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Acknowledgments

Abstract

Mohammed Al Barakati

The present research investigates how euphemistic expressions in the Qurʾān are translated into English. The study approaches the topic from a functional point of view framing it mainly within Nord's version of Skopos theory together with the equivalence and response-oriented theories of Nida and Newmark.

This study has textually and contextually analysed 29 Qurʾān verses which included some 43 sex-related expressions. Then, three contemporary translations have been textually analysed and the translation procedures chosen for the rendering of these euphemistic expressions were defined. The analysis was also aided by questionnaire results which gauged target reader recognition of the euphemistic expressions in the translations. Two translators have also contributed to this study have been#inteviewed about their translating processes, the strategies they have adopted and the translation aids they used to fulfil the mission of translation.

The analysis has revealed some interesting findings. It has been found that Qurʾān translations are very much source-oriented and translators tend not to deviate much from the source language forms and structures. It was also found that translators' faithfulness has led to a successful rendering of most of the euphemistic expressions analysed in the study.

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Abbreviations

SL	Source Language
TL	Target Language
ST	Source Text
TT	Target Text
SLT	Source Language Text
TLT	Target Language Text
E	Euphemistic
NE	Non-euphemistic
TQA	Translation Quality Assessment
QTQA	Qur'ān Translation Quality Assessment

Transliteration Symbols

Arabic Transliteration System

The following table explains the transliteration system used for Arabic consonants and vowels:

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
ا	a	ض	ḍ
ء	'	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	'
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	ﻫ	h
س	s	و	w
ش	sh	ي	y
ص	ṣ		

Arabic short-long vowels and case endings:

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliterat
ا	ā	ـَ	a	ـً	-an
ـُو	ū	ـُ	u	ـٌ	-un
ـِي	ī	ـِ	i	ـٍ	-in

CHAPTER 1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Qurʾānic discourse is a unique type of text. It is believed by Muslims that its peculiarity stems from its divine eloquence, having been revealed from God as a challenge to the Arab polytheists. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Qurʾān's idiosyncratic blend of literary, rhetorical and grammatical aspects make the process of translating it immensely challenging. However, together with the linguistic, stylistic and semantic richness found in Qurʾānic discourse, this text has another distinctive feature. For the Qurʾān never elaborates explicitly on what are considerd to be distasteful themes such as sexual matters and body effluvia, but rather employs a number of linguistic tools such as kināyah and taʿrīḍ which fulfil euphemistic functions. These are very culture- and language-specific, and their transfer to English inevitably poses a special difficulty for translators.

One special aspect relating to the translation of the Qurʾān is that this process initially involves interpretation of its meaning aided by widely accepted Tafsīr books (which explain the meaning of the Qurʾān); then at a second stage the translator's understanding of this meaning is worded into what is globally known as the Qurʾān translation (Pickthall 1963: 60; Ali 1975; Abdel Haleem 2005). Unless there are already established equivalent terms in the target language, the translator's space of agency plays an important role in conveying this meaning and with certain euphemistic function in some cases this may not be possible.

Due to the fact that every language has different styles and norms, problems can arise from these differences between source language (SL thence forth) and target language (TL thence forth). One of these aspects that poses difficulties is euphemism, a culture-specific feature which has a non-literal meaning. Since Arabic and English belong to two different language families, it is more likely to be problematic and difficult to accurately translate euphemistic expressions from the former into the latter. A further feature which makes euphemism translation problematic is the gradual change in

meaning over time. This change- known as euphemism treadmill- would be more likely to make euphemisms go unnoticed by readers.

The originality of this work comes from the fact that there is no academic research that has thoroughly tackled the notion of 'Translating Sex-related Qur'ānic Euphemism' in such a scope. It may have been touched upon in linguistic studies but without any in-depth discussion or adequate coverage. The use of euphemism in Arabic, with special reference to religious contexts, is highly important to consider when attempting its translation into any other language. Failure to translate euphemism in the Qur'ān, for instance, leads at the very least to distortion of the intended meaning, removing connotations from the words, or adding irrelevant ones.

This thesis will assess the extent to which the concept of euphemism differs in Arabic and English. Since Arabic religious genre is rich in euphemistic expressions, the study will focus only on the euphemistic expressions in a selected number of chapters of the Qur'ān. A critical examination of three reputable translations of the Qur'ān will include an analysis of the methodology which has been adopted in each case when translating euphemism. At a later stage, the study will recommend a framework of techniques and strategies proven to provide an adequate euphemistic translation. The study will draw on a selection of authentic *Tafsīr* books which will be used to help the researcher select appropriately from a wide variety of meanings. However, since this study is a linguistic one, preference will be given to those *Tafsīr* books which have approached the Qur'ānic text linguistically and, more precisely, rhetorically.

The significance of this study arises from the lack of research which has been carried out on this aspect of Arabic and more specifically the Qur'ān. It is also important as it will try to offer solutions and suggest techniques which can be applied to those potential problems created by the translation of euphemism.

1.2 Aims of the Study

The principal aim of this study is to explore how euphemisms can be translated from Qur'ānic Arabic into English and to categorize and examine

the choices made by translators and the procedures and strategies which they employed. It also aims to define the concept of euphemizing in both languages and to compare how euphemism is employed in Arabic and English in terms of its functions and the reasons for its use.

It will also assess how successful the selected translations were in rendering into English the euphemistic function found in the original Arabic. Moreover, in order to further explore the findings, interviews will be conducted with translators to uncover the translation strategies which had consciously guided their translation decisions. Furthermore, in the course of this analysis, mistranslations and misfits will be identified and will be subjected to more focused examination. Based on these findings, the researcher will make recommendations regarding techniques which could be used to help improve the accuracy of euphemism translation.

1.3 Rationale

My initial interest in this topic and subsequently this study was triggered by a verse that I came across whilst I was reciting the Qur'ān:

- مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ

انظُرْ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ (Q.05:75)

Saheeh Translation: "The Messiah, son of Mary, was not but a Messenger; [other] messengers have passed on before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth. **They both used to eat food**. Look how We make clear to them the signs; then look how they are deluded."

The underlined part in bold was the part which stirred my curiosity. The intended meaning according to most *Tafsīr* books was that since Jesus and his mother ate food, they consequently had to defecate like other humans do, thus stressing his non-divine status. An English reader who has read only the translation will not be able to recognise the intended meaning with such a literal translation. This led me to question whether this Qur'ānic euphemistic style has been translated correctly in past translations or not.

1.4 Research Questions

This study looks at euphemism as the novel use of language made for a pragmatic purpose (Warren 1992). The theories believed to fulfil the goals of this study are those which approach translation from communicative, pragmatic and functional points of view. This study approaches Qur'ān translation from a functional perspective. Yet, it also employs a response-oriented tool to gauge the TL readers' response with regards to the euphemistic functions in the translations being analysed. The functional approach has been chosen for the following reasons:

- Given that the Qur'ān employs various linguistic tools (i.e. syntactic, semantic, stylistic...etc), these do fulfill certain functions and readers are able to recognise these functions.

- The functionalist approach gives the translator freedom to choose which strategies and techniques would work better for the fulfillment of these functions in the translation (Gentzler 2001: 71).

- This approach is supported by a wide spectrum of functional theories from which researchers can adopt an eclectic set to apply to their own case study.

- Functional theories as compared to response-oriented theories give the translator both freedom and responsibility in creating the translation (Honig 1997; Gentzler 2001).

- Reader recognition of the euphemistic function can be used as a criterion for assessing the effectiveness of the translation.

Main Research Questions include:

1. To what extent does the concept of euphemism differ in Arabic and English?

2. What strategies have translators of the Qur'ān adopted for translating euphemism?

3. What are the translational priorities for Qur'ān translators? In other words, what do these translators seek to retain in their translations? Is it meaning, style, content or all of these aspects?

4. Do translators tend to produce target or source language translations?

5. To what extent are the respondents satisfied with the English translation of sex-related euphemisms in the Qur'ān?

6. What are the main factors which could affect a functional rendering of Qur'ānic meaning?

Functions of the source text (ST thence forth) are seen as important components of the parcel of meaning. Therefore, they must be equivalently presented. Thus, it is assumed that where there is consensus on the euphemistic nature of a Qur'ānic structure, the translator should strive to come up with an equivalent that provokes the same euphemistic effect in the mind of the reader.

1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1 Scope of the Study

This study attempts to explore the theory of the translation of euphemism in the Qur'ān; but due to the available time frame the SL data will be collected from Chapters 1-19, yet it will be restricted to the euphemisms concerned with marital affairs and sexual relations. One of the reasons behind choosing this theme in particular is that this area seems to be euphemized in both Arabic and English. In addition, the research data to be collected has been confined to just three published Qur'ān translations from the massive corpus which exists. The criterion for this choice of translations is that they were the work of translators from different personal and professional backgrounds, and, most importantly, they have different mother tongues. Moreover, their translations are widely used in the Islamic world and particularly in the United Kingdom.

The translations used were:

- *The Qur'ān*, by Umm Muhammed (Saheeh-International 1997)

- *The Qur'ān, a New Translation*, by M.A.S. Abdel-Haleem (Abdel Haleem 2005)

- *The Noble Qur'ān: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English* by Hajj Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley (Bewley and Bewley 2005)

1.5.2 **Criteria**

The study will define euphemism in both Arabic and English, the reasons for its formation in both languages, and the linguistic and rhetorical patterns which have been adopted for its formation and translation. It examines the topic from a linguistic, pragmatic and socio-cultural perspective. The categorization of a particular expression as a euphemistic usage will be made by undertaking a qualitative analysis which traces its definitions in classical Arabic dictionaries and considers linguistic exegetical opinions. The latter, in particular, approach the language of the Qur'ān from a linguistic and rhetorical perspective. The techniques and strategies employed in translating euphemism will be analysed, on the assumption that translators have sought to provide functional equivalence i.e. one which deals with both meaning and function of the utterance.

In this study, one of the main aims is to assess how successful the selected translations were in rendering the euphemistic effect from Arabic to English. The target text (TT thence forth) will be also examined and evaluated in terms of whether the euphemistic expressions have been successfully rendered according to both English dictionaries and reader response towards the translations. Where no reference is given for the translation provided, this is my own translation.

1.5.3 **Research Phases**

1.5.3.1 Phase One

Due to the nature of euphemism as doublespeak, the study will first locate the SL structures which can potentially be classified as euphemisms. This will be done by firstly consulting linguistic sources such as traditional exegetical books which employ a linguistic methodology in their interpretation of the Qur'ānic text. In addition, extra-linguistic means such as context and co-text inferences will be used. Then, these euphemisms will be analyzed and explained linguistically by using Arabic dictionaries and traditional Arabic philology books in order to define the strategies used for euphemism formation, whether these are rhetorical such as metaphor or semantic such as extension of meaning.

This analysis will be further supported by reference to books on the context of the revelation (i.e. ʾasbāb al-nuzūl) which offer historical background to the reasons for revelations, when there is one.

1.5.3.2 Phase Two

It is believed in this study that in order to make a balanced assessment of the translation, both the source texts (STs) and TTs must be equally examined since according to Reiss (2000: 9) there can be: "no critique without a comparison with the original". Thus, the translations will be lexically, semantically and pragmatically analyzed and their conveyance of the euphemistic function will be assessed. Then, a questionnaire designed by the researcher will be given to a group of English native speakers in order to assess their reception of the translations on the assumption that the TL text should correspond functionally with the euphemistic function found in the SL text in a way which the target reader can comprehend.

Participants will be given the translations of the euphemisms analyzed in phase two and will be asked to identify the translations which they feel are euphemistic. These results will help to classify the data according to the degree to which the euphemistic meaning of the translation has been conveyed. Receptor feedback will be taken into consideration in the researcher's assessment regarding whether the translations are euphemistic or non-euphemistic.

1.5.4 Research Tools

1.5.4.1 Interviews with translators of selected translations for the study

Two translators have been interviewed with regards to the difficulties they faced when translating Qurʾānic euphemistic expressions, the tools and strategies they employed, their priorities in decision making, and the target readership they had in mind. Interviews with these translators helped to identify the different circumstances and scenarios through which the translator's decision-making process passed (Cf. Munday 2012: 155).

1.1.1.2 Questionnaire designed to assess reader reception of ST and TT

A questionnaire related to 29 verses (please see appendices) has been sent out to over two hundred TT readers. Each questionnaire has euphemistic extracts located within their original co-text. The first part of the questionnaire gives a briefing about the nature of euphemism, i.e. its definition and purposes. Then, the respondents will be asked to identify the euphemistic occurrences in the questionnaire. Items will be presented in a list form to facilitate informant responses. Extracts were presented according to chronological order of publications. However, since two translations (namely T2 and T3) were both published in the same year, alphabetical order was observed in this case. Translations were given anonymous referential characters so that translator names did not affect readers' decisions. However, given the unavoidable length of the questionnaire, it was anticipated that a small percentage of random responses might occur although every effort was made to keep the questionnaire as brief as possible. However, such occurrences are thought to be easily spotted and eliminated. The questionnaire results will be used to support the translation analysis and assessment in chapter seven.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This study will be composed of eight chapters as follows:

1.6.1 Chapter One: Introduction to the study

Chapter One will offer an overview of the study, its aims, scope, rationale and broader significance. Along with this, a detailed outline of the chapters of the thesis is provided and the research methodology, including research questions and tools, are explained. The different sources of the data are also stated along with the research phases. The criteria for quality assessment of the translations will be defined and justified in this chapter as well.

1.6.2 Chapter Two: Euphemism in Arabic and English

This chapter examines the concept of euphemism in English and explores its Arabic equivalent. It will compare and contrast the similarities and differences between this concept in both languages, touching upon the

motives for using euphemism and the linguistic tools employed in its formation. The chapter adopts a linguistic approach towards defining euphemism and a cultural one towards defining its motives. The main discussion will be largely focusing on *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*, the main tools used in Arabic euphemism.

1.6.3 Chapter Three: Approaches to Translation

This chapter will clarify the main translation approaches to be used with a special focus on the theoretical translation framework adopted in this study i.e. functional. A general discussion of Skopos Theory will provide a context for a more detailed examination of Nord's functional theory. The last part of this chapter will be dealing with translation assessment touching upon some of the reasons for the lack of agreement in setting quality assessment criteria. As the discussion evolves, different approaches towards translation quality assessment will be reviewed with more detailed coverage of the specific approaches selected for this study. The last part will be devoted to the Qur'ānic euphemism translation assessment framework where we will present a framework that is tailored to the needs of assessing the translation quality of Qur'ānic euphemisms.

1.6.4 Chapter Four: Translating the Qur'ān

This chapter is mainly concerned about the Qur'ān, and its status in Muslim minds. We will offer an overview of the history of translating the Qur'ān with a focus on translation into western languages, more specifically into English. Then, we will proceed to discuss how translation in general and Qur'ān translations in particular rely on contextual tools.

1.6.5 Chapter Five: Equivalence in the Holy Qur'ān

This chapter discusses the notion of equivalence in translation theory and the extent to which it is suitable for use as a framework in approaching translations of the Qur'ān. The main scholarly contributions in the field of equivalence in translation will be discussed. The notion of inimitability of the Qur'ān will also be discussed, together with cultural and linguistic limitations which could hinder the theory of equivalence from being adopted in Qur'ān translation. We will conclude with a section discussing some scholarly and

translation practitioner approaches towards equivalence in translations of the Qur'ān.

1.6.6 Chapter Six: Data Analysis 1 (Textual and Contextual Analysis of the selected Qur'ānic verses)

In this chapter, the verses which are believed to have had euphemistic structures will be textually and contextually analysed. A commentary is provided of the 29 chosen verses which contain some 43 euphemistic expressions. This is intended to elucidate the linguistic textual aspects that lie beneath the euphemistic structures, and to explain the contextual background as taken from Qur'ān exegesis.

1.6.7 Chapter Seven: Data Analysis 2 (Translation Analysis and Assessment)

The translations of those verses which were textually and contextually analysed in Chapter Six will be linguistically analysed and assessed in this chapter. A number of research questions will be sought to answer. We will invertigate how sex-related Qur'ānic euphemisms are translated into English and whether translators have successfully reproduced the euphemistic function or not. Assessment will be based upon both textual analysis and questionnaire results. While textual analysis will facilitate us towards defining the strategies and techniques adopted by the translators and whether translators tend to produce TL-oriented or SL-oriented translations, questionnaire results will show how the respondents are satisfied with the assessed translations with regards to translating sex-related Qur'ānic euphemisms.

1.6.8 Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Findings

In the final chapter, a brief overview of the study will be offered. The findings of the thesis and the conclusions to be gleaned from them will be summarized. Recommendations and further research in the field will be also included.

CHAPTER 2. Euphemism in English and Arabic

2.1 Introduction to the Concept of Euphemism

Euphemism is a rhetorical device that is used to produce various effects on the reader or listener. It is mainly used for the function of beautifying speech by employing less offensive or more politically correct words and expressions. It is also used to fulfill a range of functions, and to achieve various purposes and effects on the receiver. For example, it can be used for aesthetic purposes to substitute a word that is disagreeable to one's artistic sense. It is also widely used in politics and journalism as an evasive technique to hide facts which should not be exposed to the public. However, in the religious genre, as shall be shown, it serves several different purposes such as demonstrating politeness, offering advice, and beautifying prose, among other functions.

Baker (1992: 234) rightly posits that:

> Politeness is a relativistic notion and different cultures therefore have different notions of 'polite' behaviour. They also have different ideas about what is and what is not a 'taboo' area. Sex, religion and defecation are taboo subjects in many societies, but not necessarily to the same degree within similar situations.

Therefore, because of these universal socio-cultural and psychological reasons, euphemism is omnipresent in many languages. Both Arabic and English are among the languages which are rich in euphemistic expressions covering different themes such as parts of the body, sickness and disease, crime and punishment, sex, and drug addiction. Therefore, euphemism is pervasively used in a vast majority of genres in these two languages including literary, religious, spoken, political, journalistic, etc.

As a human communication tool, euphemism is also considered a distinguishing linguistic and cultural feature marking out differences between languages and cultures which vary considerably in their usage of euphemism. These differences can be measured quantitatively by making a

count of the number of euphemistic expressions within one language, or qualitatively by studying the topics which are usually covered by those expressions. Consequently, we can argue that euphemism can be considered to be one of the markers by which languages and cultures reflect their identity.

2.1.1 Euphemism in English

Euphemism is a well-established term in English. Etymologically, dictionaries seem to agree on the Greek origin of the word, with /eu/ meaning good or well and /pheme/ relating to speech or speaking (Rawson 1983; Farghal 1995). Fowler (1994: 152) defines it as "the use of a mild or vague or periphrastic expression as a substitute for blunt precision or disagreeable truth". Neaman and Silver (1983: 4) similarly explain that euphemism describes a speaking [or writing] manner "which leans towards indirectness in the service of pleasantness". Noble (1982: 5) links it to social motives emphasizing that "when a word produces a shudder or a blush, or a glint of fear in the eye, it is discarded for an alternative, something less direct, more subtle and sweet-sounding". He further states that it is a linguistic evasion of the unpleasant aspects of life and death which has been used in English for an untraceable time (*ibid.*: 13).

Historically, it is assumed to have been used by preliterate peoples, or even since human language developed (Allan and Burridge 1991). Noble (1982) claims that it has existed since humans began using speech, which led eventually to communication in writing instead of grunts and growls. However, it happened that certain words, such as gods, evil spirits and some animals, took on magical properties that made them either sacred or profane. Hence, they were expressed with a lot of caution, and in some cases they were not even expressed at all. Furthermore, he points out that several ancient nations such as the Ancient Greeks, the Latin and the Cree Indians had to come up with euphemisms in order to make communication possible.

In the religious context, for example, in Jewish liturgy, Yahweh or Jehovah is not used; only words like God, Lord, and Most High are used instead. Thus, the art of euphemism, according to Noble (1982), began expanding from

alternative names for gods, spirits, and humans. It then gradually expanded to reach everyday functions and events depending on the linguistic fashions of the time.

The opinions mentioned above suggest that it might be anticipated that, with regards to euphemizing, English has benefited from a number of languages, namely Latin, Greek and French. Lawrence (1973) claims that the heyday of euphemism in English was the early to mid-nineteenth century. He cites two quotations written by Thomas Bowdler and Charles Dickens in 1818 and 1836 respectively, which referred to euphemism as expressions that "are omitted and cannot with propriety be read aloud in the family", and "the unmentionables" respectively (ibid.: 9). He further cites some coinages used to express euphemism including 'irrepressibles' (c.1790), 'indescribables', 'ineffables', 'inexpressables', 'unutterables', 'indispensibles' and 'innominables', whilst Dickens referred to them as 'inexplicables' and 'unwhisperables' (Lawrence 1973).

Euphemism can be differentiated from orthophemism (straight talking) and dysphemism (speaking offensively) (Allan and Burridge 2006). Noble (1982) presents a holistic view regarding euphemism viewing it as:

> An aspect of cultural development as reflected in language, firstly on a basis of superstition and respect for supernatural powers, and then in the response to a desire to transform an ugly or unpleasant word, according to the fashion of the time and place, into one that is more favourable, more pleasant-sounding, while at the same time retaining its meaning (Noble 1982: 4-5).

In his definition, euphemism is motivated by religious and social causes. He rightly sees semantic change as an aspect of euphemism and that it is bound to temporal factors.

Similarly, Allan and Burridge (1991) observe a sociolinguistic dimension to euphemism when it is used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression, in order to avoid possible loss of face, either one's face, that of the audience, or of a third party. They link what they called 'disprefferred expressions' to 'taboo terms', a point echoed by Warren (1992: 135) who presumes that:

We have a euphemism if the interpreter perceives the use of some word or expression as evidence of a wish on the part of the speaker to denote some sensitive phenomenon in a tactful and/or veiled manner.

From Warren's definition one may rightly elicit that there could always be discrepancies in different people's minds with regards to sensitive themes. What some might find quite sensitive may well be perfectly acceptable to others. Moreover, the euphemism used is thought of being less sensitive than the commonly used dictionary lexical item for the denotatum, a pragmatic view of euphemism. Nonetheless, interpretation of a euphemism whether it is expressed or otherwise is context-dependant (Linfoot-Ham 2005).

2.1.2 Euphemisms in English: The Linguistic Perspective

Euphemism can be approached from a number of different angles. If viewed as words clustering around a specific theme, one can see that there are religious euphemisms which serve to avoid profanity or to replace taboo words, such as 'Gee' instead of Jesus or 'Adonai' (Lord) in Judaism. Euphemisms relating to sexual matters can also be used to substitute words referring to lust and desire, parts of the body and effluvia. In addition, newspaper readers come across fresh euphemisms that are coined on almost a daily basis in political discourse such as 'friendly fire' and 'collateral damage'. Similarly, there are long lists of euphemisms dealing with other semantic fields such as death and killing. Euphemisms relating to different themes are endlessly invented as the need dictates.

From a linguistic perspective, euphemisms can be approached either by investigating the linguistic phenomenon that has occurred or the linguistic features which have been used in euphemism formation. Warren (1992) presents an interesting analysis and model demonstrating what she terms 'euphemism innovation' i.e. how this linguistic phenomenon is invented or produced. Her model assumes that there is a constant process of assigning new meanings to words in particular contexts known as "novel contextual meanings" and that such a process is rule-governed (*ibid.*: 130). Her phrase 'conventional referent' applies to the dictionary meanings and senses of a

term while 'contextual referent' covers the new emerging meanings which are context-dependant and feature some sort of unusual usage i.e. euphemistic usage in our case.

From Warren's perspective, there are two main ways of creating euphemisms: formal and semantic innovations. There are three main ways of producing formal innovations:

1. **Word formation devices** including compounding (blowjob = masturbation); blends (hasbian = has been + lesbian (Lavrova 2010); derivation (fellatio = oral sex, modified from Latin *fellare* i.e. to suck (Linfoot-Ham 2005: 230); onomatopoeia (bonk = sexual intercourse: imitates the sound of things hitting each other); and acronyms (BJ = blowjob).

2. **Phonemic modifications** including back slang or letter reversal ('enob' = bone); rhyming slang (Bristol Cities = breast and titties); phonemic replacement or euphemistic mispronunciation (shoot = shit), and abbreviation ('eff' = fuck).

3. **Loan words** from various languages but mainly from French, Greek and Latin (affair(e) = French for extramarital relationship). Rawson (1983: 8) argues that the reason for this is "foreign languages sound finer".

Semantic innovation involves the following eight categories:

1. In **Particularisation** a general term is used in a much more specific way in the new context to produce a new meaning. Words are moved up the 'ladder of abstraction' to be particularized in a 'particular context' to convey a different meaning and a new link is built between a conventionally known term and a new euphemized concept, for example 'satisfaction' may refer to 'orgasm'. Another example is 'growth' for 'tumour' where the link is the 'process' through which growth becomes a tumour (Lavrova 2010). A more evident link is 'function' which connects the novel contextual meaning of 'yellow card' and 'cautioning' in the context of football.

2. **Implication** is used when both the contextual referent and the conventionally common referent are concurrent. Thus, 'to go to the toilet' is used for 'to urinate' or 'to defecate' whilst 'to sleep with someone' means 'to have sex'. In order to comprehend the intended contextual meaning, listeners or readers, need to infer meaning from the context and the word used. The two examples mentioned above have already been standardized by use, but with a phrase such as 'he switched off the light', listeners must grasp the intended meaning of this statement from both the expression and the context. Without contextualization, the euphemistic meaning which hints to sex will not be grasped.

3. **Metonymy** implies co-occurrence between the new euphemistic referent and the conventional one. It could be a cause-effect such as 'ecstasy' for 'amphetamine' or 'to go to bed with' for 'to have sex'.

4. In the case of **metaphor** there is at least one shared property between the conventional and euphemistic referents. Thus, 'balls' = 'testicles' as both share a similar shape. The very essence of a metaphor is that it produces an aesthetic function and hence this is often used in literary works and public oratory (Stefanowitsch 2005). Thus, metaphors are pervasive in euphemism formation and it is clear that many euphemisms are figurative. To mention but a few: 'to kick the bucket' and 'to go to the happy hunting grounds' = 'to die' or 'to spend a penny' = 'to go to the toilet'.

5. **Reversal** occurs when the conventional meaning is semantically reversed to refer to the contextual meaning ('crazy' = 'creative'). Some references link this reversal with irony. Thus 'enviable disease' refers to syphilis, an example in which the euphemism allows reference to be made to something 'bad' by using the opposite (Linfoot-Ham 2005 (Linfoot-Ham 2005): 232).

6. **Understatement** is used when the conventional and new contextual referents share some features in common and a neutral feature is employed in the euphemistic structure to downplay the connotations of the orignal. Examples include 'drug habit' for 'drug addiction' which

are linked by the continual consumption of drugs, or 'to sleep' meaning 'to die' with both actions having the element of unconsciousness in common.

7. Its opposite is **overstatement** when the new contextual structure gives the conventional referent a somewhat exaggerated tone e.g. 'secretary' becomes 'personal assistant' and 'servant', 'housekeeper'.

8. Finally, **paraphrasing** is used in cases when a more general word or structure is used. This could involve word definition, concept explanation, or a restatement of the meaning using different words.

2.1.3 Euphemisms in English: The Cultural Perspective

Cultures reflect how a language copes lexically with taboo themes. Accordingly, the stronger a taboo is, the more euphemistic expressions one can expect to find in a language (Rawson 1983). Consequently, differences exist between languages with regards to frequency and abundance of euphemisms. For example, some topical fields seem to possess greater numbers of euphemisms than others within the same language. In English, for instance, there are more than 800 euphemistic terms for 'copulation' according to Allan and Burridge (1991: 91), and 356 synonyms for 'drunk' in American slang (Rawson 1983: 6).

Moreover, since English has borrowed large numbers of words from a wide range of languages, and Arabic tends to depend more on lexical inflection, it is not surprising that the number of euphemisms in the two languages is so disparate (Al-Qadi 2009). Given the lack of Arabic dictionaries for euphemisms, it is difficult to provide a sound statistical estimate of euphemisms in this language.

Due to the differences which exist between languages and cultures, there can be a great deal of variation between the thematic distribution of euphemisms in different languages. In English for instance, euphemisms which are linked to sex, drugs and addictions are noticeably more than those which are used in Arabic which seems to have a wealth of euphemisms to convey meanings linked to themes like ageing and apostasy. In addition, some themes may exist in one language but may be absent in another, such as disparagement of rhymesters in Arabic, and naming gods in English.

Moreover, some languages may make use of certain tools for euphemism formation more frequently than others. For example, clipping such as 'jeez' for 'Jesus' and 'bra' for 'brassiere', is noticeably more frequently used in English than in it is in Arabic. Other types of euphemisms such as abbreviations, acronyms, or complete omission, such as 'AIDS' and 'HIV', are also commonly found in English. That is simply because Arabic tends not to abbreviate. Instead, Arabic would use circumlocutions such as *al-khalā* i.e. 'open air' and *bayt al-rāḥat* i.e. 'place of relief' for 'toilet'. The latter can be compared to the English euphemisms 'comfort room' or 'little girl's room'.

Another way of classifying euphemisms is the sociolinguistic classification proposed by Rawson (1983: 1) who divided euphemisms into two types: positive and negative. The first inflates and magnifies the euphemized item, and thus makes it sound more important than it really is. Examples of this type are 'custodian' for 'janitor' or 'caretaker'; 'counsel' for 'lawyer' and 'working girl' for 'Prostitute'. Such euphemisms are often neologisms and are related to different regional tastes. Similarly, a mechanic who is often illiterate and has gained his knowledge merely through working experience is called *mohandis* ('engineer') in Arabic. More interestingly, a secretary may be referred to as *mudīr maktab* (literally: office manager) which is if compared with its English counterpart 'administrative assistant' would not seem to satisfy the ego of Arab secretaries. Positive euphemism can also be used for honorific purposes such as 'His/Her Excellency' in English or *ṣāḥib/ṣāḥibat al-saʿādah* in Arabic.

