad, drew a distinction between two kinds of charms: (i) charms seen only by the husband: the ring and the bracelet and (ii) charms which can be seen by foreigners: what is revealed from clothes (ibid). Female believers are also ordered to draw their coverings over their necklines so that the neck as well as the bosom is completely covered (ibid). In this context, notice the use of the verb (wa-lyadribna – draw their coverings) which rhetorically signifies a complete covering of necklines and bosoms.

A pragmatic translation of the Qur'ānic verse (wa-lyadribna bikhumurihinna ʿallā jiyūbihinna - they should draw their coverings over their necklines) requires an awareness of 'asbāb an-nuzūl – occasions of revelation. According to Al-ṣābūnī,

women in pre-Islamic Arabia used to display their charms, i.e. their ornaments, hair, bosoms and hands in front of men. Pagan women did this either to seduce men or to encourage them to get married. They used to draw their scarves from behind so that their necks and bosoms were naked in front of men. Pursuing decency and protection of women, the Qur'ān ordered believing women to 'draw their scarves (khimār) over their bosoms and not to display their ornaments except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband's fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their womenfolk, or what their right hands rule, or the followers from the men who do not feel sexual desire, or the small children to whom the nakedness of women is not apparent, and not to strike their feet (on the ground) so as to make known what they hide of their ornaments, Q 24:31' (Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 2:320). Ibn Taymiyyah states that the wisdom behind this is mentioned in (dhālika azkā lahum – this is purer for them). That is to say, purity can also take place through other virtues, but this decency and conservation are purer for women. Also, since purity is deprived if women do not lower their eyes, then it is a duty imposed on all believing women to lower their eyes and to avoid displaying their charms (Ibn Taymiyyah 1986, 5:351). Similarly, al-Bukhārī narrates that ʿĀ'ishah said: 'May Allah bestow His Mercy on the early emigrant women. When Allāh revealed 'wa-lyadribna bikhumurihinna ʿallā jiyūbihinna - they should draw their coverings over their necklines', they immediately tore their aprons and covered their faces with it' (Al-Bukhārī 1977, VI: 267).

At the functional level, Ali was partially aware of the culture-sensitive connotations involved in the Qur'ānic verses above (Q 24: 30-31) is Ali (1934/1987). He provides the target reader with an explanatory footnote, in which a comparison is made between male and female modesty in Islam:

The need for modesty is the same in both men and women. But on account of the differentiation of the sexes in nature, temperaments and social life, a greater amount of privacy is required for women than for men, especially in the matter of dress and the uncovering of the bosom (Ali 1934/1987: 904).

However, Ali did not provide the target reader with more details of the cultural dimensions involved in the translation of the above expressions as explained above. His footnote is not enough as it offers a partial explanation. Alternatively, He should have provided his audience with some supplementary information on the cultural atmosphere and the ‘context of situation’ in which these verses were revealed.

5.6.5 Aḥkām al-Qur’ān – Qur’ān Legal Terms: (al-qīṣāṣ - fair retribution)

(yā ayyuhā alladhīna āmanū kutiba ʿalaykum al-Qīṣāṣu fil-qatlā al-ḥurru bil-ḥurri wa-l ʿabdu bil-ʿabdi wal-ʿunthā bil-ʿunthā faman ʿufiya lahu min akhīhi fat-tibāʿun bil-maʿrūfi wa-ʿadāʿun ilayhi bi-ʿiḥsān dhalika takhffifun min rabbikum wa-raḥmah fa-man iʿtadā baʿda dhalika falahu ʿadhābun alīm)

(You who believe, fair retribution is prescribed for you in cases of murder: the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave, the female for the female. But if the culprit is pardoned by his aggrieved brother, this shall be adhered to fairly, and the culprit shall pay what is due in a good way. This is alleviation from your Lord and an act of mercy. If anyone then exceeds these limits, grievous suffering awaits him, Q 2:178).

The above Qur’ānic verse is an example of the Qur’ān in its legal and social context. To understand the pragmatic meaning inherent in translating the Qur’ānic term (al-Qīṣāṣ - fair retribution) in the above Qur’ānic verse, two relevant cultural dimensions are highlighted. These are: (i) ‘asbāb an-nuzūl – occasions of revelation’, and (ii) the wisdom behind the implementation of ‘al-Qīṣāṣ - fair retribution’ judgement in Muslims’ life.

According to Al-Rāzī, the above Qur’ānic verse was revealed in order to abrogate the unfair judgements made in cases of murder in pre-Islamic Arabia. For the Jews, the retribution for murder was murder only, i.e. there was no forgiveness for those who committed this crime. On the contrary, for the Christians, the sanction for committing killing crimes was forgiveness only, i.e. there was no murder for murder. For the Arabs before Islam, the retribution for murder was either murder or paying what is due. However, in both cases, pre-Islamic Arabs did not achieve justice. That is to say, in the case of murder for murder, the highly honoured, (i.e. stronger tribe)

would say ‘a slave from our tribe equals a free man from theirs, a woman from ours equals a man from their tribe and a free man from our tribe equals two men from theirs’ (Al-Rāzī 1995, 5:51). A stronger tribe would also demand several (and sometimes all) men from the other tribe in return for one man from them. This evidently explains why the Qur’ānic verse states: ‘al-ḥurru bil-ḥurri wa-l’abdu bil’abdi wal-’unthā bil-’unthā - the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female’. Similarly, justice was not achieved in restitution either. That is to say, payment of due money for the highly honoured, i.e. the noble man was double the man of the street. This obviously construes ‘fa-’ittibā^cun bil-ma^crūfi wa-’adā’un ilayhi bi-’iḥsān – fair payment shall be adhered to’ as stated in the Qur’ānic verse above (ibid).

Thus, it is apparent that the main theme inherent in the above Qur’ānic verse is that achieving equality and justice is a basic requirement of a sound social system. The above Qur’ānic verse emphasizes that Justice is achieved when sanctions are proportional to the crime: no more, no less. Therefore, the Qur’ān legislates that the free man is for the free man, the slave is for the slave and the female is for the female. In case of forgiveness, the culprit (male or female) should pay fair financial compensation to his/her aggrieved brother / sister. Likewise, the aggrieved requests should not be excessive. Accordingly, both parties should establish cordial relations and show good conduct (ibid).

For Muslims the expression ‘al-Qiṣāṣ - fair retribution’ is culturally significant for two reasons. First, as discussed above, the term is associated with substantial cultural values, such as equality, justice, cordial relations and sound behaviour. Also, The Qur’ān offers another high wisdom beyond the implementation of al-Qiṣāṣ: (walakum fil Qiṣāṣi ḥayātun yā ‘ulil-al’albābi la^calakum tat-taqūn – Fair retribution saves life for you, people of understanding, so that you may guard yourselves against what is wrong, Q 2: 179). Mujāhid interprets the expression (ḥayāh – life) in this Qur’ānic verse as ‘nakālan wa-tanāhiyan – a judgement made as both a punishment and a life-saving’ (Mujāhid 1931, 1:95). Therefore, ‘al-Qiṣāṣ - fair retribution’ should not only be seen as a sanction issued against the killer, but it is a source of life as well. That is to say, once a person realizes that he / she will be killed in case they murder another, they will

immediately stop thinking about that serious matter, i.e. his / her life will be the penalty. Thus, 'al-Qiṣāṣ' shuts the door against even thinking about killing others and therefore it should also be viewed as a source of life. In this sense, 'al-Qiṣāṣ' is also regarded by Muslims as a means of preserving the self.

At the functional level, Ali was able to communicate the above cultural implications to the target reader through two acts. First, he translated the Qur'ānic term (al-Qiṣāṣ) as 'the law of equality'. By doing this, Ali highly emphasized the theme of justice running throughout the Qur'ānic verse (Ali 1934/1987: 70). Also, in an illuminating footnote, Ali alerted the audience that the term 'al-Qiṣāṣ - fair retribution' should not be translated as 'retaliation'. His justification for this is that the term 'retaliation' in English carries connotations of generality and negativity, i.e. it expresses a broader meaning and connotes 'returning evil for evil' (ibid). Distinctively, the term 'al-Qiṣāṣ' in Qur'ānic Arabic carries the senses of equality and justice in both the self and the financial compensations. Intelligently, in the same footnote, Ali provided the target reader with a detailed account of some cultural connotations involved in translating the expression:

This verse and the next make it clear that Islam has much mitigated the horrors of the pre-Islamic custom of retaliation. In order to meet the strict claims of justice, equality is prescribed, with a strong recommendation for mercy and forgiveness. Islam says: if you must take a life for life, at least there should be some measure of equality in it; the killing of the slave of a tribe should not involve a blood feud where many free men would be killed, but the law of mercy, where it can be obtained by consent, with reasonable compensation, would be better (ibid).

5.6.6 Material Culture: (al-bayt al-ḥarām – The Ka^ḥbah in Mecca)

(wa-'idh ja^ḥalnā al-bayta mathābatan lin-nāsi wa-'amnā wat-takhidhū min maqāmi Ibrāhīma muṣallā wa-^ḥahidnā ilā Ibrāhīma wa-Ismā^ḥīla an ṭahhirā baytiya liṭ-ṭā'ifina wa-l^ḥākifina war-rukka^ḥi as-sujūd)

(We made the House a resort and a sanctuary for people, saying, 'Take the spot where Abraham stood as your place of prayer'. We commanded Abraham and Ishmael:

‘Purify My House for those who walk around it, those who stay there, and those who bow and prostrate themselves in worship, Q 2: 125).

The above Qur’ānic verse is a typical example of the Qur’ān in its historical context. It is a cultural reference to the Ka’bah in Mecca, which is, for all Muslims, ‘baytul-lāh – The House of God’ (see below).



Figure 5.2 The Ka’bah in Mecca

[<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=ka'bah>]

The foundations of this Sacred House was raised by Abraham and his son Ishmael: (wa-’idh yarfa^ḥu Ibrāhīmu al-qawā^ḥida minal-bayti wa-Ismā^ḥīlu rabbanā taqabbal minnā innaka anta as-samī^ḥul^ḥ alīm – As Abraham and Ishmael built up the foundations of the House [they prayed], [with this prayer]: ‘Our Lord, accept [this] from us, You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing’ Q 2:127). To appreciate the pragmatic meaning involved in translating the expression (al-bayt al-ḥarām – the Sacred House), four key words mentioned in the above Qur’ānic verse will be highlighted. These are: (i) ‘mathābah – resort’, (ii) ‘amnan – a safe place’, (iii) ‘muṣallā – a place for prayer’, and (iv) ‘ṭahhirā [baytiya] – purify [My House].