Positive euphemisms are also to be found in the desire for referring to one's surroundings with pleasant-sounding names. Rawson (1983) cites the example of Greenland (part of the the realm of Denmark) where 81% of the surface is covered by ice. Two further examples can be found in Arabic. The word *mafāzah* literally means 'worth winning' but refers to 'desert'. Similarly, a suburb of Mecca in Saudi Arabia currently known as *Umm al-Jūd* (the place of bounty) seems to have been euphemized, having long been called *Umm al-Dūd* (the place of worms). The original name reflected the fact that the place had previously been used as a dumping ground for the remains of slaughtered livestock.

The second type of euphemisms, the negative or 'defensive euphemism' in Rawson's terms, deflates and diminishes the euphemized item. Unlike the first type, Rawson (1983) claims this dates back to the Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman cultures when it was prevalent to employ a euphemism to replace the name of gods, Satan, the dead, and hunted animals. Thus the Greeks, for example, transformed 'the Furies' into 'Eumenides' (the Kind Ones), god became 'Adonai' in Judaism, Satan was known as 'the great fellow', and feared animal prey was referred to familiarly (e.g. the bear was 'the grandfather'). Interestingly enough, euphemisms which are used for four-letter words, defecation, and urination are also of this type (Rawson 1983: 2).

Rawson (1983) adds a further criterion for euphemism classification: consciously or unconsciously used. Unconscious euphemisms are those which have been in use for so long that their euphemistic function is barely recognized and the reason for their coinage cannot be remembered, such as 'cemetery' which replaced 'graveyard', and 'rooster' for 'cock'. Euphemisms like 'gee' for 'Jesus' and 'gosh' for 'god' in English can be attributed to the doctrinal belief in blasphemy or taking God's name in vain. Moreover, Christian Arabs seem to follow the same belief and tend to use *al-Rabb* (Lord), *Yasū'* (Jesus), and *al-'abb* (God the Father). On the contrary, Muslims are urged to mention God's name which is in their faith is a type of worship. Therefore, the name of God i.e. Allah and His attributes are pervasively present in Muslim Arabic discourse (cf. Q. 08:180).

Rawson (1983) claims that conscious euphemisms, on the other hand, form a much more complex category. They serve to facilitate social discourse, for example when one offers a widow condolences, the word 'loss' instead of 'death' is used for preference even though they are interchangeable in this case. Moreover, conscious euphemisms also lead to social double-thinking, forming a kind of code between speakers and listeners. They are used to stand for 'something else' which is unmentionable, and speakers and listeners consciously and happily pretend that this euphemized object does not exist. Rawson (1983) argues that sometimes avoiding offence tips over into institutionalized deception, when 'murder' becomes 'executive action', and 'solitary confinement cells' are said to be 'quiet cells' (*ibid.*: 3).

2.2 Euphemism in Arabic

Euphemism as it is used in English does not have one absolute Arabic equivalent term and is usually considered to be an element of Rhetorics in Arabic which tends to use two rhetorical devices known as *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*. These deal with similar euphemistic functions such as hiding meaning, and making harsh words more pleasant to listeners and readers. More recently, however, a number of scholars of Arabic rhetorics have touched upon the concept of euphemism in Arabic giving it a number of labels including *luṭf al-ta'bīr, al-talaṭṭuf fi al-ta'bīr*, and *taḥsīn al-lafẓ* (El-Zeiny 2009: 173): *al-talaṭṭuf* and *al-kināyah 'an ma yustaqbaḥ dhikruh.*

As stated above, euphemism in Arabic is generally studied in connection with *kināyah,* which is part of the *'ilm al-bayān*, i.e. the science of clarity of language, and with the four types of *kināyah: ta'rīḍ, talwīḥ, ramz,* and *'īmā'* or *'ishārah.* These four aspects centre around the metaphorical use of language which is closely related to the English concept of euphemism. This section traces their historical development and examines the scholarly attempts which have been to define and explain them. A comparison will be also made between *kināyah* as a whole in Arabic and euphemism in English, in terms of the reasons for their usage in both languages.

2.2.1 A Historical Account of Kināyah as a Euphemistic Device

The word *kināyah* is derived from the verb *kanā* which means to cover or to hide (IbnManzur 1980). It means insinuation without using elaborate wording. It is the opposite of *al-tasrīḥ* (clarification or elaboration) when one thing is said but something else is meant (al-Zarkashi 1957). Rhetorically, *kināyah* is a structure which has both a denotative and a connotative meaning, with the latter being the intended one. As a linguistic structure, it shares a very close and logical link with the nature of the denotatum.

The difference between *kināyah* and *majāz* (i.e. metaphor) is in the logical semantic link which must be present in *kināyah*. For example, if someone says: *ra'aytu al-qamara yaḍḥak* (literally 'I have seen the moon laughing'), this cannot be *kināyah* as it is impossible for an inanimate object like the moon to be seen laughing. Therefore, it is considered to be metaphorical. However in the case of a sentence such as *ra'aytu 'asadan yuzamjir* ('I have

seen a lion soaring') two meanings are possible: a real lion was seen soaring or this is a reference to a man being compared to a lion which is the intended meaning here. Since both meanings are equally probable, if the latter meaning was intended, this is a *kināyah* structure provided the logical semantic link is there.

Kināyah has been investigated by many Arabic scholars. These attempts can be traced back to the ninth century when the Arabic linguist al-Mubarrad (d.898) authored the book *al-Kāmil* which touched upon the functions of *kināyah*. He argued that *kināyah* serves three main functions: to cover up an intended meaning, to honour and glorify, or to serve as a euphemistic device. In the first case, there is no elaboration of the intended meaning for the purpose of allusion and hiding details e.g. when the name of a mistress is replaced by referring to her by one of her attributes (i.e. her long hair). The second type of *kināyah* is used for exaltation purpose such as calling someone by an honorific title e.g. *Ṣāḥib al-Faḍīlah* (the Reverend). The third function is considered by al-Mubarrad as "the best type of *kināyah*", which he defines as "the replacement of an obscene vulgar word with a polite one which can still convey the meaning" [i.e. without loss of face] (al-Mubarrad 1997: 855)

Another early pioneer was Ibn Fāris (d. 972), author of *al-Ṣāḥibi,* the leading work in Arabic philology of its day. The book dealt with various issues in Arabic syntax (e.g. parts of speech), morphology (e.g. derivation), and rhetoric including metonymy (*kināyah*) and allegory (*'istiʿārah*). In addition, the book examined the emergence of Arabic and issues relating to its history, its script, and its eminence over other languages. Ibn Fāris also listed some Arabic dialects which he considered less-favoured in terms of their deviation from the standard norms of Arabic, and how Arabic changed after the emergence of Islam. With regards to *kināyah*, Ibn Fāris divided this into two main types: semantic (used for the purpose of providing less coarse-sounding words or raising the tone of the language), and formal (Ibn Fāris 1998: 200-2).

The semantic type is divided into two subsidiary ones. In the first type one referent is substituted for another for the purpose of making it sound less

coarse such as the word *julūduhum,* (literally: their skins) in the verse: "*waqālū li julūdihim lima shahidtum ʿalaynā*" (Q.41:21) (literally: and they said to their skins why did you testify on us?). Ibn Fāris follows an exegetical opinion which posits that the word 'skins' in this verse refers to male sexual organ. He also cites another Qurʾānic example: "*ʾaw jāʾa ʾaḥadun minkum min al-ghāʾiʾ*" (Q.04:43) (literally: or anyone amongst you have come from the deep soil). The phrase 'deep soil' here refers to the place where people used to go to relieve themselves.

The second type of *kināyah* is used for the purposes of showing respect and includes the usage of *kunyah* such as *Abu Fulān* i.e. 'the-father-of' format. Teknonyms are commonly used in Arab culture to show respect when referring to individuals. It is worth mentioning that providing a less coarse-sounding name for a referent is semantically rather than aesthetically motivated, and therefore it is very similar to the principal reason for the use of euphemism in English.

According to Ibn Fāris, the formal type of *kināyah* involves the substitution of a word with a pronoun as when personal pronouns are used to replace a noun. Although this type is considered syntactical and morphological, it may sometimes have a euphemistic purpose e.g. when a referent is not stated but instead replaced by a pronoun in order to avoid mentioning this referent. Ibn Fāris subdivided this type of *kināyah* into three different morphological patterns :

1. **Kināyah Muttaṣilah** (attached *kināyah*) e.g. *qumtu* ('I stood up'). The speaker's pronoun *tā* in bold is attached to the verb.

2. **Kināyah Munfaṣilah** (detached *kināyah*) e.g. *ʾiyyahu ʾaradtu* ('I wanted him'). The third person object pronoun *hā* is detached from the verb.

3. **Kināyah Mustajinnah** (hidden *kināyah*) e.g. *qāma* ('he stood up'). The subject pronoun is hidden but implied.

Ibn Fāris' work paved the way for his followers such as al-Thaʿālibi (d. 1043) who was one of the early pioneers of the science of Arabic Rhetorics. He wrote three seminal works which are excellent sources for any study of this

topic: *Fiqh al-Lughah wa 'Asrār al-'Arabiyyah, al-Nihāyah fi Fann al-Kināyah* (popularly known as *al-Kināyah wa al-Ta'rīḍ*), and *Taḥsīn al-Qabīḥ wa Taqbīḥ al-Ḥasan*. In the first of al-Thaʿālibi's books, the content is arranged thematically in a way that is designed to help those searching for lexical items connected to particular subjects. Thus, for example, under the heading of Army al-Thaʿālibi listed various lexical items relating to different sizes of military forces. Whilst al-Thaʿālibi (2000) assigned a short chapter in this work to dealing exclusively with euphemistic metonymy, he later devoted a whole book, entitled *al-Kināyah wa al-Ta'rīḍ*, to this topic.

Al-Thaʿālibi used the term *kināyah* to refer to an utterance that has more than one meaning, one of them being more obvious and more commonly used (the major usage), whilst the other is another possible meaning of the utterance (al-Thaʿālibi 1998). One of the main purposes of *kināyah* is to beautify the ugly as opposed to *ḍiddu al-kināyah* (literally: the opposite of *kināyah*) to use al-Thaʿālibi's term for dysphemism (*ibid.*: 163). However, he did not offer a definition for *kināyah* nor did he try to categorize it. Instead, he cited several examples, some of which had already been mentioned by Ibn Fāris. Along with the examples already discussed above, the following Qur'ānic examples were discussed by al-Thaʿālibi:

نساؤكم حرثٌ لكم فأتوا حرثكم أنّى شئتم **(Q.02:223)**

(Literally: "Your women are tilth of yours, so approach your tilth (wherever, whenever, however) you want").

فلما تغشاها حملت حملاً خفيفاً **(Q.07:189)**

(Literally: "when he covered her, she bore a light burden").

The word *ḥarth* (tilth) in the first example and the verb *taghashshāha* ('covered her') in the second are *kināyah* utterances since both stand for sexual referents.

Al-Thaʿālibi further illustrates his idea with some non-Qur'ānic examples such as the Prophet Mohammed's saying: *'ittaqū al-malāʿina* (literally: "avoid the boulevards.) The word *malāʿin* is the plural of *malʿanah* which can also mean an act that brings curse and damnation. So, the meaning of the prophetic saying is: avoid defecating on the boulevards (i.e. where people

walk or rest) so that you will not be accursed or damned. Al-Tha'ālibi concluded the same chapter with other examples including *al-raqīb* ('the guard') for *thāni al-ḥabīb* (one who turns one's lover away) and *laqīṭ* (a foundling) with *tarbiyat al-qāḍi* (the judge's fosterling).

Al-Tha'ālibi's second book deals more closely with defining and differentiating between *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*. This is divided into seven sections, all dealing with culturally sensitive topics such as women, disease, ageing, death, food and other themes which are usually subject to euphemization in Arabic. He quotes numerous examples of *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* from Arabic literature and also includes numerous lines of poetry which illustrate how these two linguistic features are used by Arab poets to conceal certain details. In addition, he narrates some stories and anecdotes which include examples of these rhetorical devices. Nonetheless, the examples mentioned in the book were not all euphemistic given that *kināyah* utterances have various functions as we shall demonstrate later.

Al-Tha'ālibi started his work with metonymic words and expressions relating to women. Arabic uses a range of words to allude to women: *al-na'jah; shāt* (ewe); *qalūṣ* (young she-camel); *firāsh* (mattress); *qārūrah* (vial); *jārah* (a female neighbour) and *halīlah* (legal partner or spouse). It should be noted here that not all of these words fulfill euphemistic functions. Some, such as *shāt* and *al-na'jah*, could be used in contexts when a speaker intends to hide that he is talking about a woman. *Jārah* and *halīlah* possess aesthetic connotations, and are commonly used in poetry. However, some euphemistic *kināyah* utterances are found in another chapter of the book dealing with metonyms for defects and flaws such as ugliness, tepidity, and leprosy. For instance, Arabs use terms such as *mushaṭṭab* for a person whose face is scratched with a scar, and *muqtaṣid* (careful spender) for a miser. Al-Tha'ālibi (1998: 158) mentions some expressions which are used in Arabic to refer to the ugliness of people in a covert way. To say of someone *lahu qarābātun fi al-Yaman* (literally: 'he has relatives in Yemen') is to liken a person to a monkey since these animals used to dwell in this country in large numbers.

Al-Tha'ālibi (1998: 129) also mentions some professions which are classified as lowly jobs in Arab tradition and thus euphemized in Arabic to avoid public contempt or disrespect. These include *khayyāṭ* (a tailor) and *ḥajjām* (a cupper) i.e. a person who performs the procedure of cupping. He further narrates a funny story about a tailor who proposed to a girl. When her parents asked about him, they were told that he is a man who sits softly and stabs effectively, alluding to his profession. The book contains other chapters which deal with metonymic expressions related to disease such as *ma yamḥu al-dhunūb* (i.e. that which wipes sins away), *al-nadhīr* (i.e. the warner) for 'hoariness' i.e. it warns against proximity of death; old age e.g. *'adraka zamān al-ḥinkah* (i.e. having reached the time of worldly wisdom), and both *marqad* (i.e, place where one usually sleeps) and *al-turbah* (i.e. soil) referring to graves .

Other chapters of the book dealt with other non-euphemistic themes of *kināyah* such as those related to food and alcohol. However, al-Tha'ālibi has also assigned a chapter to deal with dysphemism which is, as previously noted *ḍidd al-kināyah* (the opposite of *kināyah*). In this chapter he adopted the same style as elsewhere in the book but, in terms of quantity, there were much fewer examples of dysphemism than of euphemism. In fact, he was able to offer only three anecdotal examples and lines of poetry which included dysphemistic structures including *mutamarragh al-fisq* (i.e. place where one would cleanse oneself from debauchery) for *muṣallā* (i.e. prayer place) and *ghammāz* (winker) for *wāli barīd al-khalīfah* (i.e. the Minister for Mail Services). This individual was responsible for State Intelligence during the reign of Caliph *al-Manṣūr* of *Baghdād*. In fact, the title of *wāli al-barīd* itself could have been used euphemistically to hide the infamous activities he carried out but could have been neutralized over time.

Al-Tha'ālibi's third book, entitled *Taḥsīn al-Qabīḥ wa Taqbīḥ al-Ḥasan* (Beautifying the Ugly and Uglifying the Beautiful), deals with both euphemism and dysphemism. Adopting a similar style to his two previous books, this work is full of euphemistic and dysphemistic expressions, some of which do not seem to be linguistically conventional but rather to reflect personal innovation. However, it is interesting that in this book al-Tha'ālibi uses the word *taḥsīn* (beautifying) instead of '*kināyah*' which was

continuously used by him and by his contemporaries in their work and he seems to have grasped the relationship between *kināyah* and euphemism more clearly. For example, a section in this book is titled *'Taḥsīn al-Maqābiḥ bi al-Kināyāt'* (beautifying the ugly with *kināyah* expressions) which clearly demonstrates that *kināyah* is a linguistic device which can be used to perform a euphemistic function (al-Thaʿālibi 1981: 35). Other chapters deal with beautifying negative concepts like immodesty, poverty, imprisonment, misery, stupidity, etc.

Another Arabic pioneer in this field was Abu al-ʿAbbās Ahmed b. Mohammed al-Jurjāni (d. 1095), the author of *al-Muntakhab min Kināyāt al-ʿUlamaʾ wa ʾIrshādāt al-Bulaghāʾ*. The book contains chapters on metonymic expressions which are related to adultery, illegitimate children, copulation, sexual potency, defloration, homosexuality, body effluvia, and other related matters. He also narrates a number of anecdotes which include situations when speakers had to avoid mentioning embarrassing words, and found their way out of a dilemma by using euphemism. Again, some expressions seem to be his own personal innovation rather than being linguistically and culturally conventionalized. One can thus hypothesize that euphemistic expressions may start out of personal interest and, over time, some may be accepted by a wider group of language users.

Al-Jurjāni (1908: 4) considers *kināyah* to be a circumlocutory way of referring to topics that should not be seen by the public such as copulation and relieving oneself. However, it is worth mentioning that al-Jurjāni allocated a whole chapter to *kināyah* in the Qurʾān and Islamic tradition. The other chapters of the book deal with a wide range of themes such as adultery, sexual potency, virginity and defloration, effluvia, etc. However, although *kināyah* can be used for a wide range of functions, the *kināyah* expressions mentioned in the book are mostly euphemistic. Two examples are worthy of note.

In the first, al-Jurjāni cites ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit who, when alluding to his impotency and his lack of desire to have sex, said: "Do not you see that I do not eat what used to be buttered for me [i.e. female genitals], and that my friend is mute and blind". Al-Jurjāni notes that 'friend' was the man's

preferred term for his sexual organ. A second example is equally interesting, being a euphemism for male masturbation: *tazawwaja rāḥatan binta sāʿid* (literally: he married Raḥah, daughter of Sāʿid). The word 'Raḥah' means 'palm of the hand' but at the same time sounds like a female name. Sāʿid is a name for a man but can also mean an arm (Al-Jurjāni 1908: 33). The expression then can also allude to the act of masturbation performed by a male with his own hand.

However, one of the best known studies on the topic of *kināyah* was conducted by Abdulqāhir al-Jurjāni (d.1078) who is generally recognized as the founder of Arabic rhetorics. He views *kināyah* as a kind of eloquent speech used when one wants to express a certain meaning, expressing this indirectly in an utterance that can imply more than one meaning. The meaning can only be grasped from the contextual clues rather than from the very literal meanings of the utterance (al-Jurjāni 2004: 431). He illustrated his analysis with examples such as *ṭawīl al-najād* (literally: one whose sword bandolier is long) and *kathīru al-ramād* (literally: one whose fire ashes amass). In the first example, there are two possible meanings: one is literal, stating that a man's sword belt is long. The other is the intended hidden meaning and refers to a tall person whose height is a feature of his attraction, the reason being a tall person should be wearing a lengthy sword belt that suits his height.

If taken literally, the second example appears similar in that it provides information about the quantity of someone's fire ashes, but the intended meaning alludes to the person being generous and hospitable. This example may not be quite as simple as the previous one because both the idea behind it and its analysis are only remotely connected with the intended meaning. The analysis is that for someone to have a profuse amount of ash, it is assumed that he must have burned lots of wood for cooking. This being the case, he must have received lots of guests and he must have been very generous to have fed them all. However, given that people now use other sources of energy, it may no longer be applicable to describe someone as *kathīru al-ramād*.

Modern Arabic linguists, however, have followed the traditional analysis of *kināyah* but applying new names specifically to Arabic euphemisms. 'Umar (1998: 40), for example has used the term *al-talaṭṭuf fi al-ta'bīr* (literally: 'being nice in expression'). He links euphemism to taboos which, according to 'Umar, are substituted with words which are not yet marred by negative connotations. Other labels also found to be in use in modern Arabic literature include *taḥsīn al-lafẓ, talṭīf al-ma'nā, al-kināyah al-latīfah* and *luṭf al-ta'bīr*.

To sum up, it is noticeable that *kināyah* utterances are concise ones. Moreover, they may be understood by some audiences and yet still remain hidden to others depending on the audience's familiarity with the topic, context, speaker, mode of address, etc.

2.2.2 A Historical Account of *Ta'rīḍ* as a Euphemistic Device

The word *ta'rīḍ* stems from the verb *'arraḍa*, literally meaning 'to widen something'. The link between the dictionary meaning of *'arraḍa* and the verb in the rhetorical context is that speech tends to be more indirect i.e. as though it has been 'semantically widened' rather being concise and direct to the point. It is the opposite of declaration as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān:

- ‎وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاء‎(Q.02:235)

Translation: And there is no blame on you if you indirectly propose to marry [these] women. (My translation).

This verse concerns proposing to widowed women whose deceased husbands had been martyred in Jihad. As widowed women are expected to keep a low profile for a period of four months and ten days (i.e. the mourning period), some male Muslims found it difficult to wait until this period elapsed, fearing maybe someone else might propose. Some men, then, might want to propose to the widow sooner so that other men would not beat them to it, and this verse allows men to propose marriage but indirectly. For example, it would be acceptable to say: "How fortunate would be the man who could have you as a wife", or "I wish I could have a good wife soon".

Ta'rīḍ, as a rhetorical term, has been approached by various rhetoricians. As briefly mentioned above, al-Tha'ālibi concluded his book titled *al-Kināyah wa al-Ta'rīḍ* with a short chapter about *ta'rīḍ*. He posits that *ta'rīḍ* style is

common among Arabs, who criticize those who choose to elucidate (Al-Tha'ālibi 1998: 167). He lists various situations from Arab tradition which make good examples for *ta'rīḍ*. Interestingly though, some examples are difficult to understand as they need prior knowledge of the culture and personages of the time. This is quite justifiable as the very essence of *ta'rīḍ* utterances is to be initially ambiguous and make the meaning comprehensible only to a chosen group. If such utterances were wholly transparent, they would not be considered to be *ta'rīḍ* any longer. Examples mentioned by al-Tha'ālibi were of two types. In the verbal type, the *ta'rīḍ* element is expressed in conversation; and in the second case, by gestures with the participants in the situation tending to use body language to express this. Below is a couple of examples quoted and adapted from al-Tha'ālibi's book. The first is a verbal one:

- قال لا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرا (Q.18:73)

Translation: 'Do not blame me for what I forgot and do not be hard upon me for my affair [with you]'. (My Translation).

The verse deals with the story of Moses, Who was following the wise *Khiḍr*. Moses had agreed that he would not ask *Khiḍr* about anything he did. As they set off on their journey, Moses becomes more curious and starts asking why *Khiḍr* had done some odd things. *Khiḍr* had dug a hole in a ship, and when Moses asked why, *Khiḍr* reminded him of his promise. This verse cites Moses reply to *Khiḍr*: 'Do not blame me for what I forgot'. Al-Tha'ālibi's cites Ibn 'Abbās' opinion which advocates that the *ta'rīḍ* part is the phrase: "what I forgot" as he claims that Moses could have plainly said "I forgot", but he chose to express it differently making a more general statement.

The second example from al-Tha'ālibi's book reads:

- Ibn Mukram was blessed with a child, so *Ibn* al-Fujā'ah came along to congratulate him. Upon Ibn al-Fujā'ah leaving, he left him a stone. (*ibid.*: 172).

The stone which was left by Ibn al-Fujā'ah alludes to his assumption that Ibn Mukram's wife had committed adultery. In order for one to comprehend the intended message, it is necessary to know about the Islamic juridical ruling

of stoning for married adulterers. The stone then alludes to the fact that Ibn Mukram's wife needed to be stoned to death.

Al-Zamakhshari (d.1151) summarizes the difference between *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* as follows:

- *Kināyah* is the act of meaning something without using the commonly used wording for it. It employs idiomaticity to fulfill its function .

- *Ta'rīḍ* is when one mentions something but at the same time is indirectly pointing to something else which cannot be elicited from the words themselves .i.e pointing to something that is not worded (al-Zamakhshari 1998: 459).

He also sets out two criteria to differentiate between *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* on the one hand, and to differentiate between both of these and normal speech:

- Symbolism i.e. declaration free: both *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* are symbolic utterances whereas normal utterances are not .

- Wording makes the distinction between *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*; that is if the meaning - or a link to the meaning- is worded, then it is a kind of *kināyah* while *ta'rīḍ* can only be understood from the context and the circumstances beyond.

To illustrate al-Zamakhshari's criteria, let us examine the following example:

- I dropped by to greet you

The speaker does not really mean he had dropped by to greet the addressee (a wealthy man) but was rather alluding to the fact that he needed some money from him. For al-Zamakhshari, such an example is charged with hidden messages transferred from the speaker to the addressee. Such messages will only be perceived by those who know about the speaker's and addressee's circumstances and situations. Other listeners- who do not know- will only be able to perceive the literal or, in other words, the surface meaning. Hence, the beauty and artistry of *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* lie in the ambiguity of the double meaning which can be comprehended by a closed group.

This topic also intrigued Ibn al-'Athīr (d.1233) who criticized some of his predecessors for confusing these two rhetorical tools. Ibn al-'Athīr defines *kināyah* as: "every utterance which could mean both a factual and a figurative meaning" (Ibn al-'Athīr n.d. : 50). In his view, *kināyah* has a metaphorical aspect whereas *ta'rīḍ* is understood through contextual clues. He adds that *ta'rīḍ* is more deeply hidden than *kināyah*. That is because in the *kināyah* utterance there is always a hint whereas *ta'rīḍ*'s is contextual and can be misleading to those who do not know fully about the situation (Ibn al-'Athīr n.d. :56). Thus, the latter is understood through insinuation rather than through figurative language.

In conclusion, meanings of *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* utterances are not literal; both have tacit meanings. Nevertheless, the former deals with figurative language and idiomatic expressions, whereas the latter deals with a deeply hidden message that can be found only in long sentences rather than in fixed expressions. Thus, it must be interpreted from the texts. However, in a few cases *ta'rīḍ* can occur in short utterances. An illustrative example would be when someone tries to rebuke someone else for not praying *maghrib* on time by exclaiming: "It is sunset already!" as a means of avoiding saying: "It is *maghrib* time, why are not you praying?" since this is very harsh and direct. Therefore, context is a very important aspect to recognising the use of euphemistic expressions. For this reason, the relationship between euphemism and context as a determiner for euphemistic meaning is focused on in Chapter Four.

2.3 Reasons for Using *Kināyah*, *Ta'rīḍ* and Euphemism

The cultural reasons for generating euphemisms are universal. As humans we tend to share many cultural similarities. Thus, it is possible that Arabic *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* may share similar or even identical reasons for usage with euphemism in English. However, on the other hand, some cultural differences can mean that reasons are quite different and may even appear odd at times.

After reviewing and examining different scholarly approaches towards euphemism, *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*, we shall now proceed to explore some of

the reasons for their usage which are known in Arabic as 'Aghrāḍ (purposes). Some of these can be seen as euphemistic:

2.3.1 Avoiding Words with Negative Connotations

This reason is a typically euphemistic purpose as it involves a sociolinguistic aspect relating to evading loss of face by means of a change of words. The Holy Qur'ān provides numerous examples of this kind. One famous example is referring to sexual intercourse by using indirect expressions which, if taken literally, would mean something else, since these are terms referring to some abstract or concrete referents. The main reason for this is to avoid embarrassment when mentioning this private relationship between a husband and his spouse. Some of the examples used here are discussed in more detail in the chapter of analysis:

<div dir="rtl">

وكيف تأخذونه وقد أفضى بعضكم إلىٰ بعض وأخذن منكم مِّيثاقا غليظا (Q.04:21)

</div>

Translation: And how can you take it back when some of you have already gone into the other and they have taken from you a solemn covenant.

In this verse the action of sexual intercourse is expressed with the phrase: 'gone into the other'. The verb 'afḍā 'ilā literally means 'to reach into' (Ibn Manzur 1980). However, it is used in this verse to refer to sexual intercourse.

<div dir="rtl">

فلمَّا تغشَّاها حملت حملًا خفيفًا (Q. 07:189)

</div>

Translation: (when he covered her she conceived a light load)

In this verse, sexual intercourse is expressed by means of the verb taghashshā which literally means to cover or to envelope.

<div dir="rtl">

هنَّ لباسٌ لكُم وأنتُم لباسٌ لهُنَّ (Q. 02:187)

</div>

Translation: (they are your garments and you are garments for them)

The word libās which literally means garments, refers to the intimate husband–wife relationship. It connotes warmth, passion, and affection as they enshroud each other with love, offering mutual fervency, embracing each other to become as close to each other as the garments on one's own body. Such a figurative image does not only beautify the speech but takes

any negative connotation of mentioning sexual relations out of the discourse.

2.3.2 Fear of Death, Killing and Similar Ill-omened Words

Death, *jinn* (i.e. spirits) and some serious diseases are euphemized in most cultures. The word *jinn* is sometimes replaced in Arabic conversation with phrases like '*Bismillāh*' ('by the name of Allah'). Moreover, in some Arab cultures, the number seven (*sab'ah*) is sometimes avoided when counting aloud because it is believed this particular number is connected with demons. A similar sounding word; *samḥah* (meaning 'pliable') is pronounced in the hopes that this might bring forth good omens or at least would not name any harmful demons.

Allan and Burridge (1991: 173) further claim that "there was tremendous fear and superstition attached to illness during the Middle Ages". Thus, fear of cancer, for instance, led to the coining of phrases like 'the Big C', or sometimes whispering the word if it needed to be said in public, rather than saying it aloud. Doctors, on the other hand, could be said to have their own medical euphemisms for cancer such as 'neoplasia' or 'neoplastic process'. Thus laymen or those who are not aware of medical terminology are completely unaware of the meaning of such terminology. In Arabic the euphemism for cancer is the word *al-khabīth* (literally 'the virulent').

2.3.3 Good Omens and Optimism

Arabs would optimistically call a blind person *baṣīr* ('endowed with eyesight'), and would call 'someone who has been stung by a bee or wasp' (*salīm*) a 'sound one'. This is merely done in order to focus on the more favourable side, and to anticipate the mostly positive outcome. Similarly, the word *marḥūm* ('those blessed with Allah's mercy') is used to precede the names of those who have passed away. The list may also be extended to include *al-mabrūkah* (literally 'the blessed') to refer to fever, and *ḥātim* for 'crow' which it is believed is a bird of ill omen. Beliefs of this kind, called *al-ṭeyarah* ('evil omen'), were later prohibited in Islam.

In addition, Arabs believe that good names give a positive impression about their referents. Al-Tha'ālibi (2000: 408) notes that Arabs used to name their sons after objects found in their environment like *ṣakhr* ('rock'), *'Asad* ('lion'),

and *kalb* ('dog'). They hoped that their sons would gain some of the attributes of these animals and objects e.g. the hardness of the rock, the bravery of the lion, or the loyalty of the dog. Consequently, names with bad connotations may give bad impressions too. Hence, it has been reported that the Prophet Mohammed changed the names of some individuals from ones with negative connotations to more positive ones. In one account, when the Prophet Mohammed inquired about a girl's name, he was told that she was called *'Āṣiyah* ('disobedient'). He then asked the girl's parents to change her name to *Jamīlah* ('pretty'). A similar incident occurred with a man called *Ḥazan* ('difficult to deal with') and the Prophet asked him to change his name into *Sahl* ('easy to deal with'). It is also reported that he changed names like *Ḥarb* ('war') into *Silm* ('peace').

2.3.4 Obscuring the Meaning

Both *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ* are used to deliver a message that is coded so that it cannot be recognized by certain groups of people, e.g. children. Parents very often do this especially when they refer to their private relationship, or are discussing sensitive issues in front of children. Some might use the phrase 'soft bedding' to refer to 'a fat woman' or the word *Wadīʿah* ('trust or consignment') to refer to 'women' (Al-Thaʿālibi 1998). To refer to sexual intercourse, some might also use coded words like *ṭabkh* ('cooking') e.g. "Are we going to cook tonight?", *ṣayd* ('hunting') e.g. "Are you going hunting tonight?" or *ghazw* ('invasion') e.g. "Are you invading tonight?". However, it is very likely to be a matter of personal choice, with every individual using his or her own preferred jargon to convey whatever coded message needed to be expressed.

In a similar manner, doublespeak is used in English. Thus 'a guest of Her Majesty's government' refers to someone being held in custody ('in jail'). Other techniques may also involve the usage of specialized jargon words such as scientific or medical terminology which may only be recognized by specific recipients as already illustrated above.

2.3.5 Using More Attractive Words

Arab men use terms of endearment like *zahrah* ('rose'), *rayḥānah* ('sweet basil') or *wardah* ('flower') to refer to women they love. Daughters and sisters

are also addressed as *karīmah* ('honourable') a word which is also used to refer to 'one's eyes'. Such words are used to express affection in a similar way to the English 'sweetheart', 'sweety pie' and 'sugar'. However, the Holy Qur'ān uses other beautiful expressions including *qāṣirāt al-ṭarf* (literally: 'women with averted glances') as mentioned in the verse below:

- فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ(Q.55:56)

Translation: (there within [in paradise] women who restrain their glance; who have never been touched by humans nor *jinn*)

This verse comes in the context of listing the advantages of paradise and what it contains. The meaning of the phrase is: in paradise, there will be women with averted glances who never look beyond their husbands; who have never been touched by humans or *jinn*.

Another aesthetic expression is *bayḍun maknūn* ('well preserved hidden eggs') as found in the following verse:

- كَأَنَّهُنَّ بِيضٌ مَّكْنُونٌ(Q.37:49)

Translation: (as if they were closely guarded eggs)

Choosing the words *bayḍ* ('eggs') alluding to delicateness, and *maknūn* ('protected', or 'guarded') adds an aesthetic dimension to the phrase.

2.3.6 Criticism or disapproval

Kināyah and *ta'rīḍ* can also be used for the purpose of admonishment and disapproval. The following verse criticizes unbelievers in a sarcastic way saying that only those who are wise would take heed of a warning.

- إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ(Q.03:07)

Translation: (it is only those who possess minds [really] heed)

The verse suggests that those who do not pay attention to warnings are not rational and lack wisdom, it hints that they lack keenness of mind.

Among the anecdotes recounted by al-Tha'ālibi (1998) it is relevant to cite one in particular in this context. He narrated an anecdote regarding a bondmaid who happened to pass wind whilst singing to amuse a man called *al-Jammāz*. After he discovered what she had done, she asked him: "What would you like to hear?", thereupon he replied: "Sing me the following:

- *Ya rīḥ ma ṣana'ti bi al-dimn   Kam laki min maḥwi manẓarin ḥasin*

Translation: (O wind, what have you done to the ruins? You have certainly wiped away all the pretty things.)

In these lines, *Al-Jammāz* alludes to the incident which had occurred, and that it had ruined the girl's beauty (using the word incident in our explanation here is itself a euphemism). He used the word *rīḥ* ('wind') which happens to carry both the neutral meaning of the natural phenomenon, and the negative connotations of intestinal gas in both Arabic and English. Referring to the same thing, Arabs would also say *waḍa'a fulanun kitāban* (someone placed a book). The same referent is expressed in English with expressions like 'break wind', and 'cut the cheese'.

Other expressions which show a degree of disapproval in Arabic include *naqiyyu al-qidr* (one whose cooking pot is spotless), and *muqtaṣid* ('frugal' or 'saving') for a person who is averse to spending money. On the other hand, Arabs would call an overgenerous or a wasteful person *kathīr al-za'farān* (one whose saffron is abundant) a reference to the fact that saffron, one of the cooking ingredients in Arab cuisine, is expensive.

2.3.7 Giving Advice

It has been reported that the Prophet Mohammed would address his companions collectively when he wanted to give them advice, using the expression: "*ma bālu aqwām...?*" (literally: why would some people [do]?

By generalising the statement in this way, the addressee who has done something wrong cannot be singled out and thereby, embarrassment is avoided. At the same time, the guilty individual would understand that he or she was being admonished.

A similar way of giving advice would be to say to an alcoholic: "I do not think drinking wine is permissible for Muslims". This indirect statement uses evasion gently in order to avoid scolding people. A more direct way, however, might be to say: 'Drinking alcohol is a great sin', or making it even more obvious and personal by stating: 'You must not drink alcohol'. The latter is harsh and might create more problems than it solved.

2.3.8 An Evasive Technique for Telling Lies

A famous story in Islamic heritage is that of Abu Ṭalḥah whose son became ill before his father left home. While he was away, his son had died, but when he returned, he found his wife had prepared herself and the bed for him. He asked her about his son, and to comfort him, she replied: 'His soul is relaxed now'. He understood this to mean that their son had got better. So, he slept with her. Later, she told him the truth that their son had died. This story and similar ones show that ta'rīḍ can be used as a means to avoid telling the truth when it is inappropriate to do so.

2.3.9 Upgrading the Denotatum

Job descriptions like caretaker, housekeeper, custodian, site manager and head of work force can reflect a lack of satisfaction with one's job. Similarly, in Arabic, words like 'āmil ('worker') can be substituted by muwaḍḍaf (employee), and sā'iq (driver) becomes murāfiq shakhṣi (personal companion) when one's employers are rich and powerful people. The idea is that those who do these jobs feel there is a lack of power in their job titles. Thus, they look for other titles which convey a more powerful position.

Moreover, names of royalty and rulers are sometimes substituted by other titles such as 'the Most High', 'the Serene', 'the August', etc. Lawrence (1973) claims that substitution of this kind is carried out for euphemistic purposes. However, according to the definition of euphemism adopted in this study, this is not the case here since the names of monarchs are often substituted by more beautiful-sounding names for panegyric purposes. The Arabic title Khādim al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn (the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques) and the English name 'Richard the Lion Heart' are very good examples of euphemisms used for such a purpose .

2.3.10 Hiding Facts and Manipulating Opinions

In the political press, euphemisms are used to suppress anger towards facts which might outrage readers. For example, those who are caught spying for their country would usually be described as having been 'expelled for activities incompatible with their status'. Similarly, when officials are fired, they are said to have 'resigned', or in the worst case 'to have been dismissed from their position'. In the Arabic press, dismissed officials are

often said to be 'released upon their request' (*u'fya binā 'an 'ala ṭalibihi*). 'Ethnic cleansing' for 'genocide' was another euphemism that entered the English language during the Serbs' war against the Croats and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia.

This list may also be extended to include the euphemism 'friendly fire' which refers to damage caused by one's own artillery in military combat, and the recently coined 'military war against terror' instead of calling it 'another form of terror' or even 'occupation'.

2.3.11 Adding a Sense of Politeness

When speaking of 'the deceased', for instance, which is itself a euphemism, it might be appropriate to say 'called home' or 'resting in peace'. In Arabic, euphemistic expressions in such a case would be *qaḍā naḥbah* (literally 'has fulfilled his/her vow') or *'intaqala 'ila al-rafīqi al-'a'lā*) literally i.e. (has moved to the Most High and Merciful). However, there may be other reasons for the use of euphemisms in the case of the mentioning the dead. There is also a social reason for the unwillingness to mention the name of the deceased. For as Lawrence (1973) rightly notes it is done in order not to revive the sorrows of the past.

2.3.12 Making the Expression of Taboo Words Possible

Although taboos are ever-evolving, euphemism has always been there to help. In other words, there is always a way to refer to taboos whether they belong to the areas of sex, religion, crime or parts of the body such as 'the insides' for the intestines or 'the pipe' for 'the urethra'. In English, there are more than 1,200 terms for 'vagina' and 2,000 words for 'whore' (Allan and Burridge 1991: 96). Such a wealthy repertoire of lexical items also reflects how these topics have been treated.

Religiously speaking, it is seen as blasphemous in Christianity to mention the true names of god. Therefore, 'gosh' and 'Gee' are used to avoid mentioning the word 'God' or 'Jesus'. It is believed that doing so i.e. referring to God by name, may provoke God's presence and his wrath (Lawrence 1973). Thus, many euphemisms have been used to avoid this such as 'Gog', 'Cocke', 'Gosse' and 'Gom' which were used in oaths in the sixteenth century. Later, contemporary words like the interjection 'Gee' for 'Jesus' and

'Losh' for 'Lord' were introduced. This can also be attributed to "Fear and desire to placate the mysterious forces that rule the universe" (Neaman and Silver 1983: 13). Thus, names of gods in English are treated cautiously. According to Lawrence (1973), Christian terms as 'the Anointed', 'the Redeemer' and 'the Saviour' and other synonymous expressions such as 'the Eternal', 'the Almighty', and 'the Creator' are used to avoid more direct references.

Furthermore, Allan and Burridge (1991), claim that "Modern European constraints on the use of God's name hark back to the Semitic founders of Judaism, Christianity and Islam".

This might be partially true as illustrated by Allan and Burridge (1991:37): "The Jewish god was written without vowels YHVH but reads out as Adonai meaning Lord– a euphemism that has been carried over into Christianity in both addressing and naming God and Jesus Christ". The situation is quite the opposite in Islam. Apart from a few places where it is believed impurity accumulates and thus it is prohibited to mention Allah's name, all Muslims are required to mention Allah's name as frequently as possible in their daily life. They actually worship Allah by mentioning His Names and Attributes consisting of more than ninety nine types of divine attributes to choose from for supplication. These divine names and attributes are not used for euphemistic purposes but rather for exaltation and submissiveness to His will as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān (Q.07:181). Moreover, in some acts of worship such as when slaughtering one's sacrifice, Allah's name must be mentioned in order to make this meat permissible to eat (i.e. *Ḥalāl*). Muslims must also start any work, good deeds and meals with the name of Allah who they believe may bring blessings and prosperity to them.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the concept of euphemism has been defined and some of its types have been identified. A comparison between the concept of euphemism in English and the *kināyah* and *taʿrīḍ* in Arabic was made. The comparison contained a detailed discussion regarding how the concept of euphemism is formed in Arabic, illustrated by relevant examples of the most

commonly used rhetorical tools for euphemising: *kināyah* and *ta'rīḍ*. The examples were elicited mainly from classical rhetorical books. In addition, some of the reasons for the use of euphemism have also been explored and contrasted in both Arabic and English.

The next chapter will focus on a discussion of the theoretical framework to be applied in this study.

CHAPTER 3. Approaches to Translation and Translation Assessment

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to review a variety of theoretical frameworks within the functional approach in order to establish a framework within which the present study of the translation of sex-related Qur'ānic euphemisms will be approached. There will be two main sections. The first will discuss the functional approach and assess its suitability for conducting this research, whilst the second will focus on translation assessment approaches with the aim of creating an assessment model specifically tailored for the assessment of the translation of euphemisms.

3.2 The Functional Approach

This study approaches Qur'ānic translation from a functional perspective focusing specifically on the theory of equivalence. It also employs a response-oriented tool to gauge target language (TL) readers' responses to euphemistic functions in the translations being assessed. It is hypothesised that due to the widely held notion of inimitability of the Qur'ān, translators do not aim to produce a text which would emulate its qualities but rather strive to do the source language text justice by rendering the linguistic functions it embodies. This topic is approached using functional theories with the principal focus being on the work of Nord. However, since Nord based her theory on Vermeer's Skopos Theory, and the work of Reiss (Nord 1997a; Nord 2006), these will also be discussed in order to provide a clearer view of functional approaches to translation. Nord's theory is one of the less controversial attempts within the functional approach which have been undertaken by proponents of Skopos Theory, and the functional approach which she has devised deviates somewhat from the original Skopos Theory as it gives importance to both source text (ST) and target text (TT).

The next section discusses Skopos Theory and demonstrates why such a theory would fall short of achieving a functional translation of the Qur'ān.

Nord's version of Skopos Theory is then reviewed, explaining why and how it can be used as a framework for this study in combination with versions of equivalence and response-oriented approaches suggested by various works of Nida and Newmark as we shall illustrate.

3.2.1 Skopos Theory

Skopos Theory was first established in 1970 by Vermeer, who then later worked together with Reiss to refine his original ideas (Munday 2001). Vermeer's main theoretical principle is that the ST should no longer be considered as "the sacred original", and that the purpose of the translation (i.e. *skopos*) is bound by the TL reader's expectations and needs (Honig 1997: 9). Nevertheless, the two scholars do not seem to hold exactly the same opinions with regards to the theory since Reiss' stance towards the ST differs from that of Vermeer. Adapting a typology of text proposed by Bühler (1990), Reiss contends that the preservation of the SL text type in the translation is important (Honig 1997: 8).

According to Vermeer (2000), Skopos Theory is part of the theory of translational action put forward by Holz-Mänttäri (1984) in which translation is seen as an action undertaken for a particular aim or purpose, from the Greek word *skopos*. The result of the action in the case of translation is the translatum (S.Holmes 2000). The purpose behind the action which results in a translatum "and the mode in which it is to be realized, are negotiated with the client who commissions the action" (Vermeer 2000: 221) i.e. the translator who is "the"- expert in translational action. He is responsible for the performance of the commissioned task, for the final translation. Insofar as the duly specified skopos is defined from the translator's point of view, the ST is a constituent of the commission, and as such the basis for all the hierarchically ordered relevant factors which ultimately determine the translatum" (Holmes 2000: 221-222).

One of the most conspicuous features of Skopos Theory which could be considered a negative aspect is that importance is wholly laid on the aim of translation rather than on adherence to the ST content. The TT or translatum is considered to be an offer of information concerning another offer of information in the ST. For a TT to be considered a good one it has to be

internally coherent; that is to say in compliance with the TT recipient's circumstances and knowledge. Coherence with the ST- which can happen by mere chance in this theory- is given the least degree of importance while the translation skopos is given the ultimate priority over any other factors. The relationship which seems to hold between the ST and TT is merely reflective as Vermeer explains:

> [T]he source text is oriented towards, and is in any case bound to, the source culture. The target text, the *translatum,* is oriented towards the target culture, and it is this which ultimately defines its adequacy (Vermeer 2000: 223).

Adequacy is an intra-textual criterion which binds translation only to the recipients. Vermeer seems to view translation as a means to an end i.e. the skopos, as opposed to the prominent view which holds that translation is the end.

Skopos theory was strongly criticized by a number of translators as well as other translation theoreticians such as Newmark (1990), Pym (1995; 1996; 1991) and others. It was criticized mainly for the way it defines translation, for the unconventional relationship it establishes between the ST and TT (Baker 1998: 308), and for oversimplifying the view of the purpose of the TT. Pym (1991) rightly posits that this theory plays down the professional ethics' dimension to translation by focusing heavily on the purpose of a translation without evaluating whether this is good or bad. He adds that emphasis in this theory "is placed on radically different and mutually distant cultures rather than on translation as a phenomenon that occurs between real or virtual neighbours in order to change their intercultural relations" (*ibid.*: 3). Moreover, he criticizes some of its terminology as being inaccurate such as the term *transfer;* he doubts what sort of information will be transferred from the ST when it is being dethroned as such has lost its central role.

Although this theory is meant to be a general theory (Munday 2001) which is supposed to deal effectively with variable chunks of language and a variable range of text types, it would be inappropriate to apply it to the translation of literary texts, let alone a highly-valued type of text such as the Qur'ān.

Nevertheless, Honig (1997: 10) who has published various works within the functional paradigm claims that Vermeer's ideas were misunderstood and, for this reason, were attacked. He advocates that Vermeer never maintained that change of function is always the norm in translation. Furthermore, as we shall see later, Nord (1997b: 109), who is a pro-functionalist theoretician herself and pro-Skopos Theory in most instances, admits that the latter theory is not valid for use with literary texts due to their stylistic complexity and the fact that do not have only one simple specific purpose. To address these weaknesses, she suggests a function-plus-loyalty model in order to render this theory applicable to different types of texts and literary texts in particular (*ibid.*: 123).

3.2.2 Nord's Functional Theory of Translation

As discussed above, functionalistic approaches place the major emphasis on the purpose of a translation with this superseding the importance of any other criteria. However, although for Reiss and Vermeer (1984) the purpose (skopos) is the key criterion of the theory, this was not clearly defined, leaving the theory open to both interpretation and criticism (Gentzler 2001). House (2001) also criticises the lack of preciseness of the notion of function, and the impossibility of objectively assessing this. Furthermore, even Nord herself who is a proponent of this approach was concerned about Vermeer's vague use of the terms 'skopos' and 'purpose'. She explains that the 'skopos' lies within the target culture and defines the situation where the TT is going to be received, whereas the 'purpose' stems from the source culture and drives the translation to the target culture (Nord 1997b: 115).

Nord approaches translation from a function-oriented angle as she clearly states: "my concept of translation is basically functional" (Nord 2005: 5). Departing from this approach, she defines translation as:

> The production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text (translation skopos). Translation allows a communicative act to take place which because of existing linguistic and cultural barriers would not have been possible without it (Nord 2005: 32).

'Functional' is the key word in Nord's definition as she deems function to be an overriding criterion in translation which is typically similar to that of the Skopos Theory. However, the relationship between the SL and the TL is given more emphasis in Nord's model. She explains that the translation skopos helps the translator to decide which elements need to be preserved and which need to be adapted. She further explains:

> Translation therefore depends on the compatibility of the target text skopos with the source text, a compatibility whose definition is culture-specific. One would interpret it as the loyalty towards the source text author or sender at least in those cases where the source text sender also "signs" as translated text sender. The translator is expected not to falsify the author's intention (Nord 2005: 29).

Loyalty as opposed to 'fidelity' and 'faithfulness' is a responsibility which "commits the translator bilaterally to the source and the target side" while the latter two "usually refer to a relationship of similarity between texts or even surface structures of texts" (Nord 1997a: 48). Nord seems to have taken advantage of the space assigned for the translator by Skopos Theory not in terms of the TT but rather for the advantage of the ST.

Another key word in Nord's theory of translation is the word 'communicativity'; text is considered to be a communicative action, and during the first phase of translation (i.e. the analysis phase) the translator first analyses the communicative factors in the ST and their functions in the situation. The prospective TT functions should correspond to those of the ST.

In Nord's theory, the translator's role is unique. Nord considers the translator to be a receptor him/herself and Nord views him/her as "a ghost-writer who produces a text at the request, and for the use of somebody else" (1991: 10). The translator's ability relies on analysis to recognise and assess the intra-textual and extra-textual factors which define the ST and TT functions. The translator's reception is influenced by the ST initiator on the one hand, and the translator's own knowledge, competences, and command of both source and target cultures. In this respect, the translator here is in the same situation as the potential TT recipients, or more accurately, the translator is

the first TT recipient addressed by the initiator. Moreover, the translator's role is also to identify, isolate and preserve those elements which need to be preserved or adapted in the translated text (*ibid.*: 21).

However, Nord makes it clear that "a translation is normally expected to render 'faithfully' all the relevant features of the source text" (*ibid.*: 22). Although relevance is subjective, it can be said to be bound to a translator's professionalism which involves a wide range of factors including linguistic competence, familiarity with source and target cultures, ability to use translation aids, and transfer competence. The production phase aims at achieving functional equivalence which, according to Nord, "is not the normal skopos of a translation, but an exceptional case in which the factor 'change of functions' is assigned zero (*ibid.*: 23). This idea is further reiterated as 'intertextual coherence' between the ST and the TT where both texts share the same functions, as discussed later.

The functions of the text are differentiated from the intention of the author and its effects on the receptor. Although all three factors are congruent, the author's intention is not necessarily effective in eliciting the intended effect or response from the receptors with the textual functions employed in the text. In other words, an author may aim at creating a piece of work in which he/she wishes to affect the receivers in a certain way. However, his/her wishes may not come true due to, for instance, technical reasons when creating the work. According to Nord (1991), functions are assessed before reception, whereas the effect of the text can only be assessed after reception.

The intention of the initiator may be elicited by means of clues in the content such as "subject matter, choice of informative details" (*ibid.*: 48), or from hints produced as a result of form such as composition, or stylistic and rhetorical characteristics. Therefore, the ST analysis is of prime importance in Nord's theory. She posits that: "The source text provides the offer of information that forms the starting point for the offer of information formulated in the target text" (Nord 1997b: 62). Text-linguistic models should "include a pragmatic analysis of the communicative situations involved and

[...] the same model [should] be used for both the source text and the translation brief, thus making the results comparable" (*ibid.*: 62).

In order to assess the different functions of a text, Nord (1997b) follows the steps of Bühler and Reiss who classified texts into three different types: informative, operative, and expressive (cited in Nord 1997:37). According to Nord (1997b), informative texts are texts which are created to give information to the receptor. In this type of text, linguistic and stylistic forms are of secondary importance to content. Examples of this type would be a newspaper article or a text which presents opinions or intentions. The second type is operative in which both content and form are secondary to the extra-linguistic effect the text was initially made to achieve. A text of this type would be an oral speech which is meant to deliver a vocative effect on the audience.

The third function is expressive and, in this case, the aesthetic component is apparent in stylistic forms employed in the text to produce aesthetic effects. For this type of text Nord (1997b: 38) advocates a stylistic rendering in the translation similar to the style used in the ST which may well have other functions (i.e. different from expressive) or sub-functions (i.e. under the expressive function). Nord (1997b: 40) adds further function adapted from Jackobson (1960), namely the phatic function. According to Nord (1997b: 44), this type of text, "aims at establishing, maintaining or ending contact between sender and receiver". An example of this type would be, for instance, a catch phrase which employs humour in order to produce a friendly atmosphere. However, in the case of the Qur'ān, it is technically impossible to assess the initiator's intent, thus, the focus needs to be on the textual aspects of the text which can be assessed.

To recapitulate, Nord's concept of translation shares some aspects with Skopos Theory. For while Skopos Theory is TT and target-culture oriented, and totally ignores the functions of the ST, "dethroning" it in the words of Vermeer (Quoted in Snell-Hornby 1995 :111) Nord's view of translation values the ST features, functions, and the initiator's intention. She also expresses two reservations regarding this theory.

The first of these is that intertextual coherence or fidelity which is claimed to hold between the ST and the TT is given secondary priority to the skopos of the translation. It can be clearly seen that Skopos Theory expects the unexpected by assuming change in functions which in turn would justify making unnecessary modifications to the TL. Nord (2006 : 4) admits the likelihood of such a case occuring if the SL and TL are distant in time and/or space but not as highly expected as it is in the Skopos Theory.

The second reservation pointed out by Nord concerns the relationship between the translator and the author of the text. Nord (1997:48) rightly sees the lack of a loyalty principle in Skopos Theory between these two and therefore she creates a function-plus-loyalty theory. However, with regard to loyalty in Nord's theory, the translator's freedom is not constrained within the SL; she envisages a scale which applies to various types of translation and ranges from extreme fidelity to extreme liberty (Williams 2009). In reality, though, Nord only criticises Skopos Theory mildly and considers that her theory forms part of it, maintaining that some of its principles have been misinterpreted.

Nevertheless, Nord does incorporate other aspects from the theory of equivalence into her work such as faithfulness, loyalty, fidelity and text effect on recipients. Her theory proposes 'intertextual coherence', i.e. between the ST and TT. She emphasizes that the translator should aim for a product which has a skopos compatible with the initiator's intention. She posits that while "functionality is the most important criterion for a translation", translators "have to postulate a compatibility between ST intention and TT functions, if translation is to be possible at all" (Nord 1991: 28). Therefore, her model "stands on two pillars: functionality plus loyalty" (Nord 1997b: 126).

However, Nord's notion of functionality is still fairly influenced by Skopos Theory's notion of the change of functions. The skopos in Nord's view is often the same in both the ST and the TT although there are cases when the translation's function or purpose is different from the original. This point is taken up by Reiss who referred to the "special functions of a translation" (Quoted in Nord 2005: 5). As a matter of fact, there seems to be a great deal

of agreement between the positions of Reiss and Nord as compared to that of Vermeer's. However, in the case of Qur'ānic translation which we have here, a change of functions between the ST and TT cannot be accepted. Thereupon, in this case there is no change of functions i.e. the factor "change of functions" is assigned zero (Nord 1991: 23).

3.3 Translation Assessment

Sager (1989: 91) claimed that "There are no absolute standards of translation quality but only more or less appropriate translations for the purpose for which they are intended". The area of translation evaluation, or better yet, translation quality assessment (i.e. TQA) is one of the most controversial, hotly debated and unresolved areas within translation studies. It can be differentiated from translation quality assurance or control which takes place before a translation reaches its intended receivers; or more precisely in business contexts, before it is delivered to the clients (Williams 2004: 163). Thus, TQA is a process that is conducted only after the translation is produced, published and has been consumed by its recipients. Early attempts at TQA date back to 1959 when the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs held a themed conference on Quality in Translation after which a shift occurred towards placing more importance on the purpose of the translation in lieu of abstract-based criteria (Melis and Albir 2001; Williams 2004).

Munday (2012: 155) rightly posits that translation itself is "a constant evaluative process: it encompasses the checking of possible TT equivalents against the ST and against each other in a process of refinement that leads to the selection of a single equivalent". However, there are many reasons for conducting TQA. These could be language-centred when the aim is to assess, for instance, linguistic gaps across languages, or conducting comparative linguistic studies. TQA can also be translator-centred where it is used for assessing translators' competence, the cognitive processes in their minds, their strategies and techniques, or for assessing translator training outcomes. It can also be directed towards assessing target readership in which case the focus is on aspects of reception, response or comprehension

of the translation. Therefore, there are always different reasons, sets of criteria, and numerous ways of approaching the process of evaluation.

3.3.1 Reasons for Lack of Conformity in TQA

Despite exhaustive research and repeated attempts at producing assessment frameworks, there does not seem to be any existing criteria which has been agreed upon for assessment, let alone a one-fits-all framework. This area remains a contentious one which can be attributed to a number of reasons, one of them being that the criteria for evaluation are broadly defined and lack precision.

Reiss (2000: 2) remarks that evaluators take the translation as the only available material which can be used for evaluation. Similarly, Al-Qinai (2000) claims that reviewers or evaluators too often evaluate a translation without comparing it to the ST. They both rightly suggest that assessment should involve both the ST and the TT in order to explore the process of decision making and what lies behind the translation decisions. Moreover, Reiss (2000: 5) remarks that translation should be looked at as translation meaning that criteria relating to its literary quality in terms of imaginativeness, author's profundity of thought, etc., are of less importance than scrutinizing whether the content of the source language text (SLT thence forth) has been accurately represented. Numerous reasons have been advanced in the literature for the reasons why there is a lack of conformity in translation assessment. Describing these as legion, Williams (2004) offers ten reasons which help to explain the lack of consensus in TQA. These are reported below:

1- Some TQA models are text-type oriented and cannot be adequately generalized to encompass all types of texts. Different text types fulfill disparate functions and what is common in one type, may be absent from another.