The first aspect of the cultural meaning involved in ‘al-bayt al-ḥarām – The Ka’bah in Mecca’ relates to the expression ‘mathābatah – resort’. According to Mujāhid, the expression ‘mathābatan lin-nāsi - a resort and a sanctuary for people’ means ‘lā yaqḍūna minhu waṭaran abadā – [Muslims’] hearts always incline toward

this Sacred House' (Mujāhid 1931, 1: 88). This unique spiritual affection is also mentioned in (rabbanā innī askantu min dhurriyyatī biwādin ghayri dhī dhar^ḥin ^ḥinda baytaka al-muḥarram rabbanā liyuqīmū aṣ-ṣalāta faj^ḥal af'idatan min an-nāsi tahwī ilayhim wa-rzuqhum min ath-thamarāti la^ḥallahum yashkurūn – Our Lord, I [Abraham] have established some of my offspring in an uncultivated valley, close to your Sacred House, so make people hearts turn to them, and provide them with produce, so that they may be thankful, Q 14:37). Therefore, the implied and inter-textual meaning underlying in the term (mathābah – resort) is that Muslims always aspire to visit this sacred place. Whenever they come back home, their hearts immediately incline to visit it again. This meaning also conforms to the linguistic implications of the root (th – ā – b – a) in Arabic which means come back again. Arabs say: 'thāba al-ma'u' to describe water flowing back and again to the river (Al-Rāzī, 1995, 4:50).

The second clue to the pragmatic meaning involved in the expression 'al-bayt al-ḥarām – The Ka^ḥbah in Mecca' in the above Qur'ānic verse lies in the expression 'amnan – a safe place'. This expression has two interpretations. The first is that 'amnan' means that people of and around the Sacred House are always secure. It is worth noting here that 'secure' is used in its general connotations, i.e. secure of all that is bad, e.g. poverty, drought, wars, fighting, etc. (ibid: 52). The second interpretation is that (amnan) in this context means that allāh – God commanded people to make the Sacred House safe of wars, killing or fighting. Thus, as ordered by God, the Sacred House is a highly glorious place where safety is undoubtedly ensured (ibid: 53). This second interpretation seems to be more probable, because it is intertextually justified. That is to say, in Q 2: 191, God orders believers to expel disbelievers from wherever they have been expelled, except at al-Masjid al-Ḥarām – the Sacred Mosque, unless believers are fought there. Only on this condition, believers are allowed to fight disbelievers and kill them. Thus, it can be argued that the Sacred Mosque should always be safe and secure unless disbelievers have initiated fighting.

The third clue to the cultural meaning involved in using 'al-bayt al-ḥarām – The Ka^ḥbah in Mecca' lies in the expression 'muṣallā – a spot taken as a place for prayer'. There are two interpretations of (maqāmi Ibrāhīma as muṣallā – the spot which Abraham took as a place of prayer): (i) a general interpretation, and (ii) a situational

one. As for the former, according to Mujāhid, in (wat-takhidhū min maqāmi Ibrāhīma muṣallā - Take the spot where Abraham stood as your place of prayer), maqāmi Ibrāhīm is ‘al-ḥaram kulluhu - the whole of the Makkah’ (Mujāhid 1931, 1:88). As for the situational interpretation, interpreting the meaning involved in ‘maqāmi Ibrāhīma muṣallā – the spot which Abraham took as a place of prayer’ requires an awareness of ‘asbāb an-nuzūl – occasions of revelation’. According to Ibn Kathīr, when Mūḥammad was moving around the Kaʿbah, his companion ʿUmr Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb asked, ‘Is this the spot where our father Abraham stood to pray?’ Mūḥammad replied, ‘Yes’, so ʿUmr Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb asked, ‘Should not we take it as a place for prayer?’ Muslims believe that this Qurʾānic verse was revealed immediately at this time. It is clear that both interpretations communicate the meaning that Muslims’ hearts always incline to pray in Makkah in general, and in the Sacred House in particular (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 1: 149, see below).



Figure 5.3 Muslims praying around the Kaʿbah

[<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=ka'bah>]

The fourth key word involved in communicating the pragmatic meaning involved in translating ‘al-bayt al-ḥarām – The Kaʿbah in Mecca’ relates to the expression ‘ṭahhirā [baytiya] – purify [My House]. The Sacred House is regarded by Muslims as a pure, divine, sanctuary and highly-spiritual resort. It is the dormitory of

Muslims, who always aspire to move around the Ka^ḥbah, stay there for worship, contemplation, bowing, or prostrating (see below):



Figure 5.4 Muslims moving, bowing and/-or prostrating around the Ka^ḥbah

[<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=ka'bah>]

According to Ibn Kathīr, ‘ṭahhirā baytiya liṭ-ṭā’ifīna wa-l’ākifīna war-rukka^ḥ as-sujūd - Purify My House for those who walk around it, those who stay there, and those who bow and prostrate themselves in worship’ means purify God’s Sacred House by avoiding polytheism and doubt and making it a resort for Muslim worshippers coming from all corners of the world (ibid: 151). Notice also the use of (baytiya – My House) which colours the term with divinity and high spirituality. To sum up, the Qur’ānic expression (baytiya – My House) is replete with both pragmatic and emotive connotations which should be communicated to the target reader in a different culture. Neither of these implications has been explicated in previous Qur’ān translations.

5.6.7 Nature Expressions: (an-nakhl – date palm trees) and (al-ṭal^ḥ – clusters of dates)

(wan-nakhla bāsiqātin lahā ṭal^ḥun naḍīd)

(And tall palm trees laden with clusters of dates Q 50: 10).

The above Qur'ānic verse is a vivid reference to nature in the Qur'ān. It is a cultural reference to the thick clustering of dates which grow on the extremely tall palm trees in the Arabian Peninsula (see below):



Date Palm Trees



Dates Clustered on Palm trees

Figure 5.5 Date Palm Trees the Arabian Peninsula

[<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=dates>]

References to nature in the Qur'ān are a main tool of arguing against disbelievers' sceptic beliefs. The Qur'ān encourages disbelievers to meditate on nature around them. This meditation will pave the way for them to believe that there must be a creator for this fabulous universe (cf. Q 88: 17:26). Accordingly, they will also be ready to listen carefully to Prophets, consider their divine messages and follow their footsteps (cf. Q 57:25). Thus, a pragmatic understanding of the above Qur'ānic verse requires highlighting two essential aspects: (i) the severe opposition encountered by all Prophets in their persistent attempts to communicate their divine messages to their nations, and (ii) language of argumentation in the Qur'ānic discourse as 'a prominent aspect of the Qur'ān and an inherent part of its discourse' (Zebiri 2006: 266).

According to Ibn Kathīr, the Qur'ān is ample with verses which refer to the fact that all prophets encountered tremendous opposition from disbelievers throughout history (cf. Q 38: 1-3; Q 50: 1-2). This severe objection opened doors for many arguments, e.g. monotheism vs. polytheism (cf. Q 19: 34-36), resurrection vs.

worldly life (cf. Q 45: 24) and the issue of authenticity of prophets (cf. 25: 7-8), to mention only few (Ibn Kathīr 1997, 4: 188). For instance, the first five Qur'ānic verses in the chapter under discussion, i.e. (Q 50: 1-5) raise two central arguments: (i) can a warner from among people be a prophet: (bal ʿajibū an jā'ahum mundhirun minhum – But the disbelievers are amazed that a warner has come from among them, Q 50:2), and (ii) will people come back [to life] after death and decay: (a'idhā mitnā wa-kunnā turāban dhālika rajʿun baʿīd – To come back [to life] after we have died and become dust? That is too far-fetched, Q 50: 3). The Qur'ān argues against disbelievers' sceptic beliefs adopting four basic tools: (i) references to history (cf. Q 50: 12-13; Q 50: 36-37; Q 54:9), (ii) references to death and the hereafter (cf. Q 50:19; Q 56:83-96), (iii) references to creation of the self (cf. Q 51:21; Q 56: 57-59; Q 22:5; 75:1-4), and (iv) references to the nature (cf. Q 56: 63-76; Q 51:20; Q 55:5-7; Q 55:37). The verse under discussion, i.e. Q 50: 10, is one of the Qur'ānic verses in which nature is adopted as a tool to argue for Muḥammad's authenticity, the inevitability of death, and marvellous as well as inspiring nature as a sign of God's greatness.

The appeal to nature is one of the prevalent themes in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān praises those who always remember God (cf. Q 3: 191). A central means to this highly recurrent remembrance is to mediate on the inspiring nature created by God. This divine creation is a sign of God's incomparable power. In this context, the Qur'ān encourages disbelievers to contemplate the heaven: how it was created (cf. Q 50: 6; Q 79:27-29), the earth: how it was spread, how fixed mountains were set and how plants were grown (cf. Q 50: 7; Q 79:30-31), the rain: the source of gardens and grains and the date palm trees from which clusters of dates flow: (wan-nakhla bāsiqātin lahā ṭalʿun naḍīd – And tall palm trees laden with clusters of dates Q 50: 10). According to Mujāhid, 'an-nakhla bāsiqātin' means that these date palm trees are 'aṭ-ṭuwāl – extremely tall' (Mujāhid 1931, 2:610). In addition, the root (na - ḍa - da) in Arabic indicates having things above each other (Al-Rāzī 2007: 301). In addition, because the use of (naḍīd) in Arabic expresses an exaggeration, it can be argued that date palm trees, which have 'ṭalʿun naḍīd' should be translated as 'palm trees on which dates are thickly clustered' (ibid).

At the functional level, Ali was keen on communicating this graphic meaning to the target reader. He provided his audience with an explanatory footnote in which he stressed the culturally-rooted connotations implied in the use of (an-nakhla al- bāsiqāt – the remarkably tall trees) and (aṭ-ṭalʿu an-naḍīd – clustering of dates). Ali also comments on the verse stating that it is ‘a beautiful nature passage. How graphic and unforgettable to anyone who has seen a spring and summer in an Arabian oasis’ (Ali 1934/1987: 1411). To sum up, appreciating the pragmatic meaning inherent in the above Qur’ānic verse requires understanding the verse in terms of cause and effect. That is to say, references to nature are one of the basic means by which the Qur’ān refutes disbelievers’ sceptic beliefs and encourages them to believe in God and His Prophets.

5.6.8 Culture-specific Times: (al-ashḥār – the last hours of the night before the dawn)

(kānū qalīlan min al-layli mā yahjaʿūn wa-bil-ashḥāri hum yastaghfirūn)

(They [The righteous] were sleeping only little at night, praying at dawn for God’s forgiveness, Q 51: 17-18).

In the above Qur’ānic verses, the translator of the Qur’ān encounters the cultural expression (al-ashḥār). This is a cultural reference to the last few hours of the night before the dawn time. To communicate the pragmatic implications involved in translating this Qur’ānic expression, the translator of the Qur’ān is advised to communicate two cultural aspects: (i) the time when (al-ashḥār) starts and finishes and (ii) the cultural as well as emotional significance of (al-ashḥār) for Muslims.

With respect to the time of (as-saḥar) in the Islamic culture, according to Al-Bukhārī, narrated by Abū Hurayrah, Muḥammad said, ‘Our Lord, the Blessed, the Superior, comes every night down on the nearest Heaven to us when the last third of the night remains, saying, ‘Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his/her invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him/her his/her request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?’ (Al-

Bukhārī 1977, 2: 136). Based on this ḥadīth - Prophetic Saying, two central aspects are revealed. These are: (i) al-saḥar starts in the last third of the night and it lasts up to time of the dawn, and (ii) al-saḥar is a highly spiritual time for Muslims as it is the optimal timing for praying and seeking forgiveness.

For Muslims, (as-saḥar) is a unique time in both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. According to Mujāhid, the expression (yastaghfirūn) in the above Qur'ānic verse means (yuṣallūn - pray) in the last few hours before the dawn. Similarly, according to Al-Bukhārī, narrated by ʿā'ishah that 'Muḥammad offered witr prayer – Muḥammad prayed an odd number of rakʿas /prayer units at various hours extending from the ʿIshā' prayer up to the last hour of the night. The Qur'ān also states: (wal-mustaghfirīna bil-ʿaṣḥār – those who pray before dawn for forgiveness Q 3: 17). According to Ibn Kathīr, this Qur'ānic verse is a proof that seeking forgiveness in al-aṣḥār - the last few hours before the dawn is a virtue (Ibn Kathīr, 1983: 1: 304) (see also Q 73:20; Q 39:9; Q 32:16). For Muslims, (as-saḥar) is also loaded with highly spiritual feelings. It is the time when believers enjoy closeness to God by means of worshipping Him. The Qur'ān encourages Muslims to prostrate and pray for God: (faṣjudū lil-lāhi wa-ʿbudū – Bow down before God and worship, Q 53:62, see also Q 96:19). Similarly, narrated in Muslim, Muḥammad also said 'The servant is closest to God when he /she bow down, so [in this state] invoke God as much as possible' Muslim 1995, 1: 294). In short, for Muslims, as-saḥar is an optimal time for praying, seeking forgiveness and enjoying closeness to God.

Another cultural significance associated with the term (al-aṣḥār) is reflected in the widely-known cultural expression (as-suḥūr). This is a cultural reference to the meal which fasting Muslims have in the last few hours before dawn in the month of Ramaḍān. During night in the month of Ramaḍān, Muslims can eat and drink 'until the white thread of dawn appears distinct from its black thread, Q 2:187. Muslims have their (suḥūr) in Ramaḍān in the last few hours before dawn. Ali comments on this Qur'ānic verse: 'those in touch with nature know the beautiful effects of early dawn. First appear thin white indefinable streaks of light in the east; then a dark zone supervenes; followed by a beautiful pinkish white zone clearly defined from the dark; after that the fast begins' (Ali 1934/1987: 74). To sum up, 'al-saḥār' is the Muslims'

favourite time to pray, remember God and seek His Forgiveness. It is also the time when Muslims have a meal before starting fasting in the month of Ramaḍān.

5.6.9 Culture-sensitive Figures

This section aims to examine one of the culture-specific expressions which could also be highlighted as an instance of polysemy, i.e. 'imām – the one who leads prayers'. This supports the argument raised earlier that there is a strong correlation between polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān (see 1.4.4). To illustrate this, the culture-specific expression 'imām' will be examined from a cultural perspective (see 5.6.9.1 below).

Another goal this section seeks to achieve is to present a cultural analysis of one of the culture-specific expressions located in the area of culture-sensitive figures. This is in line with the suggested categories of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān (see 5.5). To achieve this goal, the culture-specific proper noun 'Muhammad' will be analyzed from a cultural perspective (see 5.6.9.2 below).

5.6.9.1 Culture-Specific Polysemous Figures: 'imām – the one who leads prayers'

The word 'imām' is one of the problematic polysemous as well as culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. This is due to the generality of the term. According to Al-Rāzī, the expression 'imām' is a generic word which communicates the meaning of 'the leader', i.e. the Prophet is the 'imām' of his nation, the caliph (successor) is the 'imām' of his people, the Qur'ān is the 'imām' of Muslims, and the 'imām' in prayers is the leading person (Al-Rāzī 1995, 11: 18). This generic meaning has resulted in remarkable differences in interpreting the polysemous expression 'imām' in different Qur'ānic contexts. For example, both Al-Dāmaghānī and Ibn al-^ḥImād argue that 'imām' extends in its different Qur'ānic contexts to express five distinct shades of meaning (Al-Dāmaghānī 1983: 44-45; Ibn al-^ḥImād 1977: 83-85). These are:

(a) (al-qā'id fī al-khayr – the leader in charity), as in

(wa-'idh ibtalā ibrahīma rabbuhu bikalimātin fa'atammahunna qāla innī jāciluka lin-nāsi imāma qāla wa-min dhurriyyatī qāla lā yanālu cahdiya aẓ-ẓālimīn)

(When Abraham's Lord tested him with certain commandments, which he fulfilled, He said, 'I will make you a leader of people.' Abraham asked, 'And will You make leaders from my descendants too?' God answered, 'My pledge does not hold for those who do evil, Q 2:124);

(b) (kitāb banī ādam – register of deeds), as in

(yawma nad^cū kulla unāsin bi'imāmihim fa-man 'ūtiya kitābahu biyamīnhi fa'ulā'ika yaqra'ūna kitābahum wa-lā yuẓlamūna fatīlā)

(On the Day when We summon each community, along with its leader, those who are given their record in their right hand will read it [with pleasure]. But no one will be wronged in the least, Q 17:71);

(c) (al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz - The Preserved Tablet), as in

(innā naḥnu nuḥyil-mawtā wa-naktubu mā qaddamū wa-āthārahum wa-kulla shay'in aḥṣaynāhu fī imāmin mubīn)

(We [God] shall certainly bring the dead back to life, and We record what they send ahead of them as well as what they leave behind: We keep an account of everything in a clear Record, Q 36:12);

(d) (al-Tawrāh – The Torah), as in

(afaman kāna ^calā bayyinatīn min rabbihi wa-yatlūhu shāhidun minhu wa-min qablihi kitābu mūsā imāman wa-raḥmah)

(Can they [disbelievers] be compared to those who have clear proof [the Qur'ān] from their Lord, recited by a witness [The Angel Gabriel] from Him [God] , and before it the Book of Moses, as a guide and mercy?, Q 11: 17);

(e) (aṭ- ṭarīq al-wāḍiḥ - The Clear Way), as in

(fantaqamnā minhum wa-innahumā labi'imāmin mubīn) –

(We [God] took retribution on them [Lūṭ's family]; both are still there on the highway, plain for all to see, Q 15: 79).

Not only has the general meaning of 'imām' in the Qur'ān resulted in different interpretations of the expression in its different Qur'ānic contexts, but the expression has sometimes been interpreted differently even in a specific Qur'ānic context. For instance, in Q 17:71 above, the polysemous expression 'imām' has two other probable interpretations (Al-Rāzī 1995, 11: 18). These are:

(1) 'nabbiyihim – their Prophet': in this context, Al-Rāzī emphasizes Muḥammad's Prophetic saying that on the Day of Judgement people are called by the imām of their time (their Prophet), the Book of their Lord (their revealed Scripture) and the Prophetic tradition of their Prophets (ibid). Abdel-Haleem agrees and refers his readers to Q 16: 89 (Abdel-Haleem 2004/2008: 179):

(wa-yawma nab^ḥathu fī kulli ummatin shahīdan ^ḥalayhim wa-ji'nā bika ^ḥalā hā'ulā'i shahīdā - The day will come [Day of Judgement] when We raise up in each community a witness against them, and We shall bring you [Prophet] as a witness against these people, Q 16: 89). In Qur'ānic exegesis, this intertextual interpretation is referred to as 'at-tafsīr bil-ma'thūr – Qur'ānic intertextuality', which is based on the premise that 'al-qur'ānu yufassiru nafsahu - the Qur'ān explains itself' (see 5.3.1);

(2) 'kitābihim – the Scripture Revealed to them': this, states Al-Rāzī, was narrated by al-Ḍaḥḥāk and Ibn Zayd. They narrate that Muḥammad said, 'On the Day of Judgement

a caller will say, 'O people of the Torah, O people of the Bible, O people of the Qur'ān', so all will gather to receive their records of deeds' (ibid);

The first interpretation seems to be more probable because it is justified by both the Qur'ān itself and the Prophetic sayings. To deal with this problematic issue, the translator can borrow the expression to alert the reader that it is a culture-sensitive expression. Through either an informative footnote or paraphrasing, the translator could inform the reader of these probable interpretations. This is what Al-Hilali and Khan has opted for:

(And remember) the Day when We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imām [their Prophets, or their records of good and bad deeds, or their Holy Books like the Qur'ān, the Turāt (Torah), the Injīl (Gospel), or the leaders whom the people followed in this world (Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 233).

In case the translator opts for one of the above probable meanings, the choice should be justified. This is what Abdel-Haleem has done (see (2) above).

5.6.9.2 Culture-Specific Figures: (Muḥammad)

(wa-mā Muḥammadun illā rasūlun qad khalat min qablihi ar-rusul – Muhammad is only a messenger before whom many messengers have been and gone Q 3:144).