2- There is no consensus about the degree to which a factor should affect the quality of translation. For example, factors external to the translation such as deadline on which the translation should be delivered, and the competence of the evaluator - if they were ever included - could be of a varying weight on the assessment output.

3- Clients or ST initiators, translators, and readers may have completely different notions of quality. According to Williams (2004), the dilemma is: whose notion should be followed?

4- There is lack of uniformity between evaluators with regards to what should be considered translation errors. They may have different opinions with regards to considering aspects like elegance of style, frequency of typo errors, or use of formal vs. informal language.

5- Level of accuracy is another area where there is no consistency. In other words, for some linguistic or cultural differences between the SL and the TL, translators might make semantic shifts incurring slight deviation between the ST and the translation. Such deviation might still be considered as an error by some evaluators while it might already have been compensated for elsewhere in the translation.

6- It is time consuming and labourious to carry out sampling, especially of long translated works. Even after sampling what is believed to be sufficient data for error detection, the likelihood of undetected errors still exists.

7- TQA models are often quantitative and the decision regarding whether a translation is satisfactory or unsatisfactory depends on the quantitative findings which ignores to some extent the different levels of seriousness of those errors.

8- Some models tend to use a qualitative approach to errors which categorises them, for instance, into critical, major, and minor weaknesses, the problem regarding the lack of consensus on how to categorise these errors still remains.

9- Evaluators might agree on a comprehensive model which consists of various parameters; however, presenting an overall assessment of translation quality based on these parameters is still subjective. In other words, models do offer parameters which can be used for the purposes of measurement, but even so it is unclear how assessment of these parameters is to be made.

10-Unless the aim of the TQA is clearly defined before it is undertaken, the task serves no purpose. In other words, an assessment undertaken for informative purposes as a means of eliciting feedback for pedagogical purposes is different from one undertaken for a summative purpose when the level of translators' knowledge is assessed in order to award a certificate, or for formative purposes when assessment is carried out solely for the purposes of training (Melis and Albir 2001).

3.3.2 Selected Approaches to Translation Evaluation

House (1997: 1) has argued that "Evaluating the quality of translation presupposes a theory of translation. Thus different views of translation lead to different concepts of translational quality, and hence different ways of assessing it". The need for quality in translation and the assessment of quality could be inferred from scholarly definitions of translation. That is, the way translation is theorized dictates the criteria used to measure quality in translations. Since there have been different approaches to translation, TQA would inevitably be an area of conflict caused initially by the different notions of translation in the minds of the proponents of these various approaches. For example, Nida's definition of dynamic equivalence centres around a TT reader's response evoked by the translation that should correspond to that of the ST reader's evoked by the SLT (Nida 1964). Accordingly, the yardstick which marks quality in Nida's theory would be the similarity in response evoked by the translation on the receptors. Nonetheless, similarity is different from sameness as clearly stated by Nida (1975: 27) since that translation would inevitably experience either loss of meaning, addition of information, or skewing of information.

Melis and Albir (2001) rightly define three different areas of evaluation: evaluation of translations, evaluation of translators, and evaluation of translation curricula. An example of the first area would be an assessment of a single translation of one ST or more than one translation of the same text (comparative translation). Three different criteria could be involved: textual, contextual, and functional. The assessment in this case possesses a summative nature as it is meant to judge the translation, analyse its

strengths and weaknesses, and possibly offer solutions to certain translation problems or correct errors. This type of evaluation is often qualitative as it is quality which is being assessed (*ibid.*: 279). The second type is directed towards assessing translators in order to permit them to or prevent them from working in professional translator settings. Texts used in this type are of a specific nature such as technical, legal, scientific, etc. The third area is concerned with translation pedagogy where the focus is on correcting and rating translation errors in academic settings.

However, according to House (2001), the definition of 'meaning' is what lies behind the numerous approaches to and theories of translation. She differentiates between three major approaches to translation, namely mentalist, text- and discourse-based, and response-based. The mentalist approach which views meaning as "a concept residing in language users' heads" (*ibid*: 243) assumes that translation is intuitive and interpretive. According to this approach, meaning changes according to readers' positions and their interpretations of the text. This subjective stance has been adopted more recently by neo-hermeneutic scholars "who regard translation as an individual creative act depending exclusively on subjective interpretation and transfer decisions, artistic-literary intuitions and interpretive skills and knowledge" (*ibid.*: 244). Despite its open-endedness, this approach might work for some literary texts which are made to trigger reader's imagination but is definitely not valid for quality assessment of a religious text such as the Qur'ān which is meant to be informative and legislative.

The second approach is text- and discourse-based. Famous proponents of this approach are Venuti, Toury and Lefevere. They mark a shift towards looking at the role that the translation plays within the context of the target culture. Toury (1995) for example advocates the need for a target-culture-oriented translation, and thus bases his theory on the proposal that translation should be evaluated according to the target culture's features and constraints. He prescribes that the target culture norms dictate translator decisions. However, although norms differ across cultures, they can still be broadly classified and defined. For example, there can be expectancy norms which are concerned with readers' expectations about the translation,

linguistic norms which require the translator to maintain intertextual relations between the SL and the TL, communication norms where the translation ought to work to ensure communication takes place in translation, and finally accountability norms where translators should act responsibly towards the parties involved in the translating process such as the author, the text, and the readership (Chesterman 2000: 76).

Within the response-based approach, House (2001) differentiates between two views: behaviouristic and functionalistic. The behaviouristic view is associated with the third criteria of Nida's theory of dynamic equivalence (to be discussed in details in Chapter 6) which proposes the use of three criteria for judging translation: (1) the general efficiency of the communication process; (2) comprehension of intent, and (3) equivalence of response (Nida 1964: 182). He explains that equivalence can either be SL-oriented or TL-oriented. In the former the translator should convey to the receptor "the basis of the original response" where in the latter "the receptor makes a corresponding response within a different cultural context" (ibid.: 183).

Nida proposes three broad criteria for translation assessment. The first criterion is efficiency of the communication process which can be measured by assessing the ease with which receptors decode the message. The less effort (i.e. minimal effort according to Nida) the TL reader has to exert in order to understand the translation (i.e. maximal reception), the more efficient the translation is (Nida 1964: 182). The second criterion is comprehension of the SL's intent. This particular criterion is designed to deal with the accuracy of the translation for the TL audience, the translator's fidelity, and the correctness or relativity of the message for that audience in particular. The third criterion is receptor response which can either be source-culture oriented in formal equivalence, or target-culture-oriented in dynamic equivalence. The similarity between the two dimensions "depends on the cultural distance between the two communication contexts" (ibid.: 183).

Moreover, translations as viewed by Nida (1964) can be located on a two-end scale; extremely literal translation corresponding with formal correspondence, and free translation (highly dynamic). However, he is not

always in favour of any one of the two at the expense of the other as he affirms that "there are certain points on both ends of this scale at which extremely F-E or D-E translations fall off rapidly in efficiency, accuracy, and relevance" (ibid: 183). Furthermore, he admits that formal equivalence is more common to generate mistakes than dynamic equivalence would (ibid.). There are two main conflict areas from which mistakes can arise: style and content. Adherence to one at the expense of the other is problematic, but it is of prime importance for both to preserve the meaning of the SLT and its effect on the receptor. To further explain this, Nida (1964) rightly claims that adherence to form alone would result in a translation that lacks the charm of the original, whilst equally attending only to style would result in distortion of meaning. Therefore, it is understood that a translator should first and foremost aim at meaning. However, this is often embedded in both form and style which it is the translator's task to analyse, assess and reproduce.

However, in Nida's theory, euphemisms come under the umbrella of connotative meaning which he defines as the aspect of "the meaning which deals with our emotional reactions to words"(Nida and Taber 1982: 91) . A good translation then in Nida's view is one which triggers a response similar to that of the original but the degree of similarity relies on how close the two cultures are.

Newmark (1981: 127) proposes that texts of a literary nature should be regarded as connotative while non-literary ones are denotative. In translation, the latent meaning of connotative texts should be revealed; i.e. "to point the allegory in the story, the moral in the action, etc." (ibid.). He affirms that one significant translation criterion which should be assessed is whether the translation is well written (i.e. effectively) or badly written (i.e. ineffectively), a principle which Newmark calls "the equivalent effect". He goes on to say that "a translator who aims at something other than producing a similar response cannot claim to be attempting a full translation" (ibid.: 133). He argues that translations that do not adhere to this principle are often either stylistically biased producing "a high-flown travesty [...] dedicated to the spirit of the original", or content biased which reproduces "information, shedding emphasis, expressiveness or persuasiveness, and reduces all meaning to cognitive meaning" (ibid.: 132).

However, as Newmark rightly claims, translation is written and intended for a target reader who may not necessarily be the same type of reader the SLT had intended to address. It is the translator's job to assist the reader by making the sense of the passage clear rather than adhering to the formal aspects of the source (*ibid.*: 128). One more important criterion proposed by Newmark is naturalness. In his opinion just like the SL writer who includes content which reflect his or her own idiolect and personal touch, the translator should translate in a way which reflects the translator's idiosyncrasies in order for the translation to be considered coherent.

Newmark lists four basic procedures which need to be borne in mind in translation criticism (Newmark 1981: 182):

1- Analysis of the writer's intention and the functional (i.e. linguistic) aspects of the text, theme, style, and presumed readership. Such an analysis should enable the translator to decide what translation method it is suitable to adopt

2- A thorough comparison between the ST and a rough draft of the TT noting any linguistic and paralinguistic features which may potentially cause conflict.

3- An assessment of the total impression of both theSLTand target language text (TLT thence forth) in terms of the content whether it has been fully represented or otherwise.

4- An evaluation of the translation.

Nevertheless, Newmark rightly admits that criticism is only partially objective as it involves an exercise of intelligence and imagination. Therefore, the evaluator's personal impressions can play a role in a positive or negative assessment. In other words, translation criticism should ideally assess some fixed aspects of the translation. However, the process of assessing those invariables is where subjectivity could interfere.

Moreover, House (1997: 45) who designed a general model for TQA which consisted of various dimensions (i.e. syntactic, textual, lexical, etc.) contends that "If a translation text, in order to be adequate, is to fulfil the requirement of a dimensional, and as a result of this, a functional match, then any

mismatch along the dimensions is an error". However, the task of assessment is not an easy job to do and as Hatim and Munday (2004: 38) stress: "This is a much more difficult area to investigate objectively".

It must be re-iterated here that for the purposes of this research, it is maintained that a translation of the Qur'ān- believed by Muslims to be the word of God- can never be of the same status as the ST nor has one ever been claimed to be to the best of my knowledge. The superiority of the Qur'ān in terms of its elevated style and complex structures implies that it will evoke different responses in receptors. It follows therefore that the responses evoked by the translation should not be compared to those inspired by the original. Moreover the responses which may be triggered by the original are not of a definable nature. In other words, responses are conditioned by many factors including the receptor's comprehension, linguistic awareness and cultural background. So, there will always be response variations between readers of the text. Therefore, a wholly response-oriented assessment theory is not valid for use as a general framework for assessing translations of the Qur'ān.

3.3.3 A Framework to Assess Translation of Qur'ānic Euphemisms

The theories adopted for this study approach translation from functional and response-oriented points of view. In the pursuit to present fully comprehensive models, individual attempts at devising disparate models of translation have fallen short in their attempts to present a valid model which would be capable of dealing effectively with the translation of euphemistic meaning, and given their shortcomings, they could not be applied to a highly-valued text such as the Qur'ān. For this reason and in order to create a model capable of fulfilling the goals of this study, two approaches will be integrated in the model devised for this research, namely functional and response-oriented.

All the theories discussed earlier deal with texts at a macro-level, while euphemism, by its very essence, operates at a micro level. Therefore more than one approach is used here, and this specially-tailored model draws upon elements from various theories which have been chosen for their

appropriateness. It is based on Nord's functional theory, a balanced Skopos Theory, in which both ST and TT are equally valued. The functions of the ST are considred to be within the parcel of meaning, hence they must be equivalently presented. However, equivalence is not considered in terms of sameness but rather similarity.

The model is also based on an analytical comparison between the SL and the TL in terms of their euphemistic functions and the receptors' recognition of these. The model is based on the idea that if both ST and TT receptors can recognise the euphemistic meaning in the ST and TT respectively, then the translating process is successful. Due to the qualitative nature of euphemistic meaning, this model is not quantitative but rather qualitative and inevitably impression-based. Yet, the impressions to be assessed by the model reflect real impressions about the TT made by the real target readership which gives a tangible assessment of the reader's satisfaction about the translation with regards to the translation of euphemisms.

The above mentioned model is also derived from Nida's principle of dynamic equivalence as discussed earlier and its equivalence of response. He presents three principles according to which translation should be judged: 1. The degree of faithfulness to the original which enables the reader to comprehend the message correctly; 2. Ease of comprehension; and 3. Involvement of TT recipient's experience in order to elicit feedback regarding levels of satisfaction with the translation which indicates its adequacy to the receptors' circumstances. The first criterion is perhaps more clearly explained in de Waard and Nida (1986) as: "the manner in which receptors of the translation text respond to the translation text must be equivalent to the manner in which the receptors of the source text respond to the source text" (Quoted in House 1997: 4).

Koller (1972) also supported the use of receptors to judge a translation and developed a linguistic assessment model containing three main stages: 1. Critical scrutiny of the ST in terms of its transferability to TL after analysing its features; 2. Descriptive account of the methods adopted in the translation; 3. Evaluation of the translation according to its adequacy or non adequacy in terms of the textual features assessed in stage 1. Koller added that the final

stage was to be "measured by native speakers' meta–linguistic judgments" (cited in House 1997: 17).

Sager (1989) also acknowledges that the end user could be involved in the assessment process as a principal assessor. He argues that the end user can assess the translation's intelligibility and acceptability by virtue of comparing it with similar TL texts. Moreover, native speakers are deemed to have "keen appreciation" for emotive meaning. "That is to say, they have 'a feeling' for the appropriateness of words in certain types of linguistic and cultural contexts" (Nida 1964: 70). Yet, feeling is difficult to define and, likewise, to evaluate. Therefore, fully aware that response measurability is not wholly clear in Nida's theory nor in Koller's model, the assessment model will ask a group of English native speakers to identify the euphemistic segments in the TT which correspond to the ST euphemistic segments. This type of assessment model was also used by Osgood, Suci et al. (1957) who constructed a respondent-oriented model for assessment of meaning.

The model adopted for the assessment is based on the primary assumption that euphemisms employ aesthetic functions in the text, and that such a function ought to be communicated in the translation. Newmark (1998: 142) for instance agrees that "since translation is an instrument of truth, and translators should be bound by human rights agreements, translation is in principle at variance with euphemisms, although, with safeguards, they have to be rendered accurately". He affirms that there are both culture-specific and universal euphemisms (e.g. ageism and crime respectively) and therefore some "standard euphemisms" should have their "standard target language equivalents". He further argues that the translator ought to preserve the euphemism's "erotic charge if there is one" (ibid.). Newmark's assumption reflects his notion of 'equivalent effect' discussed above.

One of the difficulties I have personally faced in deciding which assessment model or criteria ought to be applied in this study is that assessment models are mostly designed for commercial purposes where clients are very much catered for even at the expense of the ST structures whereas the text at hand enjoys unique sacredness as compared to other religious texts. This element of sacredness limits the translator's space for free translation.

Secondly, most models are designed in a comprehensive way and are meant to deal with the translation operation including tiny details which may not be relevant in many cases (Cf Samuelsson-Brown 1996).

Thirdly, comprehensive models deal with translation and meaning at a macro level while this study is dealing with one micro-level aspect of meaning: i.e. euphemistic meaning and linking it to the higher levels of textual and contextual elements. Therefore, since function seems to have been a determinant factor against which translation quality is measured (Kingscott 1996), the diagnostic TQA model used for this study will be applied to judge whether these translations have successfully transferred the euphemistic functions over to the target reader or not.

Drawing on a case study using metaphor, found in (Toury 1995: 82), it is postulated that the following possibilities may be expected in the rendering of euphemism:

1. Euphemism into euphemism (Formal equivalence)

    a. Same euphemism (Literal rendering)   .

    b. 'Different' euphemism (Functional equivalence using adaptation (Nord 2005: 28) or any other procedure)

2. Euphemism into non-euphemism (Semantic rendering)

Since it is presumed that the simpler the assessment model is, the more objective it will be when undertaking the assessment process, the model will only use one parameter to assess whether the receptors recognize the existence of a euphemistic expression in the translation in order to minimize the factor of subjectivity. The questionnaire will be target oriented and will not be applied to the ST for the following reasons:

1- Since the assessment is mainly TT-oriented, there is no need to assess the SL receptors' response.

2- The SLT appeared more than 1400 years ago and people's sensitivity towards its language may well have changed, especially since euphemisms feature culture-oriented expressions which change their meaning over time, be it referential or connotative.

3- The textual analysis conducted in this study depends greatly on real SLT recipients (exegetes and dictionary makers) who have a similar- if not the same- language sensitivity to the original recipients of the Qurʾān when it was revealed.

The validity of this simple model has been carefully considered. Since "a measure is valid only when it really measures what it is supposed to measure" (Neves 2008: 116), it is postulated here that this parameter is entirely bound to the subject of the study. In other words, the model is dealing directly with the euphemistic expressions found in the translations, and therefore it is believed to be valid for these. As for reliability, it is also believed that if the same model was used with informants with a similar level of language competence, it would show the same results.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the use of the functional approach as a framework capable of achieving the goals of the present study was discussed. After reviewing Skopos Theory, it was argued that Nord's version of this would make a suitable principle theory since she gives both the ST and the TT due concern in her model.

The latter section focussed on theoretical approaches to translation assessment, and considered the reasons for the lack of a fixed set of criteria for translation quality assessment. After reviewing a number of different approaches to assessing translation quality, a specifically tailored model was devised to assess the translation of euphemisms. The next chapter explores the reasons why translating the Qurʾān is unlike translating other types of texts.

CHAPTER 4. **Translating the Qur'ān**

Introduction:

This chapter is mainly concerned with the Qur'ān as it is the primary source of data for this study. The chapter will begin by establishing both linguistically and historically why the Qur'ān is considered by Muslims to be a unique genre of text. This will be followed by a section on the history of its translation with a major focus on translations into western languages. Then, there will be a section linking together the three topics of the Qur'ān, euphemism and translation, which deals with the tools used for depicting Qur'ānic meaning such as 'asbāb al-nuzūl and al-maqām (reasons for revelations and context respectively). The chapter will conclude with a section which demonstrates that contextual links are required when interpreting euphemistic expressions in order to comprehend whether the intended meaning was euphemistic or not.

4.1 **The Status of the Qur'ān**

The Qur'ān is the Muslims' holy book. It is believed by Muslims to have been revealed to the Prophet Mohammed, as a miracle to challenge the Arabs of his time who greatly enjoyed eloquence. The divine challenge is worded in some of its verses such as:

- (قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا)

Translation: "If mankind and the *jinn* gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants" (Q. 17:88).

The Qur'ān enjoys a unique combination of rhythm and rhyme but is still different from poetry and prose. It has its own distinct stylistic and literary discourse which mixes metrical and non-metrical speech presenting meaning in an elegant form. To Muslims, it is a text which "falsehood would not touch from the front or from the back" (Cf Q. 41:42). Muslims, who believe in the unique idiosyncrasy of the Qur'ān, appreciate such an eloquent form of language that is different from any other book in their tradition.

Muslims believe that during Moses era, the people enjoyed a great power of magic, and worked the miracles of parting the Red Sea and getting water from a rock (Cf. Q 07:109-113). His miracles challenged his people of what was considered part of their expertise. The Prophet Mohammed on the other hand, was sent to a people whose command of language was lucid, as evidenced in various genres. Although the people of Arabia were mostly unlettered, their tribal pride was demonstrated through oral poetry, which was phenomenally powerful. One line of poetry would make one tribe superior to another, while another line could be a cause for a long-running war between two tribes like that of *Dāḥis* and *al-Ghabrā*. Arabs used to hang their so-called Seven Odes in their most sacred shrine, *al-Ka'bah*, to demonstrate their pride in their eloquence. To early Arabs, this aesthetic sense was the criterion they used to appraise the eloquence of the Qur'ān and verify whether it was revealed by Allah, or simply written by the unlettered Mohammed himself as was claimed later by some Orientalists as well.

Even now, fourteen centuries after its revelation, Muslims are still captivated by the sound of recitation of the Qur'ān and believe that if God wills it, it can heal the ill (Ibn al-Qayyim 1994; Ghulam-Haider 2001). In addition, the Qur'ān offers Muslims both a legislative and a theological account of knowledge that serves to guide them through life thanks to the extensive variety of themes it covers.

Andrae (2000: 115), author of *Mohammed, the Man and his Faith*, affirms that the Qur'ān was the prophet's miracle:

> Allah gave Mohammed the Koran as a miracle which is and will be for all time an unsurpassable model of eloquence. The miraculous quality of the Koran consists in its style which is such that it unites within itself the five chief types of eloquence, and hence it cannot be imitated either by men or by demons.

Moreover, there are anecdotes thoughout Islamic history books that affirm that some Arabs embraced Islam because of the text's miraculous rhetoric, including 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who used to be a deadly enemy of the prophet, *al-Ṭafīl b. 'Amr* and others (al-Mubarakpouri 2002).

The Qur'ān's qualities have even been attested to by a number of non-Muslim scholars and translators who have dealt closely with this divine text such as Nicholson (1993) and Lawrence(2007). Thomas Ballantyne Irving, a linguist and translator of the Qur'ān, wrote: "The Qur'ān is a magnificent document that has been known for fourteen centuries because of its matchlessness or inimitability, its essential *'i jāz*, to use the Qur'ānic term" Irving (1985: 2). This unique style uses a combination of rhetoric and cohesive devices. The first is used to please and persuade the reader while the latter binds verses lexically and grammatically, not to mention the aesthetic effect this creates which often has an emotional impact on the reader and listener.

Linguistically, however, the Qur'ān consists of rhythmic verses, phrases and sentences that are unlike conventional Arabic poetry or prose (Guillaume 1990, Boullata 2000). Moreover, it covers a wide range of themes including the Unity of Allah, His attributes, the Hereafter, everyday worship, historical events, punishment and reward. The style of the Qur'ān is also idiosyncratic, combining description, is sometimes narrating stories of the past nations, historical narrative and dialogue. Given this broad array of thematic assortments, assessing these text functions is not an easy task and thus translating it is not an ordinary job.

Furthermore, a wide variety of grammatical and rhetorical devices has been employed in the Qur'ān, including grammatical shift covering changes in person, number and addressee (Abdel Haleem 1971). The Qur'ān also changes topics and deals with certain subjects repeatedly. Sudden pronominal shift known as *'iltifāt* ('apostrophe') which "aims at expressing a particular meaning or set of meanings by alternating between the use of first, second and third person pronouns"(al-Quran and al-Azzam 2009: 1) is to be considered a very effective rhetorical device in Qur'ānic discourse (Robinson 2003). Generally, such semantic and stylistic features and techniques are used for a number of purposes including reinforcement, persuasion, dissuasion, and emphasis, etc. (Abdel Haleem 2005: 6).

According to Abdul-Raof (2000), linguistic analysis of the morphological and stylistic aspects of the Qur'ān such as word order, simple vs. complex

structures, numerical symmetry and use of couplets, proves its uniqueness. Thus, all of the above mentioned aspects combine together to form a text that has proven troublesome to translators. This chapter will centre on a discussion of the notion of equivalence in the translations of the Qur'ān based on the aforementioned textual features and aspects. This subject will be explored by tracing comments made by translators of the Qur'ān and the approaches they have taken when attempting to define equivalence in it. Consequently, the aim is to define some limitations of the theory of equivalence in terms of its application in the Qur'ān.

4.2 A Brief History of Qur'ānic Translations

The first example of Qur'ānic translation took place when a convoy of early believers of Islam fled to Abyssinia to seek refuge with 'Aṣḥamah b. Abjar (al-Najāshi) who was the Emperor of Axum at that time. It was reported that when they met him, they had translated some verses from Chapter 19 (the Chapter of Mariam) and recited them before him (Ibn Hishām 1995). Later, the Prophet Mohammed sent a letter to al-Mukawkes, ruler of Egypt, inviting him to embrace Islam. The letter included the following Qur'ānic verse (Q.03:64):

- (قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

Saheeh Translation: "Say, O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah." But if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].".

The letter including this verse was translated for the Coptic ruler into his own language (Torrey 1922).

A pressing need to translate the Qur'ān arose after the Islamic conquests as new non-Arab Muslims demanded a translation of the Qur'ān so that they could understand the message of Islam. A number of accounts in history books confirm that a number of attempts were made to translate the Qur'ān into languages such as Persian and Turkish (al-Sarkhasi 1989 ; al-Zuhri 2001). According to Mingana (1925), a Syriac manuscript written by the West Syrian writer Barsalibi (d.1171), was composed of three divisions, one

of which was entirely composed of quotations from the Qur'ān translated into Syriac accompanied by some comments. Interestingly, although it is widely thought that *Salman al-Fārisi*, one of the Prophet's companions, translated the *al-Fātiḥah* chapter into Persian. As cited in al-Mabsūṭ of al-Sarkhasi (1989), which is the key reference cited for this information, it seems that, in fact, *al-Fārisi* only transliterated this chapter into Persian to facilitate the pronunciation of Arabic words.

Any attempts at Qur'ānic translation in the early days of the Prophet were mostly done for diplomatic purposes (Abdul-raof 2004b: 91) and scholars have taken a very reserved stance towards translating the Qur'ān. The idea of Qur'ānic translation was consensually rejected by most scholars with the exception of a Hanafite opinion which was later abandoned. The only form of translation which was allowed was that of exegetical commentary which is a form of intra-lingual translation which explains and explicates the meaning of Qur'ānic text (*ibid.*: 92). Such a theological stance seems to have kept Muslims aloof from translating the Qur'ān which eventually led to it being translated by non-Muslims (Nida 2001: 108). Nevertheless, there were many motives lying behind the interest by non-Muslim translator in translating the Qur'ān as we shall see. Yet, it is worth mentioning that by 1870 the Qur'an was translated to a number of Muslim languages such as Persian, Urdu and Sindi.

4.2.1 Qur'ānic Translations into Western Languages

4.2.1.1 Early Attempts

The first translation of the Qur'ān into a Western language was into Latin. It was done by Robertus Rotenesis and Herman Dalmatia in 1143, although it remained unpublished until 1543 for reasons unknown. It seems to have been done for missionary purposes and to refute the Islamic message (Denffer 1994: 113). According to Sale (1888), it does not deserve the name of a translation as it abounds in omission and commission. Arberry (1981) agrees that this translation is full of inaccuracies and misunderstandings of the ST and that it was also motivated by 'hostile intentions'. Although it is said one should try not to judge a book from its cover, the title of this translation - 'Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete' or 'Law of Mohammed the false prophet'- definitely speaks for the work inside in terms of bias and partiality.

Four centuries later, a revised attempt of the previous translation was undertaken by Theodorus Bibliander. However, since it copied the same mistakes made by Rotenesis and Dalmatia, it was still erroneous (Cragg 1991).

In 1647, Andre du Ryer, a French Orientalist and former French consul in Egypt, produced a French translation of the Qur'ān entitled 'The Alcoran of Mahomet, Translated out of Arabick into French by the Sieur du Ryer, Lord of Malezair, and Resident for the French King, at Alexandria'. This translation was also criticized by Sale (1888), "there being mistakes in every page, besides frequent transpositions, omissions and additions, faults unpardonable in a work of this nature" (*ibid.*: ix).

The first English translation rendered by Alexander Ross in 1688 was based upon Du Ryer's translation. According to Sale (1888), since Ross had insufficient knowledge of Arabic, and was not proficient in French, it was a very bad translation to which he added a number of new mistakes to those committed by Du Ryer. Moreover, Ross' view of the ST was a negative one, reflected in his declarion that it was:"newly Englished for the desire of all that desire to look into vanities" (cited in Arberry 1981: 7). Furthermore, he attacked the Qur'ān as being 'so rude', 'forced with contradictions', 'blasphemous', and containing 'ridiculous fables'. Despite this, Ross' translation was used by the English for nearly a century (*ibid.*).

A decade later, in 1698, a Latin translation was published in Padua and was written by Louis Marracci who was confessor to Pope Innocent XI. Cragg (1991) praised it as being 'exact' and 'valuable' but marred by 'Arabism' and by adhering too literally to the Arabic idiom which made it hard to understand. Above from that, the accumulated comments of refutations are of little or no use at all (Sale 1888). Sale's English translation, published in 1734, was based upon the translations of Maracci, Abraham Hinckelmann (published in 1694 in Hamburg), and Ross. It became the most famous English translation of its time and served as the inspiration for a number of later translations. However it was also criticized for being a far from impartial translation as Sale himself admitted, according to Hosni (1990: 96):

> Sale, who is in the same 'Preface' says that in translating this 'extraordinary book' he has 'had no opportunity of consulting a public libraries' speaks here of his endeavour 'to do the original impartial justice.' But even a casual reading of the translation shows that what Sale says is one thing and what he does is quite another.

Sale, for instance, omitted a part from the verse: "الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" (Q. 01:03). This is commonly translated as two words but translated by Sale as: "the most merciful" (Sale 1888: 1). The verse: "يَاأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ" (Q. 02:21) (literally: "O Mankind, Worship your Lord") was translated by Sale as: 'O men of Mecca! Serve your lord" (*ibid.*: 3) which accordingly limits the Qur'ānic message only to those of Mecca. Some parts of verses are even omitted altogether from his translation including the last part of (Q. 03:98). However, a cursory reading of his translation shows that it is quite acceptable in terms of readability and style except for those mistakes which he made due to his lack of understanding of the source. As he stated in his preface, he did not have access to public libraries which could have allowed him to consult references other than the commentary of *al-Bayḍāwi* and the Gospel of St. Barnabas.