The Qur'ānic verse above bears a reference to Muḥammad: the Prophet of Islam. According to Rippin, understanding Islam requires investigating three crucial foundations: (i) examining the social, political, economic and historical context in which Islām emerged, (ii) investigating the holy scripture of Islam, namely the Qur'ān, and (iii) exploring the leading character in Islam, namely Muḥammad (Rippin 1993/2001:7). Rippin further looks into more detail at the character of Muḥammad:

Muḥammad is the central figure in Islām. Chosen by God to receive the revelation of the Qur'ān, he has been taken by all Muslims to be the ideal man, the perfect embodiment of what it means to be a Muslim. Having lived a fairly normal existence in sixth century east central Arabia, at the age of 40 Muḥammad revolutionized his

society in ways which were both unexpected and long lasting (ibid: 39).

To explore the pragmatic aspects involved in translating the Qur'ānic cultural references to Muḥammad (cf. Q 48:29; Q 53:2; Q 59:7; Q 81:22), two dimensions relevant to the Islamic culture will be highlighted: (i) Muḥammad in the Qur'ān (ii) the authority of Muḥammad. Highlighting these central issues unveils many cultural aspects inherent in exploring Muḥammad's character as seen by Muslims.

Muḥammad's supreme authority in Islam has its roots in the Qur'ān. At the linguistic level, Muslims believe that what Muḥammad said is a divine revelation. In the Qur'ān itself: 'wan-najmi idhā hawā mā ḍalla ṣāhibukum wa-mā ghawā wa-mā yanṭiqu ^ʿan al-hawā in huwa illā waḥyun yūḥā ^ʿallamahu shadīdul-quwā dhū mirratin fastawā - By the star when it sets! Your companion [Muḥammad] has not strayed; he is not deluded; he does not speak from his own desire. The Qur'ān is nothing less than a revelation that is sent to him [Muḥammad]. It was taught to him by an angel [Gabriel] with mighty powers and great strength, Q 53: 1-6'. Similarly, the Qur'ān emphasizes: 'lā tuḥarrik bihi lisānaka lita^ʿjala bih inna ^ʿalaynā jam^ʿahu wa-qur'ānahu fa'idhā qara'nāhu fattabi^ʿ qur'ānahu thumma inna ^ʿalaynā bayānahu - [Muḥammad] do not rush your tongue in an attempt to hasten [your memorization of] the Revelation: It is for Us [God] to make sure of its safe collection and recitation. When We have recited it, repeat the recitation and it is up to Us to make it clear, Q 75:16-19'. At the behaviouristic level, the Qur'ān highly praises Muḥammad's manners and his code of ethics: 'wa-innaka la^ʿalā khuluqin ^ʿaẓīm - And verily, you [O Muḥammad] are on an exalted standard of character, Q 68:4'. In short, for righteous Muslims, following Muḥammad's footsteps is the road to a good life and the path to salvation (cf. Q 16:97).

Muḥammad's 'Sunnah' is the second supreme authority for Muslims after the Qur'ān (ibid: 48). In the Qur'ān itself: 'wa mā ātākum ar-rasūlu fakhudhūh wa-mā nahākum ^ʿanhu fantahū – Accept whatever the Messenger gives you, and abstain from whatever he forbids you Q 59:7). For Muslims, Muḥammad's personality is the high example which all Muslims should follow (cf. Q 2: 285; Q 4:64). Muḥammad's linguistic

and physical behaviour as well as his emotional overtones are looked upon by Muslims as the proof of sound Islamic behaviour.

5.6.10 Culture-Sensitive Emotions: (at-tabatul – Devoting oneself wholeheartedly to God)

(yā ayyuhā al-muzzammil qumil-layla illā qalīlā niṣfuhu aw inqūṣ minhu qalīlā aw zid ᶜalayhi wa-rattil al-qur'āna tartīlā innā sanulqī ᶜalayka qawlan thaqīlā inna nāshi'ata al-layli hiya ashaddu waṭ'an wa-aqwamu qīlā inna laka fin-nahāri sabaḥan ṭawīlā wa-dhkur isma rabbika wa-tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā)

(You [Prophet], enfolded in your cloak! Stay up throughout the night, all but a small part of it, half, or a little less, or a little more; recite the Qur'ān slowly and distinctly: We [God] shall send a momentous message down to you. Night prayer makes a deeper impression and sharpens words- you are kept busy for long periods of the day – so celebrate the name of your Lord and devote yourself wholeheartedly to Him, Q 73: 1-8).

The Qur'ānic verses above bear a cultural reference to one of the unique rituals in Islām, namely: 'qiām al-layl – praying to God during night'. The Qur'ān praises those Muslims whose 'sides shun their beds in order to pray to their Lord in fear and hope: 'tatajāfā junūbuhum ᶜanil-maḍājīᶜi yadᶜūna rabbahum khawfan wa-ṭamaᶜā, (Q 32: 16). Similarly, God commands Muḥammad to 'wake up during the night to pray, as an extra offering of his own: wa-min al-layli fatahajjad bihi nāfilatan laka, (Q 17: 79). The Qur'ānic verses under discussion are an example of this divine command, in which God orders Muḥammad to stay up during the night and to recite the Qur'ān slowly and distinctly (Ibn Kathīr 1983, 4: 379).

Another divine command to Muḥammad (and accordingly to all believers) to be done in the course of this night worship is: 'wa-tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā'. According to Mujāhid, 'tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā' means 'akhliṣ ilayhi ikhlāṣā – show a complete devotion to God' (Mujāhid 1931, 2: 700). Similarly, Ibn Kathīr interprets 'tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā' to mean 'akhliṣ lahu al-ᶜibādah – devote your worship completely to God' (Ibn

Kathīr 1983, 4: 382). Al-ṣābūnī adds, ‘wa-tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā’ means, ‘inḡaṡī ilayhi inḡiṡā’an tāmmān fī ‘ibādātika wa-tawakullika ‘alayhi wa-lā taṡamad fī sha’nin min shu’ūnika ‘alā aḡadin ḡayrahu – completely devote yourself to Him in both your worship and your asking for help, and do not rely on anyone else other than God’ (Al-ṣābūnī 1997, 3: 454).

In addition to the Qur’ān, the Prophetic traditions also encourage Muslims to both pray and devote themselves completely to God during night. Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, Muḡammad said, ‘afḡaluṡ-ṡiyām baḡda shahri Ramaḡan shahru Allāhi al-muḡarrām wa-‘afḡaluṡ-ṡalāti baḡdal-farīḡati ṡalātul-layli – the best fasting after the month of Ramaḡan is fasting God’s month of al-muḡarrām and the best prayers after obligatory ones are the night prayers, (Al-Tirmidhī 1996, 2: 459).

Some previous translators of the Qur’ān have attempted to communicate the above cultural implications involved in translating the Qur’ānic expression ‘tabattal’. For instance, Al-Hilali and Khan modify this type of devotion with the adjective ‘complete’: ‘and devote yourself to Him [God] with complete devotion (Al-Hilali and Khan 1974/2011: 467). Similarly, Abdel-Haleem uses the expression ‘wholeheartedly’ to express the highly emotive overtone involved (Abdel-Haleem 2004: 395). However, both translations have not provided the target reader with the cultural atmosphere involved in performing this ritual. This cultural background was successfully communicated by Ali, who provided the target reader with two informative footnotes. In the first one, Ali emphasizes the idea that the night is a suitable time for believers to meditate, worship and supplicate to God:

For contemplation, prayer, and praise, what time can be so suitable as the night, when calm and silence prevail, the voices of the market-place are still, and the silent stars pour forth their eloquence to the discerning soul (Ali 1934/1987: 1633).

In the second footnote, attention is paid to the worshipper and the need to make a balance between life responsibilities which usually take place during the day and the enjoyment of worshipping God during night:

A man of God, as a man, a member of a family or a citizen, has many ordinary duties to perform; and his work may be made

difficult and irksome in protecting those who listen to his preaching and are therefore molested and persecuted by the world. But while discharging all his ordinary duties, he should work as in the presence of God, and in all matters and at all times retain the sense of God's nearness. His work may be on earth, but his heart is in Heaven (ibid: 1634).

In conclusion, communicating the cultural dimensions involved in translating the Qur'ānic expression 'wa-tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā' requires pointing to some relevant Islamic meanings. These are: (i) the complete devotion of oneself to God, (ii) the 'wholeheartedly' worship to God, (iii) the cultural significance of praying during night for Muslims, and (iv) the significance of making a balance between the lifetime and the hereafter. These relevant meanings are clearly mentioned in the Qur'ān itself and in the Prophetic sayings. The theme of al-tabattul – devoting oneself to God was mentioned three times in the Qur' ān:

(a) (wa-dhkur isma rabbika wa-tabattal ilayhi tabtīlā - so celebrate the name of your Lord and devote yourself wholeheartedly to Him, Q 73: 8);

(b) (rabbus-samawāti wa-larḍi fa^cbudhu wa-ṣṭabir li^cibādātihi hal ta^clamu lahu samiyyā – He [God] is the Lord of the Heavens and earth and everything in between so worship him: be steadfast in worshipping Him. Do you know of anyone equal to Him, Q 19:65);

(c) (fa'idhā faraghta fanṣab wa-'ilā rabbika farghab – The moment you are freed [of one task] work on, and turn to your Lord for everything, Q 94: 7-8).

Similarly, Muḥammad said, 'inna aḥadakum idhā ṣallā yunājī rabbahu falā yatfilanna^can yamīnihi – Whenever anyone of you offers his/her prayer, he/she is speaking in private to his Lord. So he should not spit to his right but under his left foot' (Al-Bukhārī 1976/1979, 1: 302). Another Ḥadīth – Prophetic saying is: 'ḥaddathanā Musaddad qāla, 'kāna an-nabiyyu yaukthiru an yaqūla fī rukū^cihi wa-sujūdihi: subḥānaka allāhumma rabbanā wa-biḥamdika allāhumma ighfir lī – Narrated by Musaddad, 'The Prophet frequently used to say in his bowings and prostrations, 'I honor God from all unsuitable things ascribed to Him, O God! All praise are for you. O God! Forgive me' (ibid: 434).

5.7 Qur'ān Translators as Cultural Mediators

Having examined the cultural dimension involved in communicating some culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān (see 5.6), it is necessary to closely investigate the role played by Qur'ān translators in mediating between the source and target culture (see 5.2). Two issues are raised in the discussion below:

- (a) Approaches to the notion of mediation in translation;
- (b) The influence of ideology on Qur'ān translation practice. In particular, to what extent does Qur'ān translator's ideology affect his/her performance in terms of 'domesticating' or 'foreignising' the target text?

5.7.1 Approaches to Mediation in Translation

Mediation in translation can be defined as 'the role played by translators in serving as the medium for the transfer process that takes place between an original and a translation' (Palumbo 2009: 74). The issue of mediation in translation has been approached from two different perspectives: (a) translation and function and (b) translation and ideology (ibid: 75).

Functionalist approaches view translation as 'a purposeful transcultural activity' (Schäffner 1998/2009: 115). In other words, it is the purpose of translation which determines the target text and translation in general is a means of cultural interaction (ibid) (see 5.2). In addition, functional approaches to translation look upon translation 'as an act of communication' and view meaning as 'function in context' (ibid) (see 2.5). In short, the central factor involved in functional approaches to translation is 'the prospective function or purpose of the target text as (previously) determined by the initiator's needs' (ibid: 116). In this sense, the functionalist approaches to translation look at mediation as a means to mediate between two texts: the source and the target one (Palumbo 2009: 75).

The second approach to the notion of mediation in translation is based on the argument that there is a close relationship between translation and ideology. In other words, mediation in translation can be defined as 'the extent to which translators

intervene in the transfer process, feeding their own knowledge and beliefs into their processing of a text' (Hatim and Mason 1997: 147). Thus, the focus has remarkably been transferred from the tendency to communicate aspects of differences between the source and target text-/culture to another inclination in which priority is given to the one-/ team who produce(s) the target text. In short, a shift from texts to translators has taken place. It can be argued that both approaches, i.e. functionalist approaches to translation and translation and ideology, have been adopted in the translation into English of cultural references in the Qur'ān.

A good example of the functionalist approach to mediation in Qur'ān translation at both levels of language and culture is Abdel-Haleem's (2004/2008). In the introduction to his translation Abdel-Haleem clearly sets his goals and prospective audience:

This translation is intended to go further than previous works in accuracy, clarity, flow, and currency of language. It is written in a 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'ān accessible to everyone who speaks English, Muslims or otherwise, including the millions of people all over the world for whom the English language has become a lingua franca (ibid: xxix).

This 'purposeful' orientation has clearly influenced Abdel-Haleem's mediation at both levels of language and culture. As for linguistic mediation, consider Abdel-Haleem's translation of the expression 'khalīfah' in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(wa-'idh qāla rabbuka lilmalā'ikkati innī jā'ilun fil-arḍi khalīfah qālū ataj^ḥalu fihā man yufsidu fihā wa-yasfiku ad-dimā'a wa-naḥnu nusabbiḥu biḥamdika wa-nuqaddisu laka qāla innī a'lamu mā lā ta'lamūn)

([Prophet], when your Lord told the angels, 'I am putting a successor on earth,' they said, 'How can You put someone there who will cause damage and bloodshed, when we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your holiness?' but He said, 'I know things you do not.', Q 2:30) (ibid: 7).

The expression ‘khalīfah’ in Arabic, which is derived from the root (kh-a-l-a-f-a) is used to communicate the meaning of ‘al-ladhī yustakhlafu mimman qablahu – the one(s) who supersede one/each another/other’ (Ibn Manzūr 1956, 9: 83). In their attempts to communicate this meaning in English, Qur’ān translators have opted for various equivalents. Some Qur’ān translators have opted for ‘vicegerent’ (cf. Ali 1934/1987: 24), which is used in English to refer to ‘a person exercising delegated power on behalf of a sovereign or ruler’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2006: 1963). Others have resorted to ‘viceroy’ (cf. Arberry 1955/1996: 33; Pickthall 1930/1996: 9), which is used in English to refer to ‘a ruler exercising authority in a colony on behalf of a sovereign’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, Soanes and Stevenson, eds. 1998/2006: 1963). A third party has resorted to ‘paraphrasing’: ‘establish upon earth one who shall inherit it’ (Asad 1980/2003: 8). However, neither of these options communicates the sense of succession, which is involved in the use of the Arabic expression ‘khalīfah’. Thus, Abdel-Haleem not only opts for the word ‘successor’ in English, but also provides the target reader with an informative footnote in which he linguistically mediates the sense of succession involved in using the word ‘khalīfah’ in the Qur’ān:

The term *khalīfah* is normally translated as ‘vicegerent’ or ‘deputy’. While this is one meaning of the term, its basic meaning is ‘successor’ – the Qur’ān often talks about generations and individuals who are successors to each other, cf. Q 6: 165, Q 7:129, - or a ‘trustee’ to whom a responsibility is temporarily given, cf. Moses and Aaron, 7: 142 (ibid: 7).

Abdel-Haleem has also played the role of the ‘cultural mediator’. For instance, consider the translation of the expression ‘yu’lūna’ in Qur’ānic verse below:

(lil-ladhīna yu’lūna min nisā’ihim tarabbusu arba ‘ati ashhurin fa’in fā’ū fa’inna allāha ghafūrun raḥīm)

(For those who swear that they will not approach their wives, there shall be a waiting period of four months: if they go back, remember God will be most forgiving and merciful, Q 2: 226) (ibid: 25).

The sentence ‘āla min nisā’ihi’ is used in Arabic to mean ‘ḥalafa lā yadkhulu ʿalayhinna – He [husband] swore not to approach his wife-/wives’ (Ibn Manẓūr 1956, 14:41). As this expression constitutes both a lexical and cultural gap between Arabic and English, Abdel-Haleem adopts two techniques, one of which is linguistic, while the other is cultural. As for language, Abdel-Haleem opts for ‘paraphrasing’ the expression, i.e. ‘yu’lūna – swear they will not approach their wives’ (ibid). Also, seeking to narrow the cultural gap between Arabic and English, Abdel-Haleem provides the target reader with an informative footnote, in which he explains the cultural as well as the legal implications of the use of this expression both before and after Islam:

Before Islam, husbands could make such an oath and suspend the wife indefinitely. In Islam, if they do not go back after four months, divorce becomes effective (ibid).

Moving to the second approach to the notion of mediation in translation, i.e. translation and ideology, a good example of the impact of the translator’s ideology on his/her practice would be Al-Hilali and Khan (1974/2011). For instance, consider how Al-Hilali and Khan treat the expression ‘ihdinā’ in Qur’ānic verse below:

(ihdinā aṣ- ṣirāṭa al-mustaqīm)

(Guide us to the Straight Way, Q 1: 6) Al-Hilali and Khan (1974/2011: 13).

In an explanatory footnote, Al-Hilali and Khan intervene and draw a distinction between two aspects of guidance in Islam: ‘Guidance of Tawfīq’ and ‘Guidance of Irshād’ (ibid). The former ‘is totally from Allāh, i.e. Allāh opens one’s heart to receive the truth (from disbelief to belief in Islamic Monotheism)’, whereas the latter is realized ‘through preaching by Allāh’s Messengers and pious preachers who preach the truth, i.e. Islamic Monotheism’ (ibid) (see also 1.2.2).

Another example to the impact of ideology on translation would be Al-Hilali and Khan’s comment on the Qur’ānic verse below:

(falyawma lā yamliku baʿḍukum libaʿḍin nafʿā wa-lā ḍarrā wa-naqūlu lil-ladhīna ḡalamū dhūqū ʿadhāba an-nāri al-latī kuntum bihā tukadhdhibūn)

(So Today [the Day of Resurrection], none of you [disbelievers] can profit or harm one another. And We [God] shall say to those who did wrong, i.e. worshipped others (like the angels, jinn, prophets, saints, righteous persons) along with Allāh: “Taste the torment of the Fire which you used to deny.” (ibid: 345).

Not only do Al-Hilali and Khan intervene in the text through explaining and illustrating (see above), but, in an additional footnote, they also refer the target reader to Q 9:31 where ‘Almighty Allāh says: “They [Jews and Christians] took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords beside Allāh (by obeying them in things that they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allāh, and (they also took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded [in their Taurāh (Torah) and the Injīl (Gospel) to worship none but one Ilāh (God – Allāh), Lā ilāha illā Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). Glorified is He, (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him).” (ibid).

At this point, a pivotal issue should be raised: does the Qur’ān translator have the right to intervene in the text and, to use Hatim and Mason’s words, ‘feed their own knowledge and beliefs’ into the target text? My view is that before providing an answer to this question, it is important to consider two important factors: (i) the genre and (ii) the degree of mediation. Genre is used to refer to ‘both traditional literary genres such as drama, poetry and prose fiction as well as other well-established and clearly defined types of texts for translation such as multimedia texts and religious texts’ (Williams and Chesterman 2002: 9). As for the genre, my view is that in dealing with religious texts, the translator is advised to take a very cautious approach when deciding to intervene in the text. He/she may provide the target reader with explanatory information when it is felt that this information is crucially important for understanding the meaning involved at the linguistic and-/cultural level. Realizing that there is a blockage in communication at any of these levels, the translator may intervene to explain, clarify, compare and-/contrast. This additional information may also be provided when it addresses the pre-determined purpose of translation (see 5.2). However, he/she should not overburden the target reader with too many and-/irrelevant notes as this may confuse the reader or lead to the decision not to read the additional notes at all. Extensive commentaries

should also be minimised. These should be provided only when they add to the readers' knowledge. Short introductions may also be provided if they are extremely necessary for understanding the text, e.g. contextualizing the text at the cultural level. The structure of the text may briefly be discussed only when this is necessary to realize the text 'coherence'. As for the degree of intervention, my view is that in dealing with religious texts, the translator is advised to be, to use Venuti's description, 'visible' (Venuti 1995/2008). By 'visible' I mean that the translator should be keen on explaining the linguistic/cultural differences between the source and target text/culture only when this is necessary for understanding. Both the source and target culture should be represented and cultural differences should be explained. At this point, I agree with Venuti who argues that 'a translation ought to be read differently from an original composition precisely because it is not an original, because not only a foreign work, but also a foreign culture is involved' (Venuti 2004/ 2013: 115). Thus, both the source and the target culture should be taken into consideration. The target text should both accept and represent the other in translation and, accordingly, the source text sensitivity is retained. Also, the translator should not unnecessarily inject irrelevant and-/additional information which points to his/her ideological beliefs. This obviously contradicts both objectivity and translation ethics.