Although Sale claims that he had based his translation on the Arabic source, he was criticized for his lack of command of Arabic, and since Maracci's translation was the main source on which his own version depended, he was further criticized for not verifying the Italian's translation and comments. However, in comparison with his predecessors, one can clearly see a relatively balanced use of language in his preface. In addition, his detailed critique of his predecessors was also remarkable. A lengthy 'Preliminary Discourse' of the history before and during the Prophet's era makes his work of special importance. For these reasons, his translation was in use for some 150 years and its influence was enormous. It was, according to Arberry (1981:11), "the Koran for all English readers almost to the end of the nineteenth century".

In 1861, John Rodwell published another English translation containing what he referred to as a chronological order of the *sūrahs*. Unlike Sale, Rodwell used the Leipzig 1841 text of the Qur'ān, edited by Gustav Fluegel. Although he spoke highly of Maracci's work in his preface, he criticized Sale for two things: for following Maracci too closely, and for including Maracci's commentary in the body of the translated text. However, he proudly stated that he thought it would be best to use different renderings for the same recurring words and phrases for the sake of an accurate rendering of the meaning (Rodwell 1933). Apart from inconsistency, Rodwell did not bother to consult any Islamic exegesis books for deeper understanding of the meaning, a methodology which will definitely lead the translator to misrepresent the meaning of the ST. There are several examples from Rodwell's translation which prove this to be the case:

- Example 1: "ﻓﺼﻞ ﻟﺮﺑﻚ ﻭﺍﻧﺤﺮ" (Q. 108:02) (literally: 'pray for your Lord and sacrifice') was translated by Rodwell as: "Pray therefore to the Lord, and slay the victims". The Arabic verb "ﺍﻧﺤﺮ" is restricted to *nusuk* (sacrifice), whereas Rodwell went for a very different rendering.

- Example 2: "ﺇﻻ ﺃﺻﺤﺎﺏ ﺍﻟﻴﻤﻴﻦ" (Q.74:39) (literally: 'except those on/of the right") was rendered by Rodwell as "But they of God's right hand". In his translation, he has deviated from the wording of the verse. Rodwell's translation is not worded in the original verse nor could it be found anywhere in exegesis books.

Inaccurate rendering of the titles of the *sūrahs* is also a feature of Rodwell's translation. Apparently lacking a clear and consistent methodology, at times he translates the title literally, whilst in other instances he takes this from the content of the first verse (e.g. *'al-Ma'ūn'* and *'al-Balad'* are entitled 'The Religion' and 'The Soil' respectively. Moreover, not only does he arrange the *sūrahs* in a style of his invention, he also fails to follow convention in his naming of *sūrahs* (e.g. he refers to *al-Sharḥ* as 'Opening', leaving *al-Fātiḥah'*, which is commonly translated as 'the Opening', unnamed). In addition, two different *sūrahs* are given the same title, with both *'Al-Wāqi'ah'* and *'Al-Ḥāqqah'* being called 'the Inevitable'.

His preface also contains other derrogatory comments on the Prophet Mohammed and Muslims in general. He writes:

> It is due to the Koran, that the occupants in the sixth century of an arid peninsula, whose poverty was only equalled by their ignorance, become not only the fervent and sincere votaries of a new creed, but, like Amru and many more, its warlike propagators." (Rodwell 1933: 28).

Moreover, he also derides Thomas Carlyle for the comments about the Prophet Mohammed which he made in his book *Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* (1840) "The lies (Western slander) which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only" (Rodwell 1933: 53).

With all the derrogatory comments he makes in his Preface, and the confused methodology he adopts, it would seem that for Rodwell's approach to produce a faithful translation or an accurate rendering was something of a 'mission impossible' Even a casual reader of his translation would not be convinced by this version.

Not long after the publication of Rodwell's translation, a new English translation appeared. Edward Henry Palmer published his translation in the series 'Sacred Books of the East' for Oxford University Press in 1880. He is said to have had a long-lasting contact with the Arabs and thus should have been in a better linguistic position than the previous translators (Abdel Haleem 2005: xxvii). However, abandoning the chronological order adopted by Rodwell in his Preface, he seems to have had difficulty catching the drift of Qur'ānic language. He writes: "The language is noble and forcible, but it is not elegant in the sense of literary refinement" (Palmer 1880: lxxvii). Moreover, in his elaborated introduction, he keeps repeating that the Qur'ān was written by Mohammed, and that its language is 'rugged' and 'colloquial'. Even though in some instances he speaks highly of the Prophet Mohammed, he concludes: "The Prophet spoke with rude, fierce eloquence in ordinary language" i.e. in reference to the Qur'ān (*ibid.:* lxxvii). The fact that these contradictory comments go unproven or are not illustrated with examples make his claims counterproductive. In terms of his methodology, he writes his about his difficulties with the language of the ST which according to him was 'rude', 'rhymic' and 'rhythmic.' He claims that he "endeavoured to take a middle course" meaning that he would translate as literally as allowed by the two languages (*ibid.:* lxxvii).

4.2.1.2 Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Translations

In the period 1937-1939, another translation was done by the Scottish Arabist Richard Bell which was entitled *The Quran translated with a critical re-arrangement of the sūrahs*. Following Fluegel's text and verse numbering, Bell reordered the *sūrahs* in a chronological order, different from that of the original ST. Even so, he admits that his so-called chronological order is "provisional" and that "the thorough arrangement of the Quran in chronological order remains a complicated problem which must be left to others to solve" (Bell 1937:vi). He also mentions that when he had experienced difficulties translating the text he had consulted some Arabic commentaries including the one by *al-Bayḏāwi*.

In his Preface, Bell mentions that he believes that the Qur'ān was written by the Prophet Mohammed. He also explains that his translation was mainly intended to "unravel the composition of the separate *sūrahs*" (*ibid.:* vi) given that, in his opinion, the Qur'ān suffers from being a confusion of written documents. This being the case, not only does he change the order of the *sūrahs* which he thought would clear up what he perceived to be confusion, but also interferes with the order of the ST in the belief that it had undergone

a number of corrections, interlinear additions, and deletions, and that, moreover, pieces had been taken out of ST and has subsequently been wrongly replaced.

One of the criteria Bell used in his task was rhyme. He questions the fact that *sūrahs* have more than one rhyme and tries to 'unravel' their composition. Thus he claims, for example, that *sūrah* VII "cannot be a unity" (*ibid.*: 159). Furthermore, he mentions that he had broken up verses which did not follow a consistent rhyme sequence throughout. He sometimes changes the order of verses and some parts of verses are modified by him with the aim of producing a clearer interpretation of their meaning. For example, he merges verses (Q. 36:01) and (Q. 36:02) into one verse, whereas verse (Q. 36:31) is divided into two.

According to some critics such as Kidwai (1987), Bell succeeded only in making a mess of the traditional arrangement of the Qur'ān. Professionally speaking, the translator does not have the right to interfere with the ST in such a way especially when dealing with an original which is a highly sacred and complex text such as the Qur'ān. As argued above, it has its own unique style, grammar and vocabulary. Qur'ānic text is not linear, written in a chronological order or possessing a logical beginning, middle and end. Its chapters range in length from very short to very long.

Moreover, Bell (1937) had to suppress the mass of notes he accumulated during the course of his work because of the cost of printing. However, he included some brief footnotes which elaborate on the literal translation of some units, or present his personal interpretations of the verses. He also admits that his translation has a number of defects, some of which were removed before publication by some knowledgeable scholars. He accepts responsibility for any that remain. Furthermore, what he terms "awkward inversions" (*ibid.*: viii) are due to his attempt to use an equivalent of the Arabic-rhyme word at the end of the verse. In short, he seems to have dealt with the text as if it were a piece of poetry rather than a text which belongs to no set genre with its unique features and peculiarities.

Due to the 'rearrangements' that he made to the ST, it is very difficult to follow Bell's translation. Considering his translation in its entirety, one can say it is acceptable except for the defects that result from his limited awareness of the ST and its peculiarities, and his failure to consult sufficient references. It is extremely important for translators of the Qur'ān to equip themselves with as much reference material as possible. Having access to an array of different approaches to interpreting Qur'ānic meaning helps

provide a better understanding of the ST. Without this, major mistakes can be made, as Bell's translation of the following verse demonstrates.

Bell's translation of "وَلاَ تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّىَ يَبْلُغَ الكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ" (Q. 02:235) reads: "And do not resolve upon the marriage tie until the Book has reached its term" (ibid.: 33) The word 'book' is a literal translation of the Arabic word kitāb which is not the intended meaning here. In this instance, Bell did not even bother to consult al-Bayḍāwi– the only Arabic source he mentions– who interpreted kitāb as 'term of time' (al-Bayḍāwi 1999:204). Bell, however, has translated the word kitāb literally, ignoring the co-textual and contextual links.

The first translation into English carried out by a member of the Muslim faith did not appear until 1930 and was done by the Englishman Marmaduke Pickthall, a convert from Christianity to Islam who was a gifted writer. Being a novelist seems to have enabled him to produce a translation that is still widely accepted in the Islamic world. He attempted, in his own words, to produce a literal translation of the Qur'ān using befitting language. According to him, it is meant to capture the meaning and also the beauty of the Qur'ān in English (Pickthall 1938). However, although it was the fashion during that period, Pickthall's use of Biblical English might have hindered average readers from understanding its language.

Most critics seem to agree that Pickthall's version faithfully presents the message of the Qur'ān while keeping close to the ST (Abdel Haleem 2005);(Kidwai n.d.). His translation gained approval from al-'Azhar, and Mustafa al-Marāghi and other scholars in Egypt. Furthermore, in response to a Pakistani scholar's criticism, some sources indicate that his translation was scrutinized in 1982 by the Islamic Ideological Council of Pakistan where it was found to be satisfactory (Hadhrami 2010).

In his Preface, Pickthall (1938) lists the traditional books he has relied upon. To mention but a few, Pickthall refers to Tafsīr of al-Bayḍāwi, al-Kashshāf of al-Zamakhshari, and al-Jalālayn which are considered among the most famous exegesis books of the Qur'ān. He also used the Saḥīḥ of al-Bukhāri to verify the authenticity of certain traditions.

In 1934, another popular translation entitled The Glorious Qur'ān, Translation and Commentary (The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān) in later editions, was carried out by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, a learned Indian scholar who spoke both Arabic and English fluently. At a very young stage of his life, he received Islamic education and had memorized the entire Qur'ān. This seems to have helped him to grasp the meaning of the Qur'ān in more

depth. He eventually studied English literature and was educated at several European universities including the University of Leeds. His translation is accompanied by the original Arabic text and annotated with ample commentary.

Regarding his translation methodology, he writes:

> I spoke of the general meaning of the verses. Every earnest and reverent student of the Qur'ān, as he proceeds with his study, will find, with an inward joy difficult to describe, how the general meaning enlarges as his own capacity of understanding increases. It is like a traveler climbing a mountain: the higher he goes, the farther he sees (Ali 1975: v).

He states that he did not express any personal view points but rather has counted on exegetical opinions. However, when commentators offered differing opinions, he would choose one which seemed to be a reasonable one (Ali 1991: xii). He rightly assumes that the translator would inevitably and unconsciously express his own view at times.

Lengthy notes were offered to elaborate on the meaning. He explains that the need for explanation for the verses had arisen as early as the era of the Prophet, when the companions used to ask him questions about meaning of certain words or about some spiritual matters they needed to understand. Ali explains that he wanted to address a broad spectrum of readers with his translation. He states that an English reader, whether a scholar or a general reader, should be able to read what he calls: "a fairly complete but concise view of what I understand to be the meaning of the text" (Ali 1991: xiii).

In 1955, Arthur John Arberry, a scholar of Islamic Studies at Cambridge University, published a translation of the Qur'ān which was by far one of the best translations done by a non-Muslim. *The Koran Interpreted* was widely accepted in the Islamic world because of the translator's impartiality as compared with his predecessors. The title of his work accedes to the prevailing Islamic doctrine that the Qur'ān cannot be translated but must instead be interpreted as Pickthall proposed. Arberry "shows great respect towards the language of the Qur'ān, particularly its musical effects" (Abdel Haleem 2005: xxvii). He also mirrors Arabic sentence structure in a way which makes his translation close to the ST. However, there is very little commentary to explicate some of the ambiguities created by such a method, meaning that readers who are unfamiliar with the ST are likely to have difficulty reading the TT (Abdel Haleem 2005: xxviii). However, Arberry

makes it clear in his own comments that he made a deliberate choice to offer an unannotated version "because notes in plenty are to be found in other versions, and the radiant beauty of the original is not clouded by such vexing interpolations" (Arberry 1981: 28).

Arberry's version, however, merges verses into paragraphs, and does not follow the conventional verse numbering of the Qur'ān. Nevertheless, he places numbers in the margin that are multiples of five which appear to be meant to refer to verses. Moreover, *sūrahs* composed of less than five verses are left without any numbering. This makes the task of comparing the ST and Arberry's translation a difficult one. Furthermore, some chapters are also arranged in a different manner to the conventional order found in the Qur'ān.

Although the early translations of the Qur'ān seem to be biased against the original and full of allegations against its credibility and authenticity, Arberry's was clearly distinguished from the previous translations for his scholarly manner in dealing with the text. Indeed, it might be said that he managed to prove the contrary of Pickthall's proposition that: "It takes a Muslim to translate the Qur'ān honestly". Responding to this opinion, Arberry writes: "It is a fanatical argument, unworthy of a serious enquirer; it is an insulting argument, unjust to the integrity of not a few who have laboured honestly in the field of Koranic interpretation; it is an invalid argument, and that on many counts, which I will abstain from enumerating here" (Arberry 2007: 13).

Although Arberry's interpretation was widely accepted especially in academic circles (Abdel Haleem 2005), one can still find instances of omission in his translation. For example, the verse " يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ" (Q.03:43) was rendered as: " Mary, be obedient to thy Lord, prostrating and bowing before him" (Arberry 1981:79). The part وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (i.e. 'among those who bow') was omitted altogether from Arberry's translation. He might have thought that the phrase was used for the purposes of rhythm which made him choose to 'round off' "each succession of loose rhythm with a much shorter line" (*ibid.*: 24).

The next distinguished translation is the first American version simply entitled *The Qur'ān,* the work of T.B. Irving (Al-Hajj Ta'lim 'Ali). His translation took some 23 years to complete and was intended to provide a translated version which could be easily read by "the English-speaking world at the end of the twentieth Christian, or the beginning of the Islamic fifteenth century" (Irving 1985: xli). His aim is to offer a clear and simple text which addresses English-speaking young people in North America, Britain, and

English-speaking parts of Africa (*ibid.*). It was also motivated by his own personal need for one to use at an Islamic School he used to lecture at. Instead of the previous ones "which evoke no reverence or beauty in the minds of the listeners" (*ibid.*: xlii).

Irving's approach towards translation seems to be a functional and pragmatic one. He was against using Christian terms such as 'infidel', 'piety', or 'sin', let alone Biblical vocabulary. He calls his version 'a modest *Tafsīr*', rather than a translation, as he does not really explicate the verses much. He generally adopts a communicative translation strategy in which he reproduces in a clear English the understood meaning of the verse, fitting the target readership he had in mind. However, his version does come with a brief commentary on the themes found in each chapter.

More recently, a translation was published by the Riyadh-based Abulqasim Publishing House in 1997, which was undertaken by Aminah Assami, an American who converted to Islam in 1974. As a translator, she has now spent more than twenty years working in the fields of *Tafsīr* (Qur'ān interpretation), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) and *Da'wah* (preaching of Islam). According to the Saheeh International website, Assami has authored and revised more than 80 Islamic books in English including *The Global Messenger*, *Realities of Faith*, *The Path to Prayer*, *The Marriage Procedure in Islam*, and *The Forty Hadīth of Al-Imam an-Nawawi* (Saheeh-International 2012)

According to Assami whom I had the privilege to interview, her interest in translating Islamic books was inspired by the fact that most of the booklets she used to read for *Da'wah* purposes were badly translated with many mistakes. She was asked by the owner of Abul-Qasim Publsihing House in Jeddah to start editing and writing books to be used for the same purpose. Assami's translation of the Qur'ān was at the request of the same publisher who thought that the existing translations lacked clarity and accuracy. Hesitant at first, she agreed three years later to do the translation with the assistance of two language editors, namely Amatullah J. Bantley and Mary M. Kennedy. According to Assami, the first edition took three years of exhaustive work from the group.

Assami first intended to edit and improve an existing translation, but soon realized that it was an easier task and made more sense from a methodological point of view to embark on a completely new rendering since each verse had to be rechecked in both *Tafsīr* and grammar books. Her major reference was *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, with *Tafir al-Nasafi* as a reference for

a grammatical-oriented queries. However, Assami's comprehension of the text was the result of consulting a range of references, and whenever interpretations differ, her translation does not follow a particular scholar's opinion but uses whatever sounds most accurate and authentic. When there is more than one possible accepted interpretation, this is conveyed in footnotes.

The target readership are not only English native speakers but also those with English as a second or other language. Their needs are catered for in the translation by means of simplification and clarification. One of the strategies employed by the translator is to keep footnotes to a minimum, letting the Qur'ān speak for itself. Answering my interview questions, Assami explains that attempts are also made to ensure TL word order conforms with the original as much as English syntax will allow so that the reader gains a similar atmosphere to that of the Qur'ān. Occasionally the translation transliterates Arabic words, something of a hybrid technique between translation foreignization and domestication.

Assami's stance on Qur'ānic translation is similar to that of Picthall, Abdel Haleem and others who made it clear that the Qur'ān cannot be translated. According to Assami, existing translations of the Qur'ān are essentially brief interpretations of its meaning as it is impossible to translate the Qur'ān literally. Assami acknowledges that the translations by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Marmaduke Pickthall are the main translations which have been consulted by later translators to produce their versions. These more recent translations were undertaken for the purpose of correcting errors found in the previous ones, and include works by al-Hilāli and Khan, which serves as Assami's main source. This translation stands out as it contains useful material about Islam for the readers. However, one of its drawbacks is that the very wealth of commentary and explanatory included makes it hard to follow (Saheeh-International 1997).

It is noticeable that the translator offers very brief comments on the Qur'ānic text throughout her work, which are mainly confined to explanations of certain Qur'ānic terms or idiomatic expressions. They also sometimes explain other possible shades of meaning for the verses. However, modern commentaries which touch upon issues such as scientific miracles are avoided. Furthermore, it is also noticeable that her translation adheres to the idea of the importance of the Qur'ānic word in itself. For example, there is a

literal translation of the verb "مَسَّنِيَ" which literally means 'touched me' in the verse:

- وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ(Q.21:83)

The word 'مس' is used as a trope while the verse is translated as: "And [mention] Job, when he called to his Lord, 'Indeed, adversity has touched me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful" (ibid.: 447). Although the touching here is figurative, the translator provides a literal translation rather than for an idiomatic or a metaphorical one such as Arberry's "affliction visited me" or Ali's "distress has seized me". Moreover, extra care seems to have taken with punctuation because, as Assami notes, in some previous translations this did not coincide with the Arabic meaning.

The translator also explains the fact that the many shades of meanings carried by a single vocabulary item poses a great difficulty for scholars of exegesis, who often differ in their interpretations of some verses. Assami mentions that other possible renderings are covered in footnotes, a useful technique for such verses. She also makes it clear that there are a number of significant linguistic differences between Arabic and English. According to Assami, Arabic is richer in both grammar and vocabulary than English, making it a more expressive language with fewer limitations than other languages. An example of this is Arabic's "flexibility of tenses" which according to the translator allows the Qur'ān to portray occurrences in the Hereafter in a unique way. She refers to the different functions of the tenses when there are variations between the SL and the TL in terms of their temporal coverage.

Another recent translation is that of Abdel Haleem, a Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London. Having memorized the Qur'ān at an early age seems to have enabled him to become acquainted to the essence of its meaning. His translation took seven years, and stands out from the other translations because one can feel a natural flow and freedom when reading the translation. According to Abdel Haleem, his translation is "intended to go further than previous works in accuracy, clarity, flow and currency of language" (Abdel Haleem 2005: xxix). One evident difference in his translation is that it does not offer a verse by verse translation as other translations would normally do, but rather translates freely as much as the message to be conveyed requires. In other words, the unit of translation in Abdel Haleem's version is the idea and not necessarily the verse. He combines two or more verses together in a flowing

manner so that a complete message or idea is presented. This is comparable to reciting the Qur'ān during prayers when Imams do not pause between separate verses which complete each other in terms of meaning (cf Q.107:04-05).

In the Preface to his work, he provides a clear and extensive account of his translation and presentation methodologies. One important feature he comments on is that of intertextuality in the Qur'ān, mentioning that some parts of the text are explained by parts occurring elsewhere. This method, writes Abdel Haleem, was considered by Imam Ibn Taymiyyah to be the most accurate method for finding the meaning of Qur'ānic verses. In other words, ideas which are briefly outlined in some verses of the Qur'ān will be explained at length elsewhere. Abdel Haleem adopts this technique in his translation with the use of footnotes which is crucial as it minimises the consultation of exegetic books. Nevertheless, throughout his translation one can see that he most frequently consulted *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* by *al-Rāzi*, referring to other books of exegesis including *al-Suyūṭi* and *al-Bayḍāwi* less often. This technique is also beneficial to readers as it helps them to engage more with similar expressions found elsewhere in the Qur'ān.

One of the difficulties that Abdel Haleem (2005) faced is the constant shift in pronouns, a type of *'iltifāt* which is a stylistic feature where grammatical shifts occur for rhetorical purposes. On those occasions when the translation does not correspond with the norms of English sentences, the translator breaks the verse into smaller translation units, or even starts a completely new paragraph for the sake of making the meaning clear. Different voices within one verse are another issue and Abdel Haleem deals with this by using punctuation marks found in modern English. For instance, (Q. 37:102) concerns a dialogue between Abraham and Ismail and the translator uses commas and quotation marks to elucidate to whom each part of the dialogue belongs.

An informative account of the features of the Qur'ān is also included in his preface commentary. One important feature he mentions is *wujūh al-Qur'ān* i.e. having various meanings throughout the Qur'ān with key terms such as *islām, muslimūn* (Muslims), *kāfirūn* (infidels), *fāsiqūn* (transgressers) and *dīn* (religion). According to Abdel Haleem, consistency in translating these terms will certainly lead to mistranslation and explains: "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).

Abdel Haleem makes it clear that he adopted a free translation methodology, avoiding unnecessarily close adherence to the structures and idioms of the Qur'ān, since literal translations of such idioms lead to meaningless English. He further explains that because the language of the Qur'ān is concise, and elision is a marked Qur'ānic feature, it is almost impossible to adhere closely to this Arabic style without causing loss of meaning. As the review of previous translations shows, Abdel Haleem's methodology has never been adopted by any previous translator of the Qur'ān since they seem to be reluctant to treat the ST with such a degree of freedom. However, Abdel Haleem's translation does not over-translate the text as normally occur with free translation but rather makes the text flow with an ease and naturalness not present in previous translations of the Qur'ān.

In Abdel Haleem's introduction to the work, his confidence as a translator is evident. Having been a specialist in Qur'ānic Studies, he was extremely familiar with the history of the Qur'ān, the contexts, different exegetical schools and opinions, and the linguistic idiosyncrasies of the ST. Other translators have not had such a degree of academic knowledge with regards to these aspects.

The last translation to be reviewed is *The Noble Qur'ān, a New Rendering of its Meaning in English* by Abdulhaqq and Aisha Bewely, a convert couple whom I had the honour to interview personally in November 2012. They started working on this translation in 1974 but it was not a continuous work as they stopped more than once till it was published in 1999; and republished again in 2005 with a small amount of amendments. In response to one of the interview questions, they said the work could have taken as long as five continuous years of work and they recommended that since it is the very nature of English to evolve constantly, the need for a new rendering arises every 25 years.

The Bewley's state in their Introduction and in the interview that they were motivated to translate the Qur'ān because they felt the translated versions they had access to lacked structural clarity: "the meaning always came through a glass darkly" (Bewley and Bewley 2005: iii).

Mrs Bewley's translation process starts with reading verse commentaries and if there are more than one possible interpretation, she would then review previous translations and see how translators had gone about it. If she could not make a decision on the meaning that should be empacised in the translation, she would then apply the same level of ambiguity found in the ST (i.e. literal translation). The translation then goes to Mr Bewely who

would re-check if the translation does convey the meaning of the ST and that it reads natural to the English reader.

Rhyme and rhythm are seen by Mr Bewely as two important factors for a faithful conveyance of the meaning. Reproduction of these two aspects i.e. rhyme and rhythm is noticed throughout their translation. Therefore, the Bewely's approach towards translation seems to be a functional one. Moreover, one of the strategies adopted by the Bewley's was to avoid brackets "at all costs" and "let the text speak for itself".

To summarise, then, the first form of translation of the Qur'ān was practiced as early as the era of the Prophet Mohammed when a Muslim convoy sought refuge in the Abyssinian ruler from the oppression of the inhabitants of Mecca. As Islam spread, the need for translation arose so the Prophet Mohammed sent letters to adjacent kingdoms which included translation of some Qur'ānic verses. In addition, new Muslims have also demanded translation of the Qur'ān for having embraced their new religion, they needed to understand its message so that they could practice their rituals properly. Scholars were originally reluctant to approve of a complete translation of the Qur'ān which deterred translators.

Later on, Christian missionaries exerted great efforts to understand the Qur'ān, and translated it into a number of languages, namely Latin, French and English. They were motivated by a desire to disprove the Qur'ān and Islamic claims. Since some translations were not based on the original ST, it is clear that these early translations lacked clear understanding of Arabic and Islam. Therefore, these translations were criticized harshly by their successors for not offering faithful translations, and for making many mistakes and omissions (Mohammed 2005). Increasing access to learning Arabic and Islamic beliefs have helped translators gain a better understanding of the content of the Qur'ān, meaning that the later translations carried out by non-Muslims improved in terms of quality and thus acquired a better status.

The need for Muslims to combat the aforementioned missionary efforts then arose. Pickthall, followed by Ali and others, and most recently Assami and Abdel Haleem, have been able to present more balanced translations which helped to convey the Muslim perspective of the Qur'ān. Ranging from unannotated versions to versions with a wealth of commentary, their translations have now spread worldwide granting access for both Muslims and non-Muslims to the Qur'ān.

4.3 Translation and its Reliance on Context

Translation is a form of cross-cultural and social communication. Thus, ideally translators should strive to transfer meaning from one language into another bearing in mind that the input they are dealing with inevitably relates to a context in which the speech act took place. Context refers to both linguistic and non-linguistic structures (i.e. situational elements) which are related to the utterance in question and this includes participants and their identities (Levinson 1983: 5; Abdul-Raof 2005: 23). It also refers to what goes with the text: "the total environment in which a text unfolds" (Halliday and Hasan 1997: 5). Context contributes to the study of meaning as it envelopes the text and the situation upon which interpretation of the text relies. Therefore, it is context that dictates the kind of utterance which should be made and whether it should be repeated or another language variation should replace it instead. In other words, context serves to regulate the stylistic features used in the text and justifies questions relating to which features are employed in that text, when and how.

Ideally, context facilitates the reader's expectations and inferences with the aid of the conventional and logical connections textured by the individual's lived experiences. Halliday and Hasan (1997: 9) agree that as listeners we:

> Always do have a good idea of what is coming next, so that we are seldom totally surprised. We may be partly surprised; but the surprise will always be within the framework of something that we knew was going to happen.

Yet, according to Halliday and Hasan (1997), our predictions about the text are unconsciously made.

However, this framework which is thought to limit our degree of surprise does not seem to be universal but rather personal and bound to a number of factors. These include culture, language, age, religion, level of education, intelligence, acquaintance with fauna, flora and environment, to mention but a few. All these factors combine to form and refine our expectation skills. Thus, with this range of factors and due to the variations and discrepancies

which normally exist between different situations, surprise is always possible.

Although the centrality of the notion of context has been taken lightly by translation scholars (Baker 2006), scholars of pragmatics find a strong link between pragmatics and context (House 2006). Stalnaker (1999:34), for instance, defines pragmatics as "the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed". Pragmatics is similarly defined by Levinson (1983:32) as "a theory of language understanding that takes context into account". Both view context as a decisive key term in pragmatics, assuming that context contributes to the defining of the relationship between linguistic expressions and their meaning referents. House (2006: 340) states that: "in order to arrive at an adequate theory of the relation between linguistic expressions and what they express, one must consider the context in which these expressions are used". Context, therefore, plays a major role in defining the meaning of linguistic acts since "it relates language with something that is not language" (Halliday 2002: 56).

Moreover, Gutt (1998: 49) argues that "The speaker-intended, interpretation of an utterance, is highly context-dependant. The reason for this strong-dependence lies in the inferential nature of human communication". He draws a comparison between translation on one hand and direct quoting or speech-reporting on the other. According to Gutt (1998), both translation and quoting or reporting involve interpretation. However, a translated text may not be interpreted in its original context. In consequence, "by translating a text for a target audience other than that envisioned by the original writer, the translator is, in effect, quoting the original author out of context" (Gutt 1998: 49).