5.7.2 'Foreignization' and 'Domestication'

The central argument in this section is that 'domestication' and 'foreignization' can be looked upon as an indicator to the translator's ideology (Venuti 1995/2008). In the view of Salama-Carr, many debates in translation have taken the form of 'dichotomies, tensions and cultural differences, or conflicting allegiances' (Salama-Carr 2007: 1). She further agrees with Pym that central to these dichotomies is that 'general conflict between source-focused and target-focused approaches' (Pym 1995: 594). This constant debate between source and target text oriented translation has had its impact on the translator's practice. It has resulted in two different methods of translation: 'foreignization' and 'domestication'.

The conflict between 'foreignization' and 'domestication' has its origin in Schleiermacher, who argues that there are two methods of translation: (i)

'foreignization' and (ii) 'domestication'. Following Schleiermacher (1813/1992), Venuti defines 'domestication' as 'an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home', whereas 'foreignization' is a different method of translation in which linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target text-/culture are recorded, 'sending the reader abroad' (Venuti 1995/2008: 15).

Venuti further reviews the two methods. His view is that 'domestication' may seem to result in a transparent, fluent and easy style translation, when in fact it is not but an illusion. In Venuti's words:

By producing the illusion of transparency, a fluent translation masquerades as a true semantic equivalence when it in fact inscribes the foreign text with a partial interpretation, partial to English language values, reducing if not simply excluding the very differences that translation is called on to convey (ibid: 16).

Thus, Venuti rejects 'domesticating' the target text. Another reason for his rejection is that, in his view, 'domesticating' the target text leads to a 'violent' translation, i.e. the dominance of the target over the source culture (ibid: 16). Alternatively, Venuti argues that 'foreignization' is a 'valuable' method of translation as it 'restrains the ethnocentric vilence' of 'domestication' (ibid: 15-16). In this context, it can be argued that in their treatment of cultural references in the Qur'ān, some Qur'ān translators have resorted to 'foreignizing' the target text, while others have tended to 'domesticate' it. For instance, compare the translation into English of the Qur'ānic expression 'al-ghayb' as treated by Al-Hilali and Khan (1974/2011) and Shakir (1999/2011) in the Qur'ānic verse below:

(al-ladhīna yu'minūna bil-ghaybi wa-yuqīmūna aṣ-ṣalāta wa-mimmā razaqnāhum yunfiqūn)

(Those [believers] who believe in the unseen, keep up the prayer, and give out of what We [God] have provided for them, Q 2: 3).

Al-Hilali and Khan (1974/2011: 15): (Those [believers] who believe in the *ghayb* and perform aṣ- ṣalāh (the prayers), and spend out of what We [God] have provided with

them [i.e. give zakāh (obligatory charity), spend on themselves, their parents, their children, their wives, and also give charity to the poor and also in Allāh's Cause – Jihād];

Footnote (ibid):

Al-ghayb: literally means a thing not seen. But this word includes vast meanings: belief in Allāh, Angels, Holy Books, Allāh's Messengers, Day of Resurrection and Al-Qadar (Divine preordainments). It also includes what Allāh and His Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) informed about the knowledge of the matters of past, present and future, e.g. news about the creation of the heavens and earth, botanical and zoological life, the news about the nations of the past, and about Paradise and Hell.

Shakir (1999/2011: (Those [believers] who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We [God] have given them).

On the one hand, Al-Hilali and Khan's translation above is a typical example of 'foreignizing' the Qur'ānic expression. First, they have opted for transliterating the expression 'al-ghayb' though there is a dynamic equivalent for the expression in English, i.e. the unseen. This clearly indicates the translators' source-text orientation. In addition, in an explanatory footnote, Al-Hilali and Khan makes a comparison between 'al-ghayb – the unseen' in Arabic and English. It is clear that the goal at this point is to record the cultural differences involved in understanding the expression in both languages. It is argued that the expression 'al-ghayb' in Arabic expands to communicate a wide range of implications (see the footnote above). In short, in their explanation of the cultural implications involved in using 'al-ghayb' in the Qur'ān, Al-Hilali and Khan 'moves the reader toward the source culture' (Schleiermacher 1813/1992: 42). Thus, it can safely be argued that adopting 'foreignization' in translation indicates that the translator is ideologically oriented toward the source culture.

On the other hand, Shakir's translation above is a typical example of 'domesticating' the target text. Shakir merely opts for the functional equivalent of the expression 'al-ghayb' in the Qur'ān, i.e. the unseen. He does not record any cultural difference between the source and target expression. In short, Shakir 'moves the author toward the reader' (ibid). Therefore, it can safely be argued that adopting

'domestication' in translation indicates that the translator is ideologically oriented toward the target culture.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the viability of the 'cultural' and 'functional' approaches to translation studies in the Arabic-English translation of culture-bound expressions in the Qur'ān has been examined. The research has shown that the Qur'ān is abundant in culture-sensitive expressions, which require a translation of both language and culture of the Qur'ān. In this context, the translator of the Qur'ān is required to perform two tasks: (i) to be aware of the cultural implications involved in the translation of these cultural references, and (ii) to 'mediate' between the source and target culture in the process of translation. This necessarily involves providing the target reader with explanatory information which helps the target reader to realize the cultural significance of these expressions in the source culture. Therefore, approaches to the notion of mediation in translation have been investigated. At this point, the research has shown that among the central factors which affect the notion of mediation in translation are (i) the purpose/function of translation and (ii) the impact of the translator's ideology on his/her performance. The research has also argued that 'foreignization' and 'domestication' can be looked upon as indicators to the translator's ideology. Having analyzed a large number of culture-sensitive expressions in the Qur'ān, it can safely be argued that a key function of Qur'ān translation is to attempt to narrow the gap between the source and target culture. This function can be described as the cultural function in Qur'ān translation.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Review of the Study

Due to its inter-disciplinary nature, the current research is accommodated to fill the needs of a wide scope of audiences. First, it is designed to address the needs of translators and researchers in the field of translation studies, with particular emphasis on the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. In this sense, the current study will be of interest to those engaged in investigating the cultural factors involved in translating the meanings of the Qur'ān. Accordingly, the present research should also be of interest to researchers as well as readers in the area of cultural and Qur'ānic studies. In addition, the current research should also address the needs of researchers in the field of lexical semantics through its analysis of polysemy.

In this context, the present project has focused on the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. The ultimate goal has been to propose a contextual view of meaning in which both the cultural and the functional dimensions involved in the use of both issues in Qur'ānic translation are considered. Three fields of knowledge have been utilized: lexical semantics, translation studies and cultural studies. Three central theories have been adopted: (i) theories of context in translation, anthropology and linguistics (see 2.5), (ii) approaches to culture and function in translation (see 5.2) and (iii) 'thick translation' (see 2.6.3).

Aspects of interrelatedness between polysemy and culture-specific expressions have also been investigated (see 1.4). It has been argued that the treatment of both issues requires expanding the scope of analysis to include both the linguistic and the cultural aspect. For instance, the polysemous expression (*al-jihād- strife/ fight*) was analyzed with one central goal in mind: revealing the semantic aspects involved in the translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 1.2.2.2). Similarly, the polysemous expression

(at-taqwā – Being mindful of God) was examined to argue for the cultural aspects involved in the translation into English of some polysemous expressions in the Qur’ān (see 1.2.2.2). Likewise, the Qur’ānic expression (aḏ-ḏihār – [in the pre-Islamic era] saying to the wife, ‘you are to me like the back of my mother’) was investigated as an example of the culturally-rooted implications involved in the translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qur’ān (see 1.3). In short, both issues of polysemy and culture-specific expressions share a similar orientation: the tendency to examine the role of culture in translation.

The present research has been located within two ‘maps’ of translation studies: Holmes’s (1988) and Van Doorslaer’s (2007) (see 2.2.2; 2.3). In the light of these two maps, the current investigation falls within the area of theoretical translation studies, with particular emphasis on (i) theories of context and culture and (ii) approaches to function in translation. The notion of polysemy has also been located within the ‘map’ of lexical semantic relations (see 3.2). This ‘network’ of lexical relations includes synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, meronymy, polysemy and homonymy. Of these relations, ‘near-synonymy’, or in the words of Al-Dūrri ‘al-alfāḏ al-mutaqāribah’, seems to be the most problematic in Qur’ān translation (Al-Dūrri 2006: 18) (see 3.2). In addition, culture-specific expressions in the Qur’ān have been located within Hall and Trager’s ‘tripartite’ theory of culture, with particular emphasis on the ‘technical’ level of culture (see 5.4).

Justifications to adopting theories of translation in general and theories of context and function in particular have also been provided (see 2.4). In this regard, a distinction is made between the analyst and the translator. The former adopts theories to analyse the source text and the translations. The findings are then provided to the translators to assist-/guide them and to be applied in the future. In general, adopting translation theories minimizes the risk and provides the analyst with the confidence which is built on concrete and viable knowledge. It also paves the way both to identify the research problem and to suggest methods of dealing with it. Adopting translation theories also adds to the development of knowledge in the field across different times. In particular, theories of context and culture have not previously been adopted in the translation of polysemy in the Qur’ān. The notion of context has been used to include

both the linguistic and the cultural context. In addition, because the 'dynamic equivalence' has not yet been embraced in the treatment of the specific senses involved in the use of polysemy in Qur'ān translation, Nida's 'contextual consistency' is also suggested (see 2.6).

Likewise, approaches to culture and function have not yet been embraced in the treatment of culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation. Thus, tendencies toward the examination of the roles of culture and function in translation as envisaged by both translation theorists and sociologists have also been investigated (see 5.2; 5.4). In this respect, two methods of communicating cultural differences between Arabic and English, with particular emphasis on culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation are suggested. These are: 'explicitation' and 'explanatory information' (see 5.3). The ultimate goal at this stage has been both to preserve the cultural sensitivity of Qur'ānic Arabic and to view the translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān not as a process of cultural dominance, but as a process of cultural interaction.

A comparative as well as contrastive study between polysemy in Arabic and English from a linguistic and a cultural perspective has also been carried out (see 3.5). This comparison has been made with three goals in mind: (i) to introduce the notion of polysemy in Arabic and English, (ii) to argue for the linguistic and cultural differences involved in the use of polysemy in Arabic and English and, accordingly and (iii) to alert the future translators of the Qur'ān that the specific senses involved in the use of polysemy in Qur'ān translation should be revealed to the target reader who both uses a different language and experiences a distinct cultural reality.

6.2 Aspects of Originality in the Current Research

The present research contributes to the field of Qur'ān translation in three ways:

(a) It has examined both issues of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān from a translation perspective. Though a lot of research has been conducted with the goal of obtaining insights into the specific senses involved in using polysemous expressions in both Arabic and English, the issue of polysemy in Qur'ān translation has not yet been approached (see 3.3.1; 3.4.1). Previous Qur'ān translators have insisted on

generalising the polysemous expressions in all contexts, an orientation which is described by Nida and Taber as 'verbal consistency' (Nida and Taber 1969/1982:15). The result is that the specific senses involved in using polysemous expressions in the Qur'ān in their linguistic as well as cultural contexts have not yet been revealed to the target reader. In other words, to use Nida and Taber's expression, previous Qur'ān translations lack 'contextual consistency' (ibid). Similarly, little research has been conducted on the cultural dimension involved in using culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān (cf. Abdul-Raof 2004: 91-106; Abdul-Raof 2005: 162-172). The cultural implications involved in the translation into English of many cultural expressions in the Qur'ān have not yet been revealed to the audience in a different cultural reality;

(b) As for polysemy in Qur'ān translation as a problematic issue, the present research has provided the future translators of the Qur'ān with tools of translation at both levels of language and culture. At the linguistic level, seven tools have been suggested: collocational relations (see 4.5.1), oppositeness (see 4.5.1), overall meaning (see 4.5.2), 'anaphoric signals' (see 4.5.2), 'cataphoric signals' (see 4.5.3), grammatical aspects (see 4.5.4) and metaphoric interpretation (see 4.5.5). At the cultural level, two tools have been proposed: 'context of situation' (see 4.7.1) and 'context of culture' (see 4.7.2).

(c) Seeking to examine the issue of culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation from a cultural perspective, the present research has suggested two tools of analysis: 'context of situation' and 'context of culture'. Various examples of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān have culturally been contextualised (see 5.6). Two methods of communicating the cultural differences between Arabic and English have been proposed in what may be described as a mediation-oriented approach to translating the culture of the Qur'ān: 'explicitation' and additional information. These multi-faceted tools and methods contribute to the area of Qur'ān translation in three distinct ways:

(1) These tools enhance the role of language and culture in interpreting and translating meanings of the Qur'ān. Thus, the scope of analysis has expanded to include not only commentaries on, but also language and culture of the Qur'ān. This is crucial in dealing with the issue of differences in interpreting the Qur'ān, which arises not only between

the different sects within Islam, e.g. Sunni, ṣūfī and -/ -Shīʿī, but also within each sect separately (see 2.7). In the words of Wilss:

Meaning depends on linguistic, extralinguistic, and pragmatic (social) knowledge. Pragmatic knowledge, in turn, is a conglomeration of foreground, background, and emergent (trans-situational) knowledge (Wilss 1996: 81).

Thus, interpreting the Qurʾānic meaning requires moving beyond commentaries on the Qurʾān and viewing language and culture of the Qurʾān as one identity;

(2) As for polysemy in Qurʾān translation as a problematic issue, the suggested tools are crucial in decoding the specific senses involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qurʾān (see 1.2.2);

(3) As for culture-specific expressions in Qurʾān translation, the suggested tools have proved to be useful in examining the cultural dimensions involved in the Arabic-English translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qurʾān (see 5.6).

6.3 Overview of Significant Findings and Implications

Findings of the present research can be introduced from four perspectives:

- (1) The nature of translation;
- (2) The characteristics of the translator;
- (3) Methods and strategies of communicating cultural differences between Arabic and English;
- (4) Qurʾānic polysemy and its implications for translators.

6.3.1 The Nature of Qurʾān Translation

The term ‘translation’ is commonly defined as ‘a text in one language that represents or stands for a text in another language’ (Palumbo 2009: 122). Adding to what Palumbo claims, the research has shown that in the translation into English of both polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qurʾān, translation is not only a linguistic practice, but it is a cultural act as well. The means to perform this dual role is to adopt a contextual view of translation, in which both language and culture are taken into consideration (see

Chapter Two; see also 3.3.1). This tendency to examine the cultural dimension involved in the translation into English of the Qur'ān can be described as a culture-oriented approach to Qur'ān translation.

This cultural orientation should be looked upon as a topic of crucial importance. In the view of Wilss, 'language is to a large extent embedded in culture and vice versa; language is as much a cultural product as culture is a linguistic product' (Wilss 1996: 85). Similarly, narrowing his discussion to the treatment of the cultural aspects in Qur'ān translation, Abdul-Raof acknowledges the cultural perspective which is crucial for a better understanding of meanings of the Qur'ān:

The interrelation between culture and language makes me feel that the occurrence of special linguistic patterns and rhetorical tools in Qur'ānic discourse is also culture-bound (Abdul-Raof 2005: 162).

How far is the Arabic-English translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān a problematic issue? The research has shown that the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān is a challenging issue because Qur'ānic polysemous expressions expand to communicate various layers of meaning at both levels of language and culture. At the level of language, six aspects of meaning have been revealed: the semantic (see 4.2.1), the pragmatic (see 4.2.1), the metaphoric (see 4.3.1), the collocated (see 4.3.2), the emotive (see 4.3.3) and the overall meaning (see 4.3.4). At the level of culture, two layers of meaning have been detected: the situational (see 4.3.2) and the cultural meaning (see 4.3.5).

How far does the Arabic-English translation of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān constitute both a lexical and a cultural challenge? The research has revealed that the translation into English of culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān is a problematic task because of the following reasons:

- (a) These expressions are closely associated to a specific culture;
- (b) They also communicate a meaning which is totally unknown in the target culture;
- (c) These expressions are, therefore, not lexicalized in the target language;

(d) To use Baker's phrase, culture-specific expressions are 'semantically complex', i.e. these words 'express a more complex set of meanings than a whole sentence' (Baker 1992/2011:19) (see 5.6)

It has also been shown that culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān can be categorised into ten forms of the Arab culture: theology, social culture, behaviour, Qur'ān legal terms, material culture, nature, culture-specific times, culture-specific figures, culture-specific linguistic behaviour and culture-specific emotive overtones (see 5.5).

6.3.2 The Characteristics of the Qur'ān Translator

The current research has also shown that in his/her treatment of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān, it is the responsibility of the Qur'ān translator to mediate not only between the source and target language, but also between the source and target culture (see 5.7). To carry out this task, the Qur'ān translator is required to play the role of the cultural mediator between Arabic and English (see 5.2). This issue is of crucial importance for two reasons.

The first reason why the Qur'ān translator should act as a cultural mediator between the source and target culture lies in the fact that 'the Qur'ān was revealed in an Arab context of culture that is entirely alien to a target language audience outside the Arab peninsula' (Abdul-Raof 2005: 162). Accordingly, the Qur'ān translator is required to narrow this cultural gap between the source and target culture. This both results in a better understanding of the cultural implications involved and enhances the view of translation as a means of cultural interaction.

Another reason for the argument that it is necessary for the Qur'ān translator to play the role of the cultural mediator is that, argues McAuliffe, non-Muslim readers seem to approach the Qur'ān for three different reasons (McAuliffe 2006:7):

- (a) For some, 'the purpose has been apologetics and polemics' (ibid). In other words, these approach the Qur'ān to argue against and to defend their Christian beliefs;

- (b) The second group approaches the Qur'ān 'with an attitude of cultural curiosity' (ibid). They are interested in the literary status, the history and culture of the Qur'ān;
- (c) The third group approaches the Qur'ān 'for religious reasons, i.e. seeking spiritual enlightenment and personal transformation' (ibid).

In this context, the present research addresses the needs of the second group mentioned above. Adopting a contextual view of meaning in Qur'ān translation helps the target reader not only to understand the language of the Qur'ān, but also to appreciate the cultural dimension embedded in the use of this language. In short, each translation is carried out in a different context with different goals which have a key influence on the target text. Due to the cultural sensitivity of the Qur'ān, the Qur'ān translator has a delicate task to mediate between the source and target culture since translation choices and textual interpretations affect the reception of the text (see 5.6).

6.3.3 Methods and strategies of communicating cultural differences between Arabic and English

A third issue which has been raised in the course of the present research is the methods and strategies which can be followed to narrow the linguistic and cultural gap between Arabic and English in the translation into English of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. The term 'method' is used to refer to the translation methodology. In the view of Wilss, in terms of translation methodology, translation can be viewed as a tripartite operation: 'source text decoding phase, a transfer phase and a target text encoding phase' (Wilss 1996: 155). The term 'strategy' is used to refer to 'the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it' (Venuti 1998/2008: 240). In this sense, the term 'strategy' is used in translation in a more general sense.

How effective is the contextual view of meaning in resolving the lexical as well as cultural ambiguity involved in the Arabic-English translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān? One of the central goals in the present research has been to provide the future

translators of the Qur'ān with the methods which assist in decoding the specific senses involved in the use of polysemy at both levels of language and culture. In this regard, the present research has acknowledged the value of theories of context in translation and related disciplines (see 2.5), 'contextual consistency' (Nida and Taber 1969/1982: 15) (see 2.6.2) and 'thick translation' (Appiah 2000; Hermans 2003) (see 2.6.3). Adopting a contextual view of meaning has proved to be crucial in decoding the specific senses involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 4.3).

How effective are 'context of situation' and 'context of culture' in narrowing the cultural gap involved in translating culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān? The current research has shown that the cultural and functional approaches to translation are central to investigating the cultural implications involved in the use of these expressions to the target reader in a different cultural reality (see 5.2; 5.6). In particular, three methods have proved to be useful: 'explicitation' (see 5.3.1), additional information (see 5.3.2) and what might be described as 'purposeful mediation' (see 5.7.1). In addition, a distinction has been made between two strategies of translating culture: 'domestication' and 'foreignisation'. In this context, it has been argued that these strategies are one of the indicators of the translator's ideology (see 5.7.2).