Nida (1964) argues that if the translation is directed towards equivalence of response rather than formal equivalence, then a natural equivalence must fit the receptor's language, culture and context of the message. In my opinion, translation mismatches are often caused by failure to comprehend the text initially as the translator renders only what he or she understands from the text. Thus, any misunderstanding or lack of understanding will always lead to mistranslation. For this reason, theoretically speaking, translators should

ensure that they fully comprehend the ST so that they fully grasp the situation from all angles. Furthermoreand most importantly, their full understanding of the SL context will be positively reflected in their translation (El-Hadary 2009).

Baker (2006: 332) maintains:

> Instead of treating context as a constraint, a set of restrictions on what we can or cannot achieve in translation and other communicative events, and setting out to specify the numerous facets of that constraint, it might ultimately be more productive to recognize context as a resource, something that we selectively and strategically construct as we engage in any act of communication, including the act of translation.

In the proposed model of euphemism translation used in this research, context is used as a major tool to define meaning.

Ideally, a translation should always communicate the same message as the ST. However, translators often face difficulties that can be ascribed to linguistic differences between the SL and the TL, or ascribed to other factors, including extra-linguistic factors such as cultural differences and the translator's competence. As a wealth of translation theory has been derived from the difficulties and problems which result from the process of translation, it is indeed vital that translators are able to differentiate between context-based problems and language-based problems, and know how to cope with them.

As far as context is concerned, language-based translation problems are often caused by a number of particular factors. One important factor is misunderstanding the meaning of the lexical items within a given context. This may be ascribed to the misconception that word meanings found in dictionaries are always the same as that intended by speakers or writers within specific contexts. This is based on the misconception that dictionaries are able to provide an exhaustive list of all the possible meanings of lexical items. The truth is, however, that figurative use of the language is so innovative that dictionaries may not be able to cope with, let alone those idiomatic expressions that deviate semantically from the norm found in

dictionaries and which often pick on subtle new meanings. According to Nida (2001), it is widely assumed that languages are unchangeable while in fact they experience a constant change due to the fact that that they are living languages. What is more, there seems to be excessive confidence regarding the regularity of language syntactic structures. Nida points out that it is mistaken to believe that "dictionaries are the final authority of and depository of all the words of a language" or that "languages are essentially regular and completely rule governed" (ibid.: 31).

In Nida's theory of translation, context is the essential pillar on which his theory stands. To Nida (2001), meaning is achieved by means of a combination of both the meaning of words (i.e. lexical meaning) and their meaning in context. Thus, for a translator to determine how a certain communication is to be understood and then how it is to be translated, a translator should consider what he called the "focal term" i.e. the lexical item and context. He rightly prescribes:

> Whenever one tries to describe language in terms of units, whether words or sentences, isolated from discourse, serious difficulties inevitably arise, for it is only in the context of the discourse that many potential ambiguities are actually resolved (Nida 1969: 8).

4.4 Qur'ānic Contextual Tools

In the case of the Qur'ān, the importance of context was recognized with the advent of Qur'ānic *Tafsīr*, i.e. interpretation of the Qur'ān. For example, Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328 AD)- who is considered a major Ḥanbali scholar and authored numerous books on Qur'ānic exegesis, jurisprudence, the Islamic faith and other subjects- asserts that it is important to learn the intended meanings of the Qur'ān rather than only focusing on the literal meaning (Ibn Taymiyyah 1972). This can be achieved by using various aspects that are discussed below.

4.4.1 Circumstances of Revelation

One of the Qur'ānic contextual tools is *'asbāb al-nuzūl*, literally reasons of revelation. Ibn Taymiyyah holds that "knowing the occasion of the [verse] revelation helps to understand the verse; that is because knowing the reason results in knowing the effect [or implications]. For this reason, scholars have agreed that if someone swears an oath and his intention is not [really] known, the reasons for making that oath should be verified, and what had provoked it" before making any judgments (Cited in Bin 'Uthaymīn 1995: 46). Bin 'Uthaymīn (1995) explains Ibn Taymiyyah's statement with an example of a husband who repudiated his wife uttering the divorce oath by virtue of seeing her with a stranger. If the stranger appeared later to be her brother, then his divorce oath is invalidated as the reason for the oath was his assumption which proved to be wrong.

Moreover, al-Zarkashi (1957) likens knowing about the occasions of revelation to learning about history. He emphasizes that it has been given a great deal of attention by scholars of *Tafsīr* for a number of jurisprudential and semantic reasons. He quotes *abu al-Fatḥ al-Qushayri* who emphasizes that discovering the occasion of revelation is an effective way of understanding the meanings of the Qur'ān and that was used by the Ṣahābah (Prophet's companions) who employed text relations for functionally depicting the meaning (*ibid.*: 22). Al-Zarkashi (1957) also discusses some jurisprudential issues that are associated with *asbāb al-nuzūl*. For example, some verses which have been revealed by virtue of a specific occasion carry implications for certain rulings. It is the occasion of

revelation which will help to determine whether the implied ruling could be applied on other occasions of its type or whether it should only be specific to that particular incident. He also adds that occasions of revelation clarify the intended meaning of some unclear verses i.e. *mushkil* since some verses are worded in a way which makes their sense hard to render.

The interest in collecting occasions of revelation in books started as early as the third Hijri decade with a book written by Ibn al-Madīni (d. 849 AD) called *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (al-Zarkashi 1957; al-Wihaybi 1993). A series of books followed this including *al-Qisās wa al-'Asbāb al-latī Nazal min 'Ajlihā al-Qur'ān* (Literally: the Stories and the Reasons for which the Qur'ān had been Revealed) by *al-Qurṭubi* (d. 1012 AD). However, one of the most notable books on this matter is *al-Wāḥidi's* (d. 1075 AD) *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* since later works on this matter have depended upon this, such as *Lubāb al-Nuqūl fi Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by Al-Suyūṭi (d. 1505 AD) who further developed the content of the book including more occasions of revelation and further investigation. It is currently available in various printed editions having been reissued in several new editions with further commentaries by a number of modern *Tafsīr* scholars (al-Wihaybi 1993).

However, it must be admitted that relatively few Qur'ān verses were revealed with a prior occasion known in Qur'ānic Studies as *'Ibtidaī* as opposed to *Sababī* when there is a reason for its revelation such as the verses of *Ḥijāb* and the chapter of *Masad*. Therefore, it should be clarified that this tool, *asbāb al-nuzūl,* can only be applied in *sababī*-type of verses. Despite this, the *Sīrah* (Literature of the Prophet's life) can still provide information with which exegetes, translators and readers of the Qur'ān can gain enhanced understanding by knowing how verses were understood at the time of the Prophet. For instance, Darwaza who has authored a substantial modern *Tafsīr* of the Qur'ān, lays emphasis on the relation between the Qur'ān and the *Sīrah* of the prophet (Cited in Poonawala 1993). He stresses that the *Sīrah* provides the background for the revelation which, in turn, helps the reader to better grasp the subject matter of the Qur'ān. He adds: "The reader finds that the Qur'ānic passages were revealed in accordance with the events of the *Sīrah* and the circumstances surrounding the call" (*ibid.*: 229).

4.4.2 The Context of the Situation

Another tool that can also help provide a better understanding of the meaning of the text is the context of the situation. In Arabic, this has long been known as *maqām*. Hassan (1994: 351) defines this as a collection of the people who participate either positively or negatively in an utterance and their social relationships along with various circumstances relevant to time and place. Social relationships are dictated by the cultural protocol used by a given group of people. Moreover, Abdel Haleem (1993) points out that scholars of rhetorics, such as *al-Khaṭīb al-Qazwīni*, have recognized the importance of the concept of *maqām*. The latter affirms that it is the context that demands generalization, advancement of part of the discourse, inclusion, specification, separation or joining parts of the text. Abdel Haleem (1993) adds that scholars of *Balāghah* (i.e. Rhetorics) have contributed to the science of *Ma'āni* (i.e. meaning) one of the four branches of *Balāghah*) with their recognition of the importance of *maqām* (*ibid.*: 72).

Similarly, Hassan (1994) mentions that the importance of *maqām* in understanding the meaning of the Qur'ān was acknowledged as early as the era of the companions. He lists a number of examples using the *maqām* clues, when Abu Bakr al-Siddīq read the verse (Q.03:144) upon the Prophet's death:

* (وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِن مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّـهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّـهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ)

Translated by Saheeh: "Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful").

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb commented: "By Allah, [I am hearing it now] as if I have never heard it before". 'Umar means that he had heard the verse before but when Abu Bakr read it aloud in this situation, the verse has gained new meanings. Hassan (1994) reports another story that took place between two discordant Azhari sheikhs. One of them seemed to be asleep, so the other commented while walking into the place where the first was: "*al-fitnatu nā'imatun*" (evil is asleep). The sheikh - who only appeared to be sleeping -

replied: "God curse he who awakened it!". The two sentences spoken by the sheikhs are well-known set expressions in Arabic tradition, but they were employed in that context to refer to two completely different meanings.

Hassan (1994) divides meaning generally into two categories: *ma'nā maqāli* (lexical meaning) and *ma'nā maqāmi* (contextual meaning). The former, he explains, is the functional and referential meaning which can be elicited by virtue of the linguistic evidence, if there is any (*ibid.*: 339). Hassan (1994) further ntoes that functional meaning deals with the three linguistic aspects of syntax, morphology and phonology. Contextual meaning which is our concern here, is determined by the circumstantial evidence of the situation, hence it deals with semantics. He illustrates the difference between these by explaining that there can be 'a nonsense sentence' (*jumlah hurā'iyyah*) which is sound in terms of the *ma'nā maqāli* but at the same time lacks the social context (i.e. *maqām*) which conventionally links its words with each other (Hassan 1994: 341).

Hassan (1994) presents a model that can be applied in order to define semantic meaning. His model consists of two major steps:

1. Analyzing the functions at the phonological, morphological and syntactic levels which leads to understanding the conventional relations between vocabulary items.

2. Observing the social element (*maqām*) which together with the first step will lead to an understanding of semantic meaning.

He further illustrates his theory with the example: "أهلا بالجميلة" ('hello pretty') which could be said to various addressees, in different contexts. He explains that a real pretty woman [such as one's wife] can be addressed with such a sentence for the purpose of flirtation, whilst at the same time it can also serve the function of deriding an ugly one by means of insinuation. He argues that the dictionary meaning of the two vocabulary items i.e. أهلا and الجميلة will not help with understanding the semantic meaning whereas the context of the situation (*maqām*) will.

In modern linguistic theories, the context of the situation has been studied by Malinowski, Firth, and Hymes (Halliday and Hasan 1997). Malinowski

worked on Kiriwinian, a language used in the Trobriand Islands. He applied a number of translation methods on their texts, including free translation, which succeeded in producing an intelligible translation "but conveyed nothing of the language and culture" (*ibid.*: 6). He also applied literal translation following the conventions of the SL but ended up with an incomprehensible translated text. The third method Malinowski applied was to provide a sort of extended commentary which "placed the text in its living environment" (*ibid.*). According to Halliday and Hasan (1997) context was not in use as a term at the time, so Malinowski coined the term 'context of the situation'. This referred to the environment of the text, or what goes with the text both verbally and non-verbally, and also the cultural background necessary for comprehension by a target receiver. Malinowski also coined the term 'context of the culture', meaning the broader context which includes a background of cultural history related to the participants which the recipients do not know. This is because context of the situation is culture-dependant and is always closely bound to the specifics of the culture.

4.5 Qur'ānic Euphemism and Context

Euphemism which is often as doublespeak, cannot be understood without proper contextualization. Most euphemistic expressions have more than one meaning and hence could be translated differently. 'Growth' meaning 'tumour' or 'innocent' meaning 'sexually inexperienced' are both examples in which words are generalized to function euphemistically; without contextualization it is difficult to know if this is the case. Moreover, a phrase such as *anti mithlu 'ukhti* (literally: You are like my sister') may not have the same implications if addressed to an older woman as to a younger one. In the latter instance it would imply that the man wants to politely express that he is not willing to marry the addresse.

Metaphorical euphemism when a word is used in a non-literal way as in 'waterworks' to refer to 'urinary organs' would be vague if taken out of context. The relationship between the euphemism and its referent is metaphorical and the euphemism is realized by virtue of comparing the functions of both systems i.e. the pipes and tank with urinary system. Similarly, in the case of a metonymical euphemism "the relation between the

conventional and novel set of referents is one of concomitance" (Warren 1992: 152). Thus using the phrase a "burning sensation in the oesophagus" to refer to "jealousy" is by no means comprehensible as a euphemistic expression without it being situated in a relevant context.

More interestingly, it is impossible to understand a euphemism which employs irony, such as 'blessed' for 'damned', without knowing the contextual background to the story behind it. This can be clearly seen in the following example (Q. 44:49):

<div dir="rtl">ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ</div>

- Translation: ("Taste! Indeed, you are the honoured, the noble!")

This verse is referring to Abu Jahl who was one of the Meccan leaders known for his hostility to Islam. The intended meaning of 'honoured' and 'noble' is ironical. The words al-'azīz and al-karīm were his own words which he had boastfully used one day. The verse comes in the context of explaining his situation in hellfire. Therefore, if taken out of context they sound as if Abu Jahl has been rewarded with good things. Warren (1992: 140) rightly warns that:

> The interpreter will have to retrieve information of the kind exemplified above from his general knowledge of the world and/or the context at hand. In choosing missing bits of information, (s)he will be guided by the requirement that the end result must be a referent or some referents which fit the context.

This is quite important in the case of Qur'ānic translation and can be better achieved if supported by an explanatory footnote.

Most -if not all- of the above categories involve semantic change. Thus, in euphemistic utterances, translators often deal with denotative meaning (i.e. word meaning which deals with words as defined in dictionaries in less context-bound situations) and pragmatic meaning (i.e. the meaning or message intended by the speaker using the euphemistic utterance). The first demonstrates the more rigid nature of word meaning which becomes more flexible once words are put into their contexts (Dickins, Hervey and Higgins 2002). As pragmatics and context are closely connected (Marmaridou 2000),

the meaning of a euphemistic utterance, and whether it is meant to be interpreted as such are determined through context. In the same vein, Gómez (2009: 725) asserts that:

> A linguistic expression cannot be directly labelled as euphemistic or dysphemistic; rather, only through a certain context and given situation can the real sense of its intentions and its function as a communicative value be known.

Conclusion

This chapter has touched upon the status that the Qur'ān enjoys amongst Muslims, attested to also by some non-Muslim linguists. This was followed by a historical account of translation of the Qur'ān with a special focus on English language versions. The nature of the connections between the three areas being studied in this research, namely the Qur'ān, translation and euphemism, were then explored and it was concluded that all of them rely on context for depiction of meaning. Finally, there was a discussion of the contextual tools which can be used for purposes of interpreting and translating the Qur'ān. The next chapter will focus on another key notion in translation theory studies, namely equivalence, and will explain why this cannot be adopted in the case of Qur'ān translation.

CHAPTER 5. Equivalence and Translating the Qur'ān

5.1 Introduction to the Notion of Equivalence

One of the most important issues in translation, if not the most, is equivalence. A great deal of research has been conducted on this topic, and various attempts have been made to define its nature. According to many translation theorists, equivalence is the core issue of the art of translation (Jakobson 2000: 68-69);(Koller 1979); (Newmark 1981); (Nida 1964); Nida and Taber 1969). Equivalence has been defined by Baker (1998: 77) as "the relationship between a ST and a TT that allows the TT to be considered as a translation of the ST in the first place". In the following section, several major works regarding the notion of equivalence are discussed. Then, the discussion will shift to focus on why the notion of equivalence poses a particular problem in the case of translation of the Qur'ān.

5.1.1 Jakobson's Equivalence Theory

Jakobson (2000) sees translation as consisting of three types: intralingual, interlingual, and inter-semiotic. Intralingual translation, according to Jakobson, refers to rewording of a text using the same SL. Essentially, it consists of using one set of words or word combinations to explain a different set of words within one language. The words used in this kind of translation may be more or less synonymous, but sometimes there is a need to resort to circumlocution and paraphrasing. The second type i.e. 'interlingual translation' or 'translation proper' is what is generally meant by translation. In Jakobson's words (2000: 114), it is "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language". The third type he identifies is intersemiotic translation or transmutation, the form of translation whereby signs are interpreted by means of non-verbal signs. This can occur, for instance, if the translation takes a different form such as making a written text into a film, play or painting.

Jakobson claims that complete equivalence does not exist even with synonymy in the first and second types of translation. He illustrates his claim with examples like 'celibate' and 'bachelor' noting that "every celibate is a

bachelor, but not every bachelor is a celibate" (*ibid.*: 114). This could indeed sometimes be the case but we can easily argue that complete synonymy does also exist. The only aspect that really matters is whether synonyms can collocate with the remaining parts of the utterance (Lyons 2002: 148). No matter how rarely this may be the case, full equivalence can consequently also exist. In translation, we are normally dealing with a defined context; therefore, synonyms can easily act like full equivalents if carefully picked. Therefore, approaching equivalence by taking such a narrow view will only lead to drawing general and inaccurate assumptions. For example, to refute Jakobson's notion of equivalence using his example, the word 'single' can almost always be equivalent to the word 'bachelor' except for a few instances when formality vs. non-formality are marked in the context. Similarly, the verbs 'begin', 'start', and 'commence' may also be used interchangeably in various contexts without any noticeable loss of meaning as long as they collocate with the occurring lexical items in the sentence.

In the second type of translation, Jakobson illustrates that a substitution of the ST message with an equivalent TT message takes place. He claims that equivalence may only exist in combined code units which may be interpreted to have similar meanings. From both a semiotic and a linguistic point of view he investigates the English word 'cheese' and the Russian *syr* concluding that the two cannot be considered identical as the Russian word does not include the concept of English cottage cheese in it. Using the terms 'signatum' and 'signum', he draws attention to similar ideas to those of Saussure's 'signified' and 'signifier'. In fact, Jakobson seems to look at equivalence and meaning from the angles of grammatical structures used in the TT and word count rather than from the angle of ability or inability to express meaning which is normally the core issue of equivalence.

He examines examples in other languages such as French and German, concluding that: "Languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey" (Jakobson 2000: 116). Differences can occur at the level of gender of certain words, verb morphology i.e. whether the action it expresses is completed or incompleted, and absence of grammatical category e.g. dualism and pluralism. However, given that it is very difficult to translate using the same sorts of code units in both SL and

TL, it is impossible to achieve such a level of equivalence. Yet, equivalence in its broader sense (i.e. the pragmatic one) is still attainable since concepts can still be transferred across languages even with a combination of more than one concept.

5.1.2 Nida's Equivalence Theory

Nida's approach towards translation is multi-dimensional, examining translation from a linguistic point of view and drawing on ideas such as the famous Chomskyan concepts of surface and deep structures of meaning (Nida and Taber 1982). He also adopts a sociolinguistic approach, linking translation to communicative theory and concludes that communication activity is always involved in translation: "The model for such activity must be a communication model, and the principles must be primarily sociolinguistic in the broad sense of the word" (Nida 1976: 78). What is more, he contends that no single or simple theory can suffice to explain the translation phenomenon, and that a multi-disciplinary treatment of it is required. Consequently, a number of aspects are found to correspond to the functional theories of translation such as coherence, naturalness, and fluency (Gentzler 2001: 71).

Nida (1964) defines two types of equivalence: formal and dynamic (or functional). He notes that formal equivalence "focuses attention on the message itself in both form and content" (*ibid.*: 159). By definition, it is mainly connected with both ST and TL structures and text genres. Formal equivalence focuses on the ST message which could emanate from both content and form. This type of equivalence is best suited to translating SL-specific terms and concepts where the translator adheres closely to the ST form, even using literal translation that may not be comprehended by the TL recipient. Translators employing this type of equivalence would render a poetry line with another poetry line in the TT which conveys the same meaning. However, following this approach may create issues of untranslatability as correspondence of similar forms across languages does not always exist as will be illustrated in this chapter.

For example, it is not always possible to translate poetry from one language to another using a corresponding type of poetry. Arabic poetry, for instance,

is often rhymed and is written in accordance with sixteen established metres. These conventions make it an extremely difficult, if not impossible task, to produce an equivalent TL text which corresponds to the formal features of the SL original. Thus, in poetry translation, translators tend to make meaning their first priority, followed by maintaining rhyme, whilst abandoning the metre. When gaps arise, Nida refers to the strategy of what he calls 'Gloss Translation' which is applied when the translator compensates for information gaps with the aid of explanatory footnotes (Nida 1964: 159). Enjoying a literality nature, this type of translation seems to lie at the opposite end to adaptation since the translator presents a TT which follows the ST message elicited from both its content and form.

Moreover, there is a functional dimension to formal equivalence: it focuses on the function which might even be elicited from the form itself, an aspect which is usually neglected in translation. Formal equivalence is a contextually motivated method of translation which is different from literal translation which ignores context. According to Hatim and Munday (2004: 42), formal equivalence is a "procedure purposefully selected in order to preserve a certain linguistic/rhetorical effect". This purposeful adherence to form serves "to bring the target reader to the linguistic or cultural preferences of the ST" (ibid.). Nida (1976: 48) rightly posits that content cannot be totally separated from form, arguing that:

> Form and content often constitute an inseparable bond; as in the case of religious texts, in which concepts are often closely related to particular words or rather verbal formulas.

However, when meaning is not form-bound, following the formal equivalence method can result in unjustified opaqueness or redundancy in the TT, creating more problems in terms of communicativeness rather than assisting with comprehensibility. In such a case, dynamic equivalence would definitely be a better choice for the translator to adopt. The word 'dynamic' as used by Nida (1964: 120) suggests the capability to deal with more than one aspect that could affect meaning. Dynamic equivalence deals with meaning from other perspectives i.e. pragmatic, behavioural, semantic and syntactic. Therefore, Nida shifts the focus of translation from form to concentrating on

the relation between the receptor and the text. His is, thus, a reader-oriented theory.

This type of equivalence emanates from Nida's proposition that:

> Language consists of more than the meanings of the symbols and the combinations of symbols; it is essentially a code in operation, or, in other words, a code functioning for a special purpose or purposes

In dynamic equivalence Nida focuses more on naturalness in translation which he defines as "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (*ibid.*: 166). The translation produced is one of which "a bilingual and bi-cultural can justifiably say 'That is just the way we would say it'" (*ibid.*: 166). Originally, Nida followed Chomsky's generative-transformational grammar theory which analyzed sentences on two levels, namely deep structure and surface structure, bound to one another by transformational rules (Munday 2001: 40). For Nida, Chomsky's theory is important since it can provide the translator with techniques and procedures for decoding and encoding the TT (Nida 1964: 60). Furthermore, he introduces his own technique of 'componential analysis' which helps the translator determine and assess the semantic content of words and hence assess equivalence in translation.

However, it is made clear in Nida and Taber (1982) that dynamic equivalence does not simply concern communication or representation of information. There is also an "expressive factor" meaning that target receptors "must also feel as well as understand what is said" (*ibid:* 25) , a functional and pragmatic aspect of Nida's theory of translation. He provides an example of dynamic equivalence in a religious context citing the translation of 'Lamb of God' into 'Seal of God' for the Inuit. He claims that using the phrase 'Lamb of God' does not suggest innocence to the Inuit, a quality which is strongly marked in the SL expression whereas the TL translation does convey that aspect of meaning.

A similar example is the Shakespearian sonnet 'Shall I Compare thee to a Summer's Day' in which the Bard is extolling the purity and clarity of his beloved by using a vivid image of a summer's day that is imprinted in the minds of his contemporary readers. A literal translation of that figure of

speech would not communicate the same message in Arabic since for Arabs a summer's day would suggest unbearably hot temperatures. An Arab poet would not 'dare' to use such a metaphor to address his beloved. It would even sound unromantic, delivering a contradictory message i.e. alluding to her being unbearable.

One of the prime differences between the two types of equivalence is that the latter is "directed primarily toward equivalence of response rather than equivalence of form" (Nida 1964: 166). Therefore, this type of translation is oriented towards a TL rather than a SL receptor. In spite of this, Nida clearly defines the relationship between the translation and the original:

> A D-E [dynamic equivalence] translation is not merely another message which is more or less similar to that of the source. It is a translation, and as such must clearly reflect the meaning and the intent of the source (*ibid.*:166).

In terms of the purpose of the translation, Nida's principle is similar to that of Skopos Theory, but his theory places more emphasis on fidelity to the SL rather than being oriented towards the TL text and audience as in the case of Skopos.

Nida (1964: 242) argues that analysis of the SL text is more complicated than it is assumed. Given that written texts lack phonemic features from which a translator might elicit useful information, the translator's job is to be aware of the deficiencies inherent in the orthographic version. Nida proposes the following levels of analysis:

1. Analysis of lexico-grammatical features of the translation unit which requires a breakdown of the content and formal aspects of the meaning. This level should include analysis of the linguistic, referential and emotive charge of the translation unit.

2. Analysis of the wider discourse context whereby units of translation should be seen as a component which, along with other units, form the total discourse.

3. Analysis of the communicative context which can include the time and place the ST was written, its author, readership, and their responses towards the message, if recorded.

4. Analysis of the cultural context which may help to shape the semantic relationships forming the textual matrix of the ST.

Nida's approach towards equivalence was both praised and criticized. It is claimed that his theory could be of particular use in Bible translation where words occur in a defined context and are meant to deliver a defined impact on the receivers (Leonardi 2000). However Whang (2004) criticized his theory of dynamic equivalence on the following grounds:

1. Unavailability of ST reader response as a translator may not know for sure what this was.

2. It is impoosible to assess the diaouge between the original readers and the ST in order to produce a functioanlly equivalent translation.

3. Meaning is lost between the author's intention and the receptor's response.

Whang (2004: 54) also points out that Nida's theory lacks a " concrete method of comparison" between the response of the original receptors and that of the target receptors.

Nida was also fiercely criticized by Venuti (1995: 22) who argues that:

Nida's advocacy of domesticating translation is explicitly grounded on a transcendental concept of humanity as an essence that remains unchanged over time and space

This is particularly true because reader responses remain changeable and can vary significantly depending on criteria such as the receptors' cultural background, age, religion, or even their own idiosyncrasies. Venuti (1995: 23) further argues that dynamic equivalence "excludes other target language cultural constituencies" since it is focused solely on the reader.

5.1.3 Newmark's Theory

As a professional translator with long years of practice, Newmark acknowledges two dimensions in equivalence i.e. linguistic and

communicative and his translation theory adopts a functional attitude towards translation. He draws upon Jakobson's modifications of Buhler's language functions: expressive, descriptive, and vocative (Newmark 1981: 21 ; Newmark 1988: 55). Translating, according to Newmark, requires analysis of the intentions of the text. He also emphasizes the need to determine the intention of the translator and he or she is focusing on the emotive charge of the ST or focusing more on conveying the cultural flavour of the ST in the translation. He also differentiates between different types of meaning including grammatical and lexical meaning where the emphasis is evidenced in different aspects of the language (e.g. word order and lexemes respectively).

Like Nida, Newmark presents two main types of what he calls translation methods but he labels them differently as semantic and communicative. According to Newmark, 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: 39). This type of translation is ST-oriented and thus is often marred by awkwardness, being of an explanatory nature, and mistakenly tends to overtranslate in its pursuit to convey a specific nuance of meaning. Yet, despite this faithfulness to the SL, it can be differentiated from faithful translation by the fact that it pays more attention to the text's aesthetic values and is more flexible (Newmark 1988: 46). Moreover, a semantic translation is always inferior to the ST due to the fact that it implies that loss of meaning is always an inherent feature of it. Newmark remarks that when "original expression" (i.e. the intrinsic textual features of the ST) is important, adopting a semantic translation strategy is recommended as it tends to preserve the local flavour of the ST.

On the other hand, communicative translation which is similar to Nida's dynamic equivalence "attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original" (ibid.: 39). This type of methodology is meant to produce a target reader-oriented text as it caters for "a generous transfer of foreign elements into his own culture as well as his language where necessary."(ibid.: 39). Nonetheless, the form of the ST is still respected by the translator for it is the only material on which translation should be based. He adds that communicative translation

generally tends to be smoother, clearer, more direct, and more conventional (i.e. well written) although in cases of ambiguity (or 'conflict' in Newmark's words), the translator is advised to use generic terms rather than specific ones i.e. adopting a generalisation strategy.

Newmark also suggests the idea of senses (sememes) and sense components (semes) (*ibid.*: 27); a variation of Nida's componential analysis. He suggests that the translation procedure which should be used is that of breaking down the semantic components of the sentence. Moreover, above the lexical and sentence level, Newmark speaks of linguistic analysis which the translator can carry out using discourse markers such as punctuation or lexical units and which helps to clarify semantic connections in the text.

In his treatment of the issue of translation, Newmark hints that he views texts and their translations from a functionalistic perspective. This is reflected in the two translation methods reviewed above. He examines texts from a functional point of view as he tries to match different types to texts to his two methods. For example, he posits that a vast majority of texts such as informative, non-literary writing, propaganda, public notices or publicity are better translated communicatively. However, when the function of the text is derived from the idiolect of the writer, semantic translation is the option which he favours.

5.1.4 **Baker's Theory**
With regard to Baker's approach to equivalence, she acknowledges that equivalence is obtainable, but argues that it is always relative as it is bound to a number of linguistic and cultural factors (Baker 1992: 6). Following Halliday's assertion that a text is a unit of meaning and not related to form, and furthermore, that meaning is delivered by the latter, she deals with equivalence addressing both form and meaning. She categorizes equivalence into a number of different levels, following the process of translation from both a linguistic and communicative approach:

1. Equivalence at word level

2. Equivalence above word level

3. Grammatical Equivalence

4. Textual equivalence

5. Pragmatic equivalence

1- Equivalence at word level

With reference to equivalence at word level, Baker distinguishes between four main types of meaning. The first of these is propositional meaning which "arises from the relation between it [the word] and what it refers to or describes in a real or imaginary world, as conceived by the speakers of the particular language" (*ibid.*: 13). She explains that inaccurate translation is usually caused by a mismatch at this level.

The second type of meaning in this category is expressive meaning which "relates to the speaker's feelings or attitude rather than to what words and utterances refer to" (*ibid.*: 13). According to Baker (1992), expressive words can be removed without causing any loss in the informative account of meaning in the text. However, other more subtle aspects or contours of meaning such as forcefulness, markedness, etc. will definitely be affected.

Baker (1992) referred to the third category as pre-supposed meaning which "arises from co-occurrence restrictions i.e. restrictions on what other words or expressions we expect to see before or after a particular lexical unit" (*ibid.*: 14). These restrictions can be either selectional or collocational. Selectional restrictions take place when a human subject is expected to precede a particular verb or adjective. Baker (1992) notes that the use of figurative language is an exception to this type whereas collocational restrictions, on the other hand, are arbitrary semantic rules, but they still conventional.

The fourth and final of Baker's categories is evoked meaning which "arises from dialect and register variation" (*ibid.*: 15). She argues that different forms of language usage are expected to be used in different situations and contexts. For instance, there would be particular expectations in a doctor-patient conversation in terms of the vocabulary used, formality vs. informality, etc, which would not be the same in a father-son dialogue, for instance.

Baker (1992) acknowledges that these types of meanings are rarely defined with such a clear-cut distinction, simply because words have 'blurred edges' and their meaning are relative and negotiable according to context. Therefore, non-equivalence may occur due to the fact that "the choice of a suitable equivalent in a given context depends on a wide variety of factors" (*ibid.*: 17). These factors can be both linguistic and extra-linguistic. In other words, language system is certainly a crucial factor in translation. However, both the ST writer and TT writer i.e. the translator play a parallel role in how they deal with the language used i.e. the language system.

Furthermore, Baker recommends using semantic fields to help provide translators with strategies for finding equivalence and provides a thorough and straightforward analysis which can be applied to non-equivalence at this level and also suggests some strategies which can be used to overcome such obstacles. She believes that a translator must first assess the significance of the non-equivalence in question and its implications on the meaning. That is to say, not all instances of non-equivalence make a noticeable difference as words may compensate for each other. According to her, a translator "should not distract the reader by looking at every word in isolation and attempting to present him/her with a full linguistic account of its meaning" (*ibid.*: 26).

2- Equivalence above word level

Equivalence above word level may apply to collocations on the one hand and idioms and fixed expressions on the other. As these are both figurative and culture-bound, they pose difficulties when some translators fall into the trap of translating them literally. Moreover, another issue which needs to be considered at this level is markedness vs. unmarkedness as some unmarked ST collocations or idiomatic expressions do not need to be rendered with an equivalent. Baker refers to this as "the tension between accuracy and naturalness" (*ibid.*: 56). To reiterate, equivalence may not be a priority in those cases when a wide range of translation choices are available.

3- Grammatical Equivalence

Baker acknowledges that, throughout the world, languages differ substantially in the way they structure their sentences. However, the notion of grammatical equivalence emanates from the fact that different grammatical structures may result in variations in meaning. Baker focuses on aspects like number, tense, voice and gender which feature prominently in different languages. For example, Arabic has a wealth of grammatical features such as nominal and verbal sentences which if marked would raise the question of equivalence. What is more, changing conventional word order i.e. fronting, can sometimes place emphasis on a particular aspect that may not be equally emphasized or expressed in the other text.

4- Textual Equivalence

This particular type of equivalence arises from the notion that texture is an important feature in translation. Texts consist of linear arrangements which are crucial for the translator carrying out the process of ST analysis. These units combine to form an overall degree of coherence in a text. As the cohesive ties which link language arrangements together may vary from language to language, the translator must make a decision after evaluating markedness in the ST and look for an equivalent text that produces a similar degree of texture. This may sound easy, but as a matter of fact, when it comes to real life translation the gap between two languages may be too wide to be bridged. For example, repetition is far more acceptable in Arabic as compared to English which tends not to accept this feature (Baker 1992).

5- Pragmatic Equivalence

Baker (1992) holds that "pragmatics is the study of the language in use" and that pragmatic meaning is "concerned with the way utterances are used in communicative situations, and the way we interpret them" (*ibid.*: 217). She claims that there is a close relationship between coherence and implicature, which is the implied meaning carried by the text. This type of meaning in particular seems to be relevant to the main concern of this study i.e. euphemistic meaning which is sometimes implied from the context.

However, with regards to euphemism, Baker's view may not be useful in the case of Qur'ānic euphemisms. Rightly arguing that different languages may differ in their concept of taboo and politeness, Baker (1992: 234)

acknowledges in general terms that in some translation contexts politeness should be prioritized over accuracy. Therefore, it is left for the translator to decide whether to omit or to reproduce the pragmatic effect of euphemism so that reader expectation is not violated. Such a TL-oriented view, similar to the Skopos theory mentioned earlier, would not work in the Qur'ānic case since the sex-related euphemisms are equally euphemized in both Arabic and English.

5.2 Limitations to Equivalence in Qur'ānic Translation

5.2.1 Cultural Limitations

Viewing translation as a mere linguistic practice is too limiting when there are culture-specific factors which affect the translation process. It has been established that equivalence is relative because it is influenced by both linguistic and cultural factors (Baker 1992). Moreover, according to Armstrong (2005: 33), "language can be so saturated in the culture to which it refers as to rule out any kind of literal translation". The text, he rightly notes, can be culturally infused and hence the translation difficulty. He adds that when: "linguistic and cultural material are (*sic*) inextricably blended, no very close equivalent is available" (*Ibid.*: 44).

Furthermore, reciting the Qur'ān in its Arabic form is very much a required an obligatory task in Islam. Muslims believe that prayers, for instance, are not acceptable without reciting the Qur'ān in its Arabic original form (Leaman 2006: 657) (Cf. discussion in p.110). According to the Prophet Mohammed "There is no prayer for one who does not recite the opening of the book (*al-Fātiḥa*)" cited in (Zeno 1998: 75). What is more, by tradition, Muslims are rewarded for every single letter they recite from the Qur'ān. According to Ibn Mas'ūd, the Prophet Mohammed said, "Anyone who reads a letter from the book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'ān), will get a reward which is equal to ten times the single reward (of other good deeds). I do not say that (الم) *alif lām mīm* is one letter, but (ا) *alif* is a letter, (ل) *lām* is a letter, and (م) *mīm* is a letter" (al-Tirmidhi cited in Zeno 1998: 74). This belief makes the concept of complete equivalence between the ST and the TT out of the question as letters of the TL translation will definitely not enjoy such a status.

However, one of the most evident cultural reasons for non-equivalence being applied particularly to translations of the Qur'ān is the profound Islamic belief that it is the word of Allah himself, and that it is, therefore, miraculously inimitable. This corresponds to the notion of verbal *i'jāz* in the Qur'ān discussed below. Al-Tibawi (1962: 4), argues that any translation of the Qur'ān or any commentary written in Arabic is "no more than an approximation of the meaning of the Qur'ān, but not the Qur'ān itself". Evidence to support this can be found in the wide range of Tafsīr books (i.e. interpretation of meaning) written in Arabic. Even though they are written in Arabic, the same language as the Qur'ān, they do not enjoy the same status as it (i.e. sacredness and inimitability (Bin Bāz n.d: 148)

5.2.1.1 The Notion of Inimitability

The inimitability of the Qur'ān, or *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* as it is called by scholars, is believed by Muslims to be a central quality of the Qur'ān. *i'jāz* is derived from the verb *'ajiza* which means 'to be incapable. The notion itself is found in the Qur'ān which openly challenges humans to produce anything like it (Q.17:88, Q.52:33-34). These verses of challenge known as *Taḥaddi* were initially addressed specifically to Arabs who excelled in Arabic language fluency at that time. Despite that, they failed to meet such a challenge. In this section, the objective is not to present a historical account of the notion of inimitability, nor to trace scholarly attempts to identify various types of this, but to establish a necessary link to the notion of equivalence, beginning with the linguistic *i'jāz* features in the Qur'ān as they have been approached historically.

The interest in the subject of *i'jāz* first emerged in the second Hijri decade (i.e. the eighth Gregorian decade) with scholarly attempts made by Abu 'Ubaydah (d. 825A.D.), al-'Akhfash (d. 826A.D.), al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 869 A.D.) to prope the notion of *i'jāz al-Qur'ān*. It then dominated the interests of linguists, rhetoricians and exegetes such as al-Wāṣiṭi (d. 918A.D.), Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari (d. 310 A.H./923 A.D.), al-Rummāni (d. 996 A.D.), al-Khaṭṭābi (d. 998 A.D.), al-Bāqillāni (d. 1013 A.D.), al-Jurjāni (d. 1079 A.D.) and others (al-Naṣrāwi 2007). Al-Tabari, for instance, proclaims:

> It is obvious that there is no clear discourse more eloquent, no wisdom more profound, no speech more sublime, no form of expression more noble, than (this) clear discourse and speech with which a single man challenged a people at a time when they were acknowledged masters of the art of oratory and rhetoric, poetry and prose, rhymed prose and soothsaying (Cited in: Behbudi and Turner 1997: ix)

Furthermore, during the third and fourth Hijri decades (Ninth and tenth Gregorian decade), Arab scholars studied the notion of 'i'jāz extensively, attributing inimitability to a number of factors. Some writers have linked it to the Qur'ān's legislative content that is reflected in its legal regulations while others have attributed it to the Qur'ān's eternal integration which allows it to be consulted at different times and in various places. Some have focused on its content regarding information about the unseen world, telling stories about the past, or events during the time of the Prophet Mohammed, or foretelling the future, to all be an aspect of i'jāz.

It is worth mentioning here one curious aspect of 'i'jāz which is al-Ṣarfah theory, first advanced by al-Naẓẓām (d. 846 A.D.), a rationalist Mu'tazili theologian. His theory, which derives its name from the verb Ṣarafa meaning 'to turn away', is based on the belief that Arabs could produce a text similar to the Qur'ān if only God had not prevented them from doing so (Abu Zayd 2003). Mu'tazilis have approached the theory from three different stances depending on their interpretations of it.

The first perspective adopted by a number of theologians, including al-Naẓẓām and al-Mirdār (d. 841A.D.), was the belief that the Qur'ān was similar to the speech of Arabs, and that people at the same time as the revelation were able to imitate it as there was nothing special in it that could not be reproduced (Hassan 2002).

A second group which included al-Jāhiẓ (d. 869A.D.) and al-Rummāni (d. 994A.D.) believed in the divine rhetorical texture of the Qur'ān, but partially believed in the al-Ṣarfah theory in the sense that God had turned Arabs' minds away from even thinking of imitating it (Abdul-Raof 2006: 18). This

group believed that Arabs were not able to imitate the Qur'ān admitting that it is rhetorically and syntactically inimitable.

The third approach is that of al-Qāḍi 'Abdul-Jabbār al-Ḥamadani (d.1024 A.D.) who was a later Mu'tazili theologian. He had his own understanding of *al-Ṣarfah* which was at odds with the previous senses of the theory. He believed that the Arabs realized that they could not imitate the Qur'ān. So, unlike his predecessors who believed in divine power preventing people from imitating the Qur'ān, he thought that people were aware of their limited abilities which would not allow them to produce a rival to the Qur'ān which was filled with such impressive and eloquent speech (*ibid.*).

Although *al-Ṣarfah* theory attracted other proponents such as Ibn Ḥazm (d.1064A.D.), al-Juwayni (d. 1085A.D.), and al-'Aṣfahāni (d. 1034A.D.) (Hassan 2002) it was later widely rejected and severely censured by scholars such as al-Suyūti (d. 1505A.D.), al-Zarkashi (d. 1392A.D.), al-Khaṭṭābi (d. 998A.D.), al-Baqillāni (d.1013A.D.), and al-Jurjāni (d. 1079A.D.) who approached 'i'jāz from a linguistic or even a literary point of view.

Al-Qurṭubi (2006), for instance, associates 'i'jāz with ten aspects, five of which are language-specific. He asserts that the Qur'ān's texture is unique and is different from the texture of literary genres such as poetry. The style, on the other hand, is also different and rhetorically pure. There is also a lack of contradiction both 'externally' and 'internally' i.e. in terms of its form and content respectively. Moreover, he believes that the total wisdom included in it could not possibly have a human origin in terms of its abundance and honourability. The fifth aspect is the effect that the Qur'ān has on the hearts of listeners or readers (al-Qurṭubi 2006: 116)

Al-Khaṭṭābi on the other hand, has approached 'i'jāz from both linguistic and rhetorical points of view. He creates a comprehensive model of 'i'jāz composed of three different aspects. He believes that "the Qur'ān uses the most eloquent words in the best way of texturing presenting the most sound meanings" (Cited in Ahmed and Sallam 1976: 14). He seems to have laid the foundation of the theory of *naẓm* which was later developed by al-Jurjāni as we shall see later.

Similarly, al-Bāqillani (1954), an 'Ash'ari theologian, links 'ijāz to a number of factors pertaining to both content and form. With regards to content (mentioned previously by al-Qurṭubi as internal coherence), al-Bāqillani considers the Qur'ān telling about the unseen or making predictions about events such as the conquest of Persia, or battles within the Arabian Peninsula, as an aspect of 'ijāz. The second element he examines and believes to be a miraculous aspect of the Qur'ān are the stories which it tells about ancient nations, especially because they were presented via a prophet who was unlettered and had no knowledge about history. The third aspect, according to al-Bāqillani, is linguistic. He argues that the Qur'ān's texture is wonderful, and that its composition is amazing to a degree that humans would fall short of making it (al-Baqillani 1954: 51).

He spoke highly of the Qur'ān's linguistic coherence, semantically and phonetically-driven features, and stylistic shifts (Leaman 2006). He believed that the uniqueness of the Qur'ān lies in the fact that it is neither poetry nor prose but is rather a literary genre which stands apart from all others (Vahid Dastjerdi and Jamshidian 2010). He continues by identifying three layers (or levels) of Arabic rhetoric: the elite layer which is the level of the Qur'ān; the middling and lower layers which are the levels rhetoricians reach depending on whether they are eloquent speakers or merely average. He concludes from this division that rhetoricians' speech varies in eloquence whereas the Qur'ān achieves and maintains the elite level of eloquence (Dayf 1992) .

Similarly, al-Jurjāni, who was a prominent grammarian, rhetorician and thinker, determines that the inimitability of the Qur'ān stems from a linguistic and a rhetorical phenomenon. He laid the foundations of the theory of naẓm which ascribes the notion of inimitability to the beauty of the Qur'ān's texture, style, and composition (al-Jurjāni 1991). He differentiates between naẓm as putting words into mere structures (syntax) on the one hand, and interweaving words in meaningful structures on the other. In other words, in his theory, he conceives of and employs syntax as a determiner of the beauty of the meaning, not a mere set of rules that govern the speech structure. Naẓm, emphasizes al-Jurjāni, must produce meaning in harmony and congruity (ibid.: 49). In this regard, context is an important component of

this theory in which the beauty of the text can only be framed by context (Muhammed 2007). This is indeed a pragmatic dimension of his theory.

Although the terms 'texture' and 'composition' seem to link the notion of inimitability with syntax, al-Jurjāni does not clearly state its boundaries in a way that makes his thesis identifiable. Therefore, his theory has been extensively studied throughout the years. Yet, despite the fact that some scholars think that al-Jurjāni's *nazm* was first introduced by al-Jāhiz, all seem to agree that al-Jurjāni has created a more mature theory of rhetoric having benefited from the ideas of his predecessors such as al-Jāhiz and al-Qādī ʿAbdul-Jabbār (Dayf 1992).

To conclude, al-Jurjāni presents another definition of the inimitability of the Qurʾān that is linked directly with the texture of the words in given contexts. He refutes other approaches which focused their attention merely on lexical aspects. He explains that words are merely containers of meanings and that if they are meant to make eloquent speech, they need to be contrived in a meaningfully and rationally accepted manner. He manages to link structure with meaning and style to form his theory of speech eloquence and hence inimitability of the Qurʾān.

More recently, Denffer (1994) has argued that the concept of uniqueness and inimitability that is in the mind of Islamic scholars is closely linked to the Qurʾān being revealed in Arabic. As a consequence, claims Denffer (1994), once it is translated into another language, it loses its status as the word of Allah and hence, its miraculous nature.

With regards to the latter point, historically speaking, three out of the four schools agree that the Qurʾān would lose its character if translated into another language. Only the Hanafis among the four schools of jurisprudence accepted the recitation of the Qurʾān in other languages (al-Tibawi 1962). Nevertheless, it has been reported that some followers of Abu Hanīfah (d. 767A.D.) such as Abu Yūsuf al-Kasāʾi (d. 805A.D.) and Mohammed b. al-Hasan al-Shaybāni (d. 805A.D.) limit this permission to those who could not speak Arabic (al-Sarkhasi 1989 : 37). Desipte this, it has been reported that even Abu Hanīfah himself later abandoned this opinion which unconditionally permitted reading translation during prayers and eventually

reached an opinion similar to that of his disciples, al-Kasāʾi and al-Shaybāni (al-Laknāwi 2002: 10).

5.2.1.2 Linguistic Limitations

Abdul-Raof (2001) argues that if there is no cultural and linguistic congruity, the notion of sameness in equivalence, is impossible. Abdul-Raof believes that this can be attributed to the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic differences among languages. He further claims that "the intrinsic, semantic and pragmatic differences in languages lead to cases of both non-equivalence and untranslatability between languages; we are, therefore, shackled by these limitations" (Abdul-Raof 2001: 9). To avoid this, he further suggests that a translator must free him/herself of these 'shackles', a process which involves making 'inevitable' structural changes to the TT in comparison with the ST. Abdul-Raof (2001) adds:

> For a sacred and highly sensitive text like the Qurʾān, the translation, magnum opus or otherwise, cannot escape the trap of exegetical inaccuracies. A translated Qurʾān will, of course, have new structural, textural and rhetorical features ad hoc to the target language (*ibid.*: 10).

A realistic view of translation would certainly support Abdul-Raof's opinion. Indeed it is customary to experience changes to various aspects in ST and the TT emanating from the typical differences among languages. Ensuring that the text is reproduced and interwoven in accordance with the TL norms justifies inaccuracies. But the question remains: to what extent would the TL features affect the meaning of the original? And what degree of change would be acceptable? Theoretically speaking, it is not acceptable if these changes extend from affecting the form to affecting the meaning since the latter is the ultimate mission for translators to undertake. The translator, therefore, has first to spot the functions of the text contained within its words, structures or rhetorical devices, and can then opt to produce a similar text containing as many as possible of the functions in the TL according to its syntactic, semantic, lexical, and stylistic norms.

Nevertheless, since it is inherent in translation that change and modification is inevitable, choosing to over-emphasise the problem of non-existence of

equivalence among languages, or specifically between Arabic and English in our case, is a narrow view of the nature of translation. It is, as House (2006: 343) rightly posits, a relative concept that "has nothing to do with identity". It is rather determined by an array of variables such as the socio-historical conditions of the translation, the linguistic, contextual and cultural conventions of the TL, connotative and aesthetic dimensions of the original, and translators' understanding and interpretation of the original and their own creativity. These factors, along with others, combine to justify the blurry image of equivalence.

Generally, non-equivalence may well exist due to a wide variety of reasons. Some are linguistic reasons when, for instance, a word is not lexicalized in the TL such as the Arabic word *shīmatun* (شيمة). A translator will definitely have to explain this word to the target English reader as there is no direct equivalent word to it in English. The list may go on to include *ghayratun* (غيرة) and *ḥamiyyatun* (حمية) as well since these also pose difficulties in terms of non-equivalence when attempting to translate them into English. Some words also have different distinctions in meaning such as *sarā* سرى, *ghadā* غدى, *rāḥa* راح. These words express the concept of going from one place to another at different times of the day and night. In English, they may all be expressed with the verb "to go" which clearly falls short of conveying the full meaning of each verb. To illustrate more on this, the first verb *sarā* can only be used to express going at night while the other two are to be used respectively to express going in the morning and late afternoon.

Another aspect which poses difficulties is connotative meaning. Word meanings can often differ according to peoples' personal experiences and prejudices, hence it may not always be possible to express these. According to House (1973): "Connotative meanings are too elusive to be rendered correctly in translation because of their inherently indefinable nature" (House 1973: 166). However, this relates to the notion of untranslatability, rather than non-equivalence. Non-equivalence, in our view, presumes that the process of translation implies either loss of meaning, which often seems to be the case, or over-translation, i.e. expressing more than was intended in the ST.

Jarošová (2000) identifies three levels of equivalence typology: full, partial and zero equivalence. Non-equivalence, which is generally a slight deviation from what is theoretically called full equivalence, is by definition similar to partial equivalence, while untranslatability, on the other hand, is a different issue which may well be the result of attempting to compare languages and cultures where lexical gaps may occur and thus can be compared to zero equivalence. However other factors may be involved in this process, such as the translator's ability and creativity, and the difficulty of the particular ST.

5.2.1.3 Syntactic Limitations to Equivalence

The previous discussion of the notion of inimitability has demonstrated that Qur'ānic texture employs a form that is different to the conventional Arabic sentence form. Leaman (2006: 364) notes that: "In the Qur'ān, where the free word order, syntactic deletions, fronting of objects, and postponements of main verbs are prevalent, [...] declensional endings become indispensable markers of meaning". Van Valin and LaPolla (1997: 1) also explain that "In English and many other languages, the arrangement of words is a vital factor in determining the meaning of an utterance". Arabic is no exception where word order can be used to make functions such as adding emphasis to meaning. For example, some Qur'ānic verses break the conventional Arabic sentence word order of Verb-Subject-Complement as in (Q. 01:268) and (Q. 20:67). This has perplexed linguists looking at variations in Qur'ānic genres and made some western linguists such as Leaman (2006) claim that word order is haphazard in the Qur'ān.

However, what might seem to be merely rule breaking is actually an important linguistic device called *taqdīm* (i.e. foregrounding). According to Abdelwali (2007), it is a syntactic mechanism used for semantic reasons, and has a special communicative function. In other words, it is used as a vehicle to achieve a certain effect that may not be achieved by ordinary patterns of syntax. Similarly, al-Samirra'i (2006) lists a number of reasons for the use of foregrounding in the Qur'ān. He claims that it can be used for specification or designation such as in verse (Q. 01:05): *'iyyāka na'budu wa 'iyyāka nasta'īn*. Here the object (the pronoun *'iyyāka*) comes before the verbs (*na'budu- nasta'īn*) to specify God [alone] for worship and from whom

one is to seek help. In recognition of this device, al-Hilāli and Khan's (1996) translation of this verse add the word "only"; an addition put in brackets to compensate for the unworded meaning. Moreover, foregrounding may also be used for purposes such a glorification and praise, or alternatively for pejorative purposes (al-Sāmirrā'i 2006: 51). In certain instances word order provides chronological information such as the verse (Q. 51:56) which foregrounds *jinn* before mankind, the reason being according to al-Samirra'i (2006) that *jinn* were created before mankind as is clearly stated in verse (Q. 15:27).

Another aspect worth mentioning in this context is '*iltifāt* described as grammatical shift by Abdel Haleem (1971) or sudden changes in person and number by Robinson (2003). The term itself is derived from the verb '*iltafata* which literally means to 'turn one's face towards another direction'. However as a rhetorical term, it is defined as:

> The change of speech from one mode to another, for the sake of freshness and variety for the listener, to renew his interest, and to keep his mind from boredom and frustration, through having the one mode continuously at his ear (*ibid.*: 245).

Indeed, this has proven troublesome to both readers and translators of the Qur'ān. Abdel Haleem (1971) states that Theodor Nöldeke in his study *Stylistische und syntaktische Eigentümlichkeiten der Sprache des Korans* criticized some verses which contained this pronoun shift. According to Abdel Haleem (1971), Nöldeke remarked that this occasional change in grammatical persons in the Qur'ān was both unusual and was inelegant. Abdel Haleem criticizes the former for his unawareness of this rhetorical device besides other linguists such as Wansbrough and Bell-Watt who wrote about the Qur'ān's linguistic and rhetorical features as well as exegesis.

To reiterate, translators need to be especially aware of syntactic elements. A change in word order, for instance, can imply a subsequent change in sentence meaning. Therefore, translators must take this feature into consideration. Failure to do so may well result in loss of meaning or even mistranslation. One of the tools a translator may be able to use in this case is context which will be discussed at a later stage.

5.2.1.4 Some Stylistic Limitations to Equivalence

5.2.1.4.1 Assonance

We have mentioned earlier that Qur'ānic text is uniquely written in a way that is not like poetry or prose but rhyme or assonance according to Watt (1970) is generally preserved throughout the Qur'ān. Although Arabic often makes a semantic link between form and sound, most translations of the Qur'ān disregard this aspect despite its aesthetic effect and semantic function. In other words, Arabs link harsh-sounding words with the hard nature of their actions or referents, an onomatopoeic-like effect. Likewise, softer-sounding words, which are made with certain letter or sound variations, can be linked with softer referents or actions (al-Rāfi'i 1997: 193). For example, according to *al-Rāfi'i* who refers to al-Tha'ālibi (2000) examples, there are differences between the words *'anīn*, *ḥanīn* and *khanīn*. All of them express the moaning of the sick but they vary according to whether moaning is loudly voiced, quietly voiced, or unvoiced respectively. Two more examples are the verbs *shadda* and *jarra*. The sounds of the letters *shīn*, *dāl* and *jīm* espectively, denote hard actions while *rā'* in the latter denotes repetition of the action.

It is already difficult for translators to express variations in nuances in meaning, and it is even more difficult to trace these subtle differences in the Arabic sources since for the most part they are not in active use in contemporary Arabic. For example, in *sūrah Maryam* (i.e. *sūrah* 19) there are four main patterns of rhyme that interchange according to the theme. The first thematic rhyme is found within the part narrating the story of the prophets Zakariyya, Jesus and his mother Mary with the rhyme pattern *'iyyā* extending for some thirty two verses. However, when this theme changes, the rhyming pattern also changes totally in the next seven verses. The rhyme then returns to the previous scheme to briefly narrate the stories of the Prophets Abraham, his father, Moses, *'Ismā'īl* and *'Idrīs*. The change in theme in the final third of the *sūrah* is reflected in a remarkable change in the rhyme pattern. Harsh-sounding rhymes are used, such as *jundā* i.e. soldiers; *maraddā* i.e. recourse; *waladā* i.e. child; *'ahdā* i.e. promise; *wafdā* i.e. delegation; *wirdā* i.e. to be driven while thirsty, with the rhyming sounds

becoming even harsher with *'iddā* i.e. hideous and *haddā* i.e. to collapse in devastation, when the verses talk about the claim that Allah has a son (al-Shamāylah 2006).

The aforementioned phenomenon should not be confused with onomatopoeia since while the former is semantic-phonetic, the latter is lexical-phonetic. In other words, assonance links meanings involved in an action with the sound, whereas the onomatopoea links the sound produced by the action with that produced by the pronunciation of the onomatopoeic word. Onomatopoeia works across both Arabic and English since both languages share a wide variety of onomatopoeic lexical items. Known as *al-muḥākāt al-Ṣawtiyyah* in Arabic, onomatopoeic sound poses another difficulty for translators, as the following example demonstrates.

In the verse: "فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاخَّةُ" (*fa'idha jā'ati al-ṣākhkhah*) (Q. 80:33); the onomatopoeic word *al-ṣākhkhah*, which as al-Hilāli and Khan (1996) note refers to the blast accompanying the second trumpet call on the Final Day, was not equivalently translated in any of the versions by Pickthall, Arberry, Saheeh, Yusuf Ali, or al-Hilāli and Khan. Their attempted translations were: 'the deafening noise', 'blast sound', 'deafening blast' or a transliteration of the original Arabic word. The translation effect in this case may be compared to that of a film subtitled for hearing impaired viewers where one might see expressions like 'clears her throat' 'bangs his fists on the table and screams', 'moans' or 'groans'. The effect of actually hearing the onomatopoeic word is not comparable to reading the explanation given in the subtitles.

Similarly, both Nelson (2001) and Neuwirth (2006) emphasize the oral nature of the Qur'ān. Neuwirth (2006) claims that it is a book to be recited which is mistakenly treated as a written text. In addition, Nelson (2001), who researched the art of Qur'ānic recitation, confirms the correlation between both its oral and semantic dimensions, explaining that:

> Qur'ānic rhythm and assonance alone confirm that it is meant to be heard. But the oral nature of the Qur'ān goes beyond euphony: the significance of the sound is carried as much by the sound as by its semantic information" (*ibid.*: xiv).

Moreover, Alan Jones in his introduction to Rodwell's translation of the Qur'ān states that:

> When reading the Qur'ān it is crucial to remember that the text was originally intended to be read aloud and that this is still its most effective form. Recitation to an audience gives the text a dimension that does not come across in silent reading, frequently showing up lines of thought that do not stand out clearly when one peruses the text (Rodwell 1994: xix).

Jones further adds that:

> Translators often have to tackle this problem by adding to their translations bridging phrases that they normally draw from the numerous, and lengthy, commentaries on the Qur'ān that have been written over the centuries in Arabic" (*ibid.*:xix).