6.3.4 A Suggested Combined Model of Qur'ānic Polysemy and its Implications for the Translators.

This section aims to present a summary of the combined model of Qur'ānic polysemy and its implications for future translators of the Qur'ān. Based on a multi-faceted approach: Nida and Taber (1969/1982, see 2.6.2), Halliday and Hasan (1976), Newmark (1981/1988), Appiah (2000) and Hermans (2003) (see 2.6.3), Ullmann (1962) and Goddard (1998), a contextual approach to the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān is suggested. This contextual view expands to cover both the semantic and the cultural dimension in the treatment of polysemy in the Qur'ān. At the semantic level, the following tools are suggested:

(a) 'Anaphoric Signals': Halliday and Hasan argue that 'cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the

interpretation of it' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 8). This is true and can be applied to the treatment of polysemy in the Qur'ān. One of the 'signals' that helps to interpret the specific sense involved in the use of polysemy in the Qur'ān are 'the anaphoric signals'. These signals are defined by Newmark as the lexical unit or units which precede the targeted source text expression (Newmark 1981/1988: 176) (see 4.5.2);

(b) 'Cataphoric Signals': In addition to the 'anaphoric signals', 'cataphoric' ones are crucial in decoding the specific sense involved in the use of polysemy. These are described by Newmark as the lexical unit or units which follow the targeted source text expression (ibid) (see 4.5.3);

(c) 'Opposition': Newmark also argues that using opposites (antonyms) helps the translator decode the implied sense (ibid). This tool has proved to be useful in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 4.5.1);

(d) 'General Meaning': Al-Ghazali argues that the repetition of one central theme throughout the Qur'ānic chapter significantly contributes to 'the unity of the subject matter of each chapter, even if many different themes are involved' (Al-Ghazali 1998: 1). This overall analysis can be applied to the translation of polysemy in the Qur'ān (see 4.3.4; 4.5.2).

(e) 'Grammatical Aspects': Halliday and Hasan argue that 'cohesion is expressed partly through the grammar and partly through the vocabulary' (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 5). Similarly, narrowing his discussion to the issue of polysemy, Goddard argues that one of the criteria which help to distinguish polysemy from generality is the appearance of 'different grammatical properties' associated with the proposed different meaning'. To illustrate his view, he gives the following examples:

(1) The children skipped happily down the street. (moved their feet)

(2) We skipped the first chapter. (missed/ left)

Goddard argues that the two senses are different because the verb in the first sentence is intransitive, whereas it is transitive in the second sentence. This tool has

proved to be significant in the translation of some polysemous expressions in the Qur'ān (see 4.5.4).

(f) 'Collocational relations' (see 4.5.1): Ullmann argues that one of the reasons why the polysemous expression extends in its linguistic context to communicate various shades of meaning is the 'collocational relations' taking place between the polysemous expression and an accompanying word (Ullmann 1962: 159) (see 3.2). For instance, Ullmann explores the distinct shades of meaning attached to the use of the polysemous term 'handsome' in the below contexts (ibid: 160):

(1) Collocated with Persons:

- (i) Apt, skilled, clever.
- (ii) Proper, fitting, decent.
- (iii) Beautiful with dignity.

(2) Collocated with Concretes:

- (i) Easy to handle.
- (ii) Of fair size.
- (iii) Beautiful with dignity.
- (iv) Proper, fitting (of dress).

(3) Collocated with Actions, speech:

- (i) Appropriate, apt, clever.

(4) Collocated with Conduct:

- (i) Fitting, seemly.
- (ii) Gallant, brave.
- (iii) Generous, magnanimous.

(5) Collocated with Sizes, sums:

(i) Fair, moderately large.

(ii) Ample, liberal, munificent.

It is clear that the specific sense involved in the use of 'handsome' in the above linguistic contexts mainly depends on examining the noun with which 'handsome' collocates. This type of analysis can be applied to the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān. That is to say, one of the linguistic tools by which adjectival polysemy in the Qur'ān is decoded is to examine the noun with which this polysemous expression collocates in different linguistic contexts (see 3.3.2.3; 4.3.2; 4.5.1).

At the level of culture, the model proposed in the current study substantially emphasizes the correlation between language and culture. In this context, two sub-levels are examined: the 'situational' and the 'cultural' (see 2.5.2; 2.5.3; 2.5.4). In this context, some tools of analysis are suggested:

(a) The Micro-level: 'Context of Situation': This involves examining the text in the light of its immediate living environment. In the view of Halliday and Hasan, both the text and its immediate environment are correlated 'through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and the functional organization of language on the other' (Halliday and Hasan, 1989: 11) (see 2.5.3).

(b) The Macro-level: 'Context of Culture' (see 2.5.4): Culture is used in the present research in its anthropological sense. This is explained by Goodenough as follows:

As I see it, a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end-product of learning: 'knowledge', in a more general, if relative, sense of the term. (Goodenough 1964: 36).

Examining the viability of ‘the context of situation’ and ‘the context of culture’ in Qur’ānic translation requires looking in more detail at two essential dimensions:

(a) ‘asbāb an-nuzūl – occasions of revelation’: This notion is central to our analysis of culture-specific expressions in the Qur’ān. This is justified by the fact that the social as well as historical context of the revelation of the Qur’ān was highly influenced by the reports of ‘asbāb al-nuzūl’ – occasions of revelation (Saeed 1998/2008:2). Also, according to Al-Sayūṭī (d. 911 / 1490), various advantages of knowing ‘asbāb an-nuzūl’ – occasions of revelation - can be recognized (Al-Sayūṭī 1999, 1: 120-121):

(1) ‘ma^ʿrifat wajh al-ḥikmah ^ʿalā tashrī^ʿ al-ḥukm’ - realizing the wisdom beyond legislation of the judgement;

(2) ‘takhṣīṣ al-ḥukm bihi ^ʿinda man yarā anna al-^ʿibrata bi-khuṣūṣ as-sabab’ - specifying the legal judgement for those [interpreters] who believe that the evidence lies in the specificity of the occasion’;

(3) ‘anna al-lafza qad yakūnu ^ʿāmma wa-yaqūmu ad-dalīlu ^ʿalā takhṣīṣihi’ - the Qur’ānic expression may be general and an evidence for its specificity is established’;

(4) ‘al-wuqūfu ^ʿalā al-ma^ʿnā wa-‘izālat al-ishkā’ – determining the meaning and resolving the ambiguity’;

(5) ‘bayān sabab an-nuzūl ṭarīq qawī fī fihm ma^ʿānī al-qur’ān – knowing occasions of revelation is a substantial source towards a better understanding of meanings of the Qur’ān.

(b) The Qur’ān in its Cultural Context: In the view of Abu Zayd, the Qur’ānic meaning cannot be isolated from the surrounding culture in which the Qur’ān was revealed (Abu Zayd 2008: 24). He offers his justification: ‘language is the most important tool for realizing and expressing the surrounding reality’ (ibid). Narrowing this argument to the Qur’ānic text, Abu Zayd argues that ‘in its peculiar context, both linguistically and culturally, the Qur’ānic expression communicates a specific sense’

(ibid: 207). Thus, in spite of the generality of the Qur'ānic expression, examining the linguistic and cultural context is the primary tool in determining its specific sense. Abu Zayd offers Muḥammad's interpretation of the Qur'ānic expression *aḏ-ḏulm* – injustice – as an example. The general meaning of (*aḏ-ḏulm*) in the Qur'ān is injustice. However, in interpreting the hidden meaning of (*aḏ-ḏulm*) in (*alladhīna āmanū wa-lam yalbisū ṭimānahum bi-ḏulm* - it is those who have faith, and do not mix their faith with idolatry, Q, 6: 82), Muḥammad interprets the word (*aḏ-ḏulm*) in this context as (*ash-shirk* - idolatry). To resolve this ambiguity, Muḥammad adopts an inter-textual analysis and asks his companions: 'Did you not perceive the Qur'ānic verse (*inna ash-shirka laḏulmun ʿaẓīm* - attributing partners to God is a terrible wrong, Q 31: 14) (ibid: 198). Decoding the specific sense involved in the translation into English of polysemy in the Qur'ān requires a careful examination of both aspects of language and culture in the Qur'ān.

6.4 Topics for Future Research

The present research opens up potential for further research in Qur'ān translation, Ḥadīth translation – Prophetic sayings translation, lexical semantics and Arabic<>English contrastive linguistics, with particular emphasis on the interrelatedness between language and culture. The research questions below are suggested as topics for further research:

(a) Have previous Qur'ān translators managed to communicate the minor semantic differences involved in the use of 'near-synonymy', or what is described by Al-Dūrrī as 'al-alfāẓ al-mutaqāribah – words which are close in meaning' in the Qur'ān, e.g. 'al-ḥamd – praise' and 'ash-shuk – thanking', 'al-qalb – heart' and 'al-fu'ād – heart', etc. (Al-Dūrrī 2006: 18) (see 1.2.2; 3.2)?

(b) To what extent have previous Qur'ān translators succeeded in communicating the cultural differences between Arabic and English in the use of culture-familiar expressions in the Qur'ān, e.g. 'aḥ- ṣawm – fasting', 'aḥ-ṣalāh – prayers', 'az-zakāh – obligatory charity', etc. (see 1.3)?

(c) To what extent have previous Qur'ān translations succeeded in communicating the 'inter-textual' meaning involved in connecting some Qur'ānic verses throughout the Qur'ānic text? In other words, have previous Qur'ān translators utilized the exegetic ruling that different parts of the Qur'ān explain each other in communicating the notion of 'coherence' in the Qur'ān to the target reader (see 5.3.1; 5.6.3)?

(d) What is the impact of the semantic development in understanding the Qur'ānic expression across different periods of time on the modern translator's performance? Should the Qur'ān translator communicate this semantic change to the target reader (see 3.3.3.4)?

(e) To what extent does the metaphoric interpretation affect the Qur'ān translator's performance? Should the Qur'ān translator opt for the 'real' or the 'metaphoric' meaning? What is the suggested method in each (see 4.3.1)?

(f) Does the Qur'ān translator's ideology have an impact on his/her performance? Have some previous Qur'ān translators interfered in the translation for reasons relevant to their ideology? If yes, how is this intervention evaluated and what should be done to avoid this in future Qur'ān translations?

(g) Does the Qur'ān translator's gender have an impact on his/her practice? If yes, to what extent is the Qur'ān translation performed by a man different from that which is carried out by a woman?

(h) Should the Qur'ān translator explicitate what can implicitly be understood? Should he/she translate or over-translate meanings of the Qur'ān? Why?

(i) The issue of the translation into English of culture-specific expressions can be extended to the area of Ḥadīth translation – Prophetic sayings translation. In this context, a suggested research question is: to what extent have Ḥadīth translators succeeded in communicating the socio-cultural aspects embedded in the use of culture-specific expressions in Ḥadīth translation - Prophetic sayings translation?

It is hoped that these research questions will open up new horizons of academic research in the areas of culturally-oriented Qur'ān translation, Ḥadīth translation, lexical semantics and Arabic<>English contrastive linguistics.

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