Furthermore, Jones refers to the "distinctive linguistic stamp" of the Qur'ān, which he attributes to the addition of different styles, e.g. documentary and oral styles, along with rhetorical devices such as assonance. With respect to this specific linguistic device, he admits that: "There is no realistic possibility of conveying this feature in translation" (*ibid.*: xxii). Jones' opinion is similar to that of Rodwell who acknowledges that trying to imitate the rhyme found in the original "can only be done with a sacrifice of literal translation" (Rodwell 1861: xxvi). Despite their claims, there have been a number of attempts made at translating Qur'ānic verses using a similar rhyme. Watt (1970:78) managed to include rhyme in his translation of the verses Q. 100:1-5:

"By the runners panting,

By the kindlers sparking,

By the raiders early starting,

Then they raised up a dust-cloud,

Then they centered in a crowd".

There are other attempts of this kind such as that made in the Saheeh International version in chapters 98, 99 and 101. Clearly, there is some sort

of an attempt to maintain rhyme in translation of these *sūrahs*, but this does not seem to be the case in the longer *sūrahs*. However, in this particular translation, it is made clear in the translator's foreword that her translation is merely an explanation of the ST's meaning. This implies that she did not intend to replace the original, nor to simulate the rhyming feature of the Qur'ān.

5.2.1.4.2 Thematic Coherence

Another stylistic feature which translators may experience problems with is the wide range of themes presented collectively in the *sūrahs* or within single *sūrahs*. The link between *sūrahs* and verses raises the issue concerning the concept and debate regarding thematic coherence in the Qur'ān which has been explored by a number of theologians, linguists and translators including Well, Nöldecke, Muir, Rodwell and Bell (al-Sharqāwi 2005). Facing difficulties in comprehending the thematic coherence of the ST, they criticized the present arrangement of the Qur'ān and attempted an alternative arrangement of the order of the *sūrahs*, both at the level of changing verse order and chapter order.

The topic of thematic assortment in the Qur'ān was approached by early Muslim linguists. One of the pioneers in scrutinizing the issues of cohesion and coherence (i.e. unity and relatedness) in the Qur'ān is *al-Rāzi* (d. 1208 A.D.). He was already looking at the Qur'ānic *nazm* as early as the seventh Hijri century (the thirteenth Gregorian century). To him, the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān can be attributed not only to its eloquence but also to the texture and order of its verses and *sūrahs* (al-Rāzi 1981: 139). In his *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, he lays the corner stone for the theory of thematic coherence in the Qur'ān with his approach to investigating the underlying links between the verses on the one hand and between *sūrahs* on the other. For example, he views *sūrah* 1, referred to as *(umm al-Qur'ān)* i.e. the Mother of the Qur'ān, besides its well-known name (*al-Fātiḥah*) as the origin of the other *sūrahs* which flow like streams from within it. Moreover, during his textual interpretation of the *sūrahs*, he also argues that *sūrahs* 1, 6, 18, 34 and 35 which all start with praise of Allah *(al-ḥamd)* form a thematic coherence.

Following al-Rāzi, al-Suyūṭi develops a thematic coherence theory with a more in-depth investigation. According to Ba-Zumoul (1992: 729), al-Suyūṭi presents his theory under what he called al-Munāsabah (relevance) and studies the links between verses, categorising these in terms of general or specific, obvious or obscure, cause and effect, or antonyms and synonyms. He differentiates between overt and covert linkages, and explains that verses with covert linkage often established by means of the conjunction 'wāw' (and). In cases where this is not present, a semantic link is present such as antonymy, synonymy, digression, etc.

In another of his books, he particularly deals with the thematic coherence between the sūrahs and cohesion between verses. He affirms that the sūrahs, especially the long ones, expand upon the themes that are briefly mentioned in the short sūrahs (al-Suyūṭi 1986). Therefore, he draws a distinction between al-muḥkam and al-mutashābih (unclear i.e. allegorical) verses in light of their brevity or detailedness. Moreover, he develops his argument in detail, linking the themes mentioned in the sūrahs with each other. For instance, he comments on the links between the following verses:

- ﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

(Guide us to the straight path) (Q. 01:06)

- ﴿ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

(That is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those who are conscious of Allah) (Q. 02:02)

Al-Ṣuyūṭi interprets the phrase al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm mentioned in (Q. 01:06) as the Qur'ān which is literally mentioned in the second verse and described as 'guidance'. He further presents an analysis of the whole sūrah 1, linking this with the corresponding verses of sūrah 2. Furthermore, he unveils thematic links between the sūrahs 2, 3 and 4 as well. The same approach is applied in his book Tanāsuq al-Durar fi Tanāsub al-Suwar. To demonstrate an example of his thematic analysis and linking, he remarks that the last verse in sūrah 1 serves as an introduction for a detailed narrative of the same theme in sūrahs 3 and 4 (al-Suyūṭi 1986).

Al-Zarkashi (1957) proposes a number of aspects which contribute to the thematic and textual coherence of the Qur'ān, stating that the ending of a chapter is related to the beginning of the following chapter. For example, *sūrah* 5 ends with praise while *sūrah* 6 also starts with praise. Similarly, *sūrah* 56 ends by ordering people to glorify Allah, and the same theme starts chapter 57. He also identifies three components which produce eloquent speech: a carrier or utterance, the meaning contained in the carrier, and a bond by which utterances are linked together. According to al-Zarkashi (1957: 40) bonds can be grammatical connectors such as 'و' (i.e. and) which links verses with each other, as in the following example:

- وَاللَّـهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (Q.02: 245)

"And it is Allah who withholds and grants abundance, and to Him you will be returned" (Saheeh translation)

Bonds can also be contextual. He observes, for example, that rulings in the Qur'ān are preceded by warnings of punishment, a thematic bond used to encourage people to follow divine commands. The theme may change to touch upon the attributes of divine power, so that people can visualise their Lord's magnificence. This is a prevailing thematic bond in *sūrahs* 2, 4, and 5. Al-Zarkashi (1984) further identifies a number of verses which do not manifest cohesion or coherence as obviously as the others, and uncovers the nature of their contextual bonds:

- يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَن تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِن ظُهُورِهَا وَلَـٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّـهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (Q 02:189)

"They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the new moons. Say, 'They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.' And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah. And enter houses from their doors. And fear Allah that you may succeed" (Saheeh translation).

Al-Zarkashi sees two bonds here. The first is that God is drawing the attention of those who asked about the moons to a regular action they used to do in the mistaken belief that it was right. This was entering their houses by the back way after returning from *Hajj* (pilgrimage). They are being

reminded to concentrate rather on this action they are practicing, and not ask about other things which fulfil obvious purposes (i.e. the moons).

The second bond concerns digression. As part of the answer concerns *Ḥajj*, God reminds them of their habit after performing it. It can also be considered a sort of simile meant to show them how contradicting they are asking such a question. They are similar to those who attempt entering houses from the back doors instead of the front ones.

Translators should be aware of the thematic changes made in the Qur'ān, and equally they need to appreciate this particular stylistic aspect in order to have better comprehension of the text. Being unaware of this aspect may leave translators perplexed when trying to figure out the links between the themes which may be stated in one verse, within one *sūrah*, or in the most difficult case, in different *sūrahs*. Cuypers (2010: 8) has recently probed this problem in greater depth and affirms that Semitic rhetoric may be of great use to those who find the Semitic style difficult to comprehend:

> The Semitic rhetoric allows scholars to understand why certain books of the Bible (like the Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, the prophetic books, etc.) or the Koran appear so disordered, apparently made of independent fragments (laws, narratives, exhortations, oracles, etc.) without clear logical link between them.

He further adds:

> The main reason for this is that the Semitic discourse is not based on a principle of continuous and progressive development, as the Greek rhetoric (with its five classic parts of the discourse: introduction, story, confirmation, refutation, and peroration), but on the principle of symmetry (Cuypers 2010: 8).

Moreover, Mir (1988) offers a logical justification for this difficulty as well. He acknowledges that there has to be a variety of subjects covered in the Qur'ān as it was revealed over a period of more than two decades. Based on this, he claims that it is only natural that it should have a wide range of styles but adds that in general the Qur'ān is still marked by a unity of content and style.

5.2.1.4.3 **Repetition**

Repetition is another Qur'ānic phenomenon which can also prove problematic in translation. It is a linguistic and rhetorical device which is deeply rooted in various Arabic genres such as poetry and public speech. The Qur'ān, also, "abounds with linguistic feature of repetition" (Abdul-Raof 2004a: 194) with various narratives, for instance, the stories of Adam, Noah, Lot and others are repeated more than once throughout the Qur'ān. Themes like Paradise, Hellfire and punishment, together with other themes, are often repeated as well. In addition, the same word or sequence of words sometimes reoccurs more than once not far from where it was originally mentioned.

In addition, there are cases in which repetition can involve pronouns referring to the same referent such as أنا لـننني in verse (Q. 20:14) (Abdul-Raof 2001: 23). Repetition in the Qur'ān has different purposes, be they rhetorical, linguistic, communicative and stylistic. According to Abdul-Raof (2001: 23), it serves "the rhetorical functions of diaphora (التوكيد اللفظي) and epizeuxis (التكرار التوكيدي)", while linguistically it has "a linguistic function of lexical cohesion and textual progression". The communicative function of repetition, adds Abdul-Raof (2004), has a semantic nature that "designates affirmation" while stylistically " it takes various forms in Qur'ānic genre" (Abdul-Raof 2004a:194). So, although there is a good semantic reason for this, the pronouns might look unnecessarily repeated from a surface structure point of view (Abdul-Raof 2001).

Despite that, this phenomenon is not only exclusive to Arabic but exists in a wide range of languages. English, for instance, is one of the languages which uses repetition to create semantic unity of the text to attract the reader's attention (Nash 1980), to create cohesion in the text (Hatim and Mason 1990), and for purposes of general pragmatic principles (Tyler 1994). Although seen by some western linguists as deficiency (Neuwirth 2006), or "incongruously and tediously flowery" (Holes 1995 :270), this phenomenon is valued by Arabic scholars as "an impressive way of expression and a rhetorical figure" (Hannouna 2010:1).

The phenomenon of repetition was extensively researched as early as the third Hijri decade (ninth Gregorian decade) by al-Farrā', Ibn Qutaybah and later by al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Suyūṭi and others, who could identify the types, functions and effects of repetition. Scholars have agreed that there are two main types of repetition: repetition of meaning only, and repetition of both form (words) and meaning. The repeated stories and parables referring to Adam, Noah, etc, which are reiterated in different *sūrahs* in different wordings are good examples of the former type which repeats content i.e. meaning. According to Ibn Qutaybah, this type is meant for affirmation and to help people understand the message better (Ibn Qutaybah 2007). Moreover, repetition can also help provide a wider reach for a message which was important especially given the difficulties of communication and media during the time of the revelation (aL-Hamad 2006). According to Abdul-Raof (2004: 203), the repetition of motifs which- occurs at the macro textual level and "helps to establish conceptual chaining and sequentiality in Qur'ānic discourse" also fits into this type of repetition. Among the many examples are the verses (Q. 06:151) and (Q. 17:31) both of which present the same idea in different wording.

However, the repetition of narratives is not simply a form of redundancy since each time a story is mentioned, a different reading of it is provided. According to Abdul-Raof (2004: 204):

> The repetition of a parable in different places in the macro text enhances textuality. Repetition improves the intertextuality standard of the text and establishes conceptual and intertextual relationship for a given motif.

Thus the story of Moses is mentioned in more than three different *sūrahs* and each time the story is narrated, it draws attention towards elements that have not been addressed elsewhere (Bahādhiq 1993). Moreover, these elements are presented differently with each repetition taking the form of a brief reference in some instances, or a detailed, expanded form in others. It can be seen that when the need arises, meaning may be repeated in different wordings. Thus, context plays a major role in defining or justifying relatedness and appropriateness of the repetition (Abdul-Raof 2005).

The second type of repetition can be further subdivided into attached (*al-tikrār al-muttaṣil*) and detached (*al-tikrār al-munfaṣil*). Attached repetition occurs within either one verse or within two or more verses which follow each other as in the following two examples:

- هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ (Q. 23:36)

"How far, how far is that which you are promised" (Saheeh translation)

- ثُمَّ قُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ * فَقُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ (Q. 74:19-20)

"So may he be destroyed [for] how he deliberated * Then may he be destroyed [for] how he deliberated" (Saheeh translation)

On the other hand, detached repetition occurs within parts of the Qur'ān which may be approximate to each other or distant from each other. An example of an approximate detached repetition is verse (Q. 55:13) which recurs thirty one times in the same *sūrah*. Scholars such as *al-Zarkashi* affirm that this particular repetition is meant to urge people's acknowledgement and recognition of God's blessings upon them and it is worth noting that the most repeated verses are preceded by mention of divine blessing (al-Zarkashi 1957: 18). Detached repetition also occurs within different *sūrahs*. For example, the verses (Q. 27:71), (Q. 36:48) and (Q. 67:25) come in three different *sūrahs* but all share the same wording:

- وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Translated as follows, respectively:

"And they say, 'When is [the fulfilment of] this promise, if you should be truthful?'"

"And they say, 'When is this promise, if you should be truthful?'"

"And they say, 'When is this promise, if you should be truthful?'" (Saheeh translation)

As shown above, the verses are all translated with the same wording except for the first one where the translator inserts his own comment in what seems to be an attempt to compensate for the meaning which may have seemed incompletely rendered by literal translation. In our point of view, as this type of repetition occurs in verses within different *sūrahs*, it is unlikely to be

noticed as repetition at all. Thus, it would read very naturally within its accompanying co-text and context and would be unlikely to create any difficulties.

However, attached repetition can make translation sound rather cumbersome as some translators adhere enthusiastically to the SLT wording and style. Ali (2006: 20-21) acknowledges that this can pose difficulties:

> While the aim of translators should be to present the given text in the appropriate style and to conform to the linguistic demands of the target language, in many cases they might find themselves in a situation where the impact of the source language displays itself glaringly – with sometimes unacceptable yet unavoidable results.

He criticizes translators who imitate the linguistic and stylistic norms of the SLT at the expense of producing a translation that sounds natural to the TL audience but he asserts that Qur'ānic style inevitably impacts on translation.

In addition, the sacredness of the text causes translators to attend very closely to its linguistic and stylistic features due to the fact that:

> Those very forms and usages are intrinsic in, and an essential part of, the sacred message that Muslims believe is the original, unadulterated and incorruptible Word of God. They therefore invite, not mere literary critique, but metaphysical reflection" (ibid.: 23).

Nevertheless, unlike English which uses devices such as pronominalization or reference, and conjunction more frequently (Shushana 2004), Arabic tends to use lexical recurrence more than English does. It serves as both a stylistic feature and a cohesive device (Dickins, Hervey and Higgins 2002). Therefore, the burden is laid on translators who need to make sure that their translations conform with TL norms meaning that it does not read as redundancy but natural, with an equivalent level of coherence.

5.3 **Approaches towards Equivalence in the Qur'ān**

The above discussion has drawn attention to the notion of non-equivalence and the value of the ST language in the minds of the SL audience combining both semiotics and pragmatics. However, the focus here remains on equivalence as a procedure used in translation in which correspondence in meaning is preserved, as the ultimate goal. Returning briefly to Nida's definition of dynamic equivalence in which effect is a key term, the feasibility of applying that definition in the case of Qur'ān translation is questioned here. The effect that is produced by the Qur'ānic verses as felt by Muslims is incomparable to that which a translation of the Qur'ān would have. Pickthall (1963) claims:

> Every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Qur'ān, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Qur'ān-and peradventure something of the charm in English (Pickthall 1963: vii).

Pickthall here speaks of the effect of the Qur'ān on the reader and listener which is, technically speaking, what Nida and Taber have referred to as the receptor's response (Nida and Taber 1982: 200).

In spite of that, Qur'ānic translation has never been intended as a replacement of the original but is rather merely expressing the meaning of the ST and can sometimes take the form of a totally independent style unlike the original. In other words, most of the current translations of the Qur'ān are explanatory works that endeavour to convey meaning and can involve lengthy additions to the translation. This is the case, for example, with the version by al-Hilāli and Khan (1996) who offer commentary when they feel appropriate and entitled their work "interpretation of the meaning" rather than "translation". Interpretation, as the definition of the word suggests, allows translators more possibility of interference. Yet, it is worth noting in the case of al-Hilāli and Khan that they only refer to authentic ḥadīths and reliable sources to support their interpretation of the ST. Moreover, readers can easily distinguish between the TT and the translators' commentary which appears in either square brackets or footnotes.

Pickthall (1963) makes it clear in the foreword to his translation that the Qur'ān cannot be translated. According to him, he had only attempted to present the meaning of the ST and "peradventure something of the charm" (Pickthall 1963: I). So to him, translation of the Qur'ān must communicate the same message as accurately as possible in terms of both meaning and effect. Arberry (1983), on the contrary, states it is blasphemous to attempt to imitate the Qur'ān. Although this is generally true, and particularly in the case of attempting to make an Arabic text sound like the Qur'ān, as long as a text is written in another language there does not seem to be any proof to support Arberry's claim. Khan (1981) notes that current translations have "generally adhered to the Arabic idiom in the English version" (Khan 1981: vii) and claims that this produces an Arabicized version which makes the translation difficult to understand if no notes are included. Nevertheless, he further adds that it is not the translator's "burden" to make the text comprehensible i.e. by simplifying it, but rather the reader's. The translator's responsibility is limited to making the reader's task of understanding the text easier and more attractive. Khan's argument implies that the translator should produce an equivalent TT which reflects the complexity of the ST without making any attempts at simplifying this. To do otherwise will definitely fail to be wholly faithful to the ST and will therefore lead to lapses and mismatches in translation.

Abdel Haleem (2005), however, rejects Khan's proposition to limit the translator's space, expressing the view that the translator should bring the reader as close as possible to the meaning of the original by using both linguistic and stylistic features. Affirming that context should play a major role in translating the Qur'ān, he provides a number of examples of mistranslation whicih occurred because words or expressions were taken out of their context. Abdel Haleem explains that the following verse, as translated by Dawood, was taken out of context:

- "Slay them where you find them" (Q. 02:191).

While the verse specifically refers to the inhabitants of Mecca who attacked the Prophet and his followers, Abdel Haleem (2005: xxii) argues that it could be inferred from Dawood's non-contextualized translation that Muslims can

kill non-Muslims wherever they find them, a message that the ST does not convey. He adds that Muslims are not allowed to kill non-Muslims unless in self defence or to defend the oppressed who are crying for help, as long as there is no active treaty between the two parties. Of course, translators cannot prevent their translation from being taken out of context, nor can they be expected to. In other words, even Abdel Haleem's own translation of this particular verse may likewise be taken out of context.

Abdel Haleem adds that to prevent mistatranslation, awareness of the different meanings of certain terms is also needed to produce an equivalent text. According to Abdel Haleem, the word 'Islam' was misinterpreted by Dawood in verse (Q. 03:85) which he translates thus: "He that chooses a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him...". Abdel Haleem argues that the word 'Islam' in Qur'ānic language means complete devotion and submission to Allah and does not refer to Islam as a religion (*ibid.*: xxx).

Asad (1984), however, sees both sides of the argument when he writes:

> I do not claim to have "translated" the Qur'ān in the sense in which, say Plato or Shakespeare can be translated. Unlike any other book, its meaning and its linguistic presentation form one unbreakable whole. The position of individual words in a sentence, the rhythm and the sound of its phrases and their syntactic construction, the manner in which a metaphor flows almost imperceptibly into a pragmatic statement, the use of acoustic stress not merely in the service of rhetoric but as a means of alluding to unspoken but clearly implied ideas: all this makes the Quran, in the last resort, unique and untranslatable – a fact that has been pointed out by many earlier translators and by all Arab scholars. But although it is impossible to "reproduce" the Qur'ān as such in any other language, it is nonetheless possible to render its message comprehensible to people who, like most Westerners, do not know Arabic at all or – as is the case with most of the educated non-Arab Muslims – not well enough to find their way through it unaided (Asad 1984: v).

Qur'ānic words are lexically compressed meaning, according to Abdul-Raof (2001: 81), that "lengthy details of semantic features are compressed and

encapsulated in a single word". What seems to worry translators of the Qur'ān most is how many different shades of meaning they ought to cover whilst translating. As there might be no equivalent word or an established sequence of words in the TL to cover all the senses housed within a translation unit, translators are left with the options of either partially translating some senses and omitting others or proposing a translation label which may not be acceptable. Denffer (1994) acknowledges that translation does not always convey all the different shades of meaning covered in the original Arabic text. Thus, the meaning is narrowed down, and as a result a number of concepts are missed out as a result.

Simlarly, Watt (1994) agrees that Arabic words may sometimes have connotations which a single English word cannot bring out, a sentiment echoed by Cleary (1993) who explains: "The pregnancy of Arabic also makes it possible, and even useful, to render the same word in different ways when translating from Arabic to another language" (Cleary 1993: xiii). He claims he had attempted in his translation to add some linguistic notes which are meant to compensate for the lost meanings.

On the same issue, Cragg (1988) comments that "the Arabic of the Qur'ān is rich in terms of multiple import. Not all nuances can be transferred over with all their subtlety to the receiving language" (Cragg 1988: 48). He further argues that "layers of meaning which may be latent for interior interpretations by commentary have to become explicit in translation" (*ibid.*). At the same time he bluntly acknowledges that the most difficult problem that a translator faces is making decision. Translators find themselves caught on the horns of a dilemma, in a situation which may be controlled by either the SL or the TL. In other words, Cragg (1988: 49) points out, a translation dominated by the linguistic and semantic norms of Arabic may well be "full of Arabisms, sometimes to the point of oddity and unintelligibility" such as that of Arberry. Conversely, Asad's translation which includes phrases or words inserted in brackets which do not appear in the Arabic original was criticized by Cragg (1988). He suggests that decisions to solve ambiguities should be made in translation not in brackets. Cragg states that the translator needs to be 'watchful' of but not 'slavish' towards either of the two languages

involved, claiming that "sometimes a nice ambiguity can be retained" (ibid.: 52).

But whether there is a 'nice ambiguity' or not, the question must be asked: is the translation supposed to solve ambiguities in the ST? Or should this be considered a sort of interference with the ST? Historically speaking, even at times of the Prophet, it is reported that the Prophet's companions used to refer to him in order to interpret certain verses whose meanings were implicit, making them difficult to understand in their contexts (Darrāz 1985; Abbas 2007). Later, exegetes admitted that there were instances of ambiguity in the Qur'ān which could produce different translations and interpretations. The opening letters (referred to as al-muqaṭṭa'āt in Arabic) which open twenty nine sūrahs are very good examples. They cluster in an unusual way which left exegetes perplexed by their meanings. Although scholars have discussed them at length, they could not arrive at a consensus conclusion based on evidence. There are also other ambiguities that may be caused by the unique structural, syntactic and semantic style of the Qur'ān. Abdul-Raof (2001) provides an interesting and detailed analysis of some examples where structure, for instance, produces as ambiguous meaning showing that ambiguity is a Qur'ānic characteristic posing problems which would not be solved by translating.

Watt (1994) also argues that "there are often several different ways of 'taking' a sentence [in Arabic], and these ways yield at least slightly different meanings". According to Watt (1994), this occurs frequently in the Qur'ān, and it leaves the translator with the difficult option of expressing one meaning and omitting the rest. He further affirms that problems in Qur'ānic translation can be caused by two major issues: translation and interpretation. He explains that "once the precise meaning of the text has been determined, or the alternatives indicated, there arises the question of interpretation" (ibid.: 11). Interpretation as explained by Watt (1994) can be drawn out from the context but involves 'Occasions of revelations' which are sometimes 'dubious'.

Generally speaking, literal translation, which is sometimes merely word by word translation, is not a satisfactory methodology for this text which is rich

in both idiomaticity and metaphor. Denffer (1994) argues that "word by word translation of the Qur'ān into another language would not be adequate" (*ibid.*: 144). In order to create a good translation, the translator has to determine first the meaning of the passage and only then, according to Denffer (1994), can it be rendered into the TL. Although his approach may well sound somewhat simplistic, he is right to emphasize that a good translator must always opt for conveying meaning at the expense of form.

5.4 Conclusion

In this study, equivalence is understood to be the best approximation of the meaning of the SLT as affirmed by (Newmark 1981)); Hatim and Mason (1990: 8)); (Baker 1992) and others. Newmark (1981) expresses this approximation in terms of closeness to the original meaning whilst recognizing both the semantic and syntactic limitations in the TL. Baker (1992) acknowledges that it is sometimes possible to achieve equivalence only in relative terms as it is influenced by linguistic and cultural factors. Abdul-Raof (2001: 13) similarly claims that "one cannot expect a translation into another language to be able to achieve equivalence; approximation is the most we can hope for".

Moreover, Armstrong (2005), referring to Harvey and Higgins (1992), agrees that the difficulty in achieving equivalence lies in our definition of equivalence, and that we are expecting the translator to "reproduce the 'same' effect achieved in the ST" (Armstrong 2005: 45). The effect, according to Armstrong (2005), can not only vary between individuals, but also in the same individual at different times, not to mention that it is based on speculation based on unknowable and insufficient data. The only effect, therefore, which translators can measure, is that which is perceived by their own minds.

Thus, the stance adopted here is one in which we believe equivalence is obtainable but is still relative, meaning that equivalence does exist but with varying degrees of correspondence among languages. Thus, equivalence across languages cannot be compared to synonymy within one single language. That is simply because languages always share the same or at

least similar common objects and abstract concepts among them whereas the need for more than one label (lexical item) for one object or abstract concept within one language may not be as demanding.

We would not generalize our hypothesis here as circumstances can always change according to the level of equivalence sought, the type of text, and its relative simplicity or complexity. However, the claim that equivalence does not exist is totally rejected since this often results from defining equivalence in terms of sameness. Sameness, which does not even exist between two versions of a text in one single language, is even less likely to take place across other languages (Bassnett 2002). This chapter formed the last part of the literature review and argued that the notion of equivalence cannot be fully applied to translating the Qur'ān for some cultural and linguistic reasons. The next chapter forms the first part of the data analysis within this study and focuses on conducting a textual and contextual analysis of a chosen sample of SL expressions with the intention of proving that they are euphemistic.

CHAPTER 6. Textual and Contextual Analysis of the Data

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will identify the sample of verses which are believed to contain euphemistic expressions by using textual and contextual analysis. In each case, a literal translation of the chosen verse will be presented, to produce a TT which adheres to the syntactic system and dictionary meaning of the Arabic words in so far as the English structure allows. If this literal translation does not make sense syntactically, appropriate adaptation will be carried out. This will be followed by a contextual analysis providing exegetical commentary on the verse. Reasons for the revelation will be provided when this exists for the verse in question. Textual analysis will also be carried out on the vocabulary items which appear in the euphemistic expression and this process will be assisted by the use of authoritative Arabic dictionaries and exegetical works that have approached the Qurʾānic text from a linguistic and rhetorical point of view. Both aspects of analysis are covered within the same section for the purpose of brevity and coherence.

6.2 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 1: (Q. 02:187)

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۖ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

(Q.02:187)

When fasting was first decreed, Muslims were ordered to abstain from eating, drinking, and having sexual relations while fasting during daytime. After sunset, it was permissible for them to eat and drink, and for married couples to enjoy each other's company until the time of *Isha* prayer. The period between *Maghrib* (sunset prayer time) and *'Ishā'* was not long enough for them, so some *Ṣaḥābah* violated this order with their spouses. Some repented and came to the Prophet asking for Allah's forgiveness. So, the verse was revealed to abrogate the way fasting had been practiced, and

to extend the permission period to last the whole night until the time for *Fajr* (dawn prayer) (Qutb 2003; Bewley 2003; al-Bayḍāwi 1999).

Euphemism 1: الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ

According to entries in Arabic dictionaries, the word *rafath* originally meant 'indecent speech', and as a verb, it means 'to be obscene' (Ibn al-Hā'im 2003; Penrice 1970; Riḍa 1920). In other contexts, it also refers to pre-copulatory talk and foreplay between a husband and wife such as flirtation (i.e. making explicit sexual overtures). It also involves speech which represents their sexual interest in and desire for each other (Riḍa 1920). In this instance, followed by the conjunction *'ilā* (to), the word refers to actual sexual relations, using a similar structure to *afḍā 'ilā* as in verse (Q. 04:21) (al-Suyūṭi 1999; al-Zamakhshari 1998). However, in this instance there seems to be a case of semantic progression or extension of meaning. That is, since it originally meant indecent talk in the general sense and flirtation in certain contexts, it took on another meaning, namely actually having sexual relations.

There also seems to be cause-effect and part-for-the-whole relationships between its literal and euphemistic senses as the process of making love would normally start with flirtatious talk (the literal meaning = cause) leading to the actual coitus itself (the euphemistic meaning = effect) (Neaman and Silver 1983: 257). According to al-Zamakhshari (1998 : 387), this is a type of *kināyah* in which a more refined expression replaces a crude one. Interestingly though, al-Zamakhshari (1998: 389) and al-Bayḍāwi (1999: 106) agree that the word *rafath* sounds more negative than some other expressions used as euphemisms for the same purpose such as *afḍā 'ilā* and *lāmastum al-nisā'*. They both agree that the reason for using such a negative word is disapproval of the actions of some *Ṣaḥābah* who had sexual relations with their wives when it was prohibited. This opinion is co-textually supported by the word *takhtānūn* which is normally translated as 'to betray' and mentioned later in the verse, supporting the opinion that *rafath* occurs in a context of contempt. Moreover, in terms of its occurrence in the Qur'ān, it is mentioned only twice in the entire text, in verses (Q. 02:187) and (Q. 02:197). Let us examine (Q. 02:197):

- الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَن فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

"The pilgrimage is [performed during] well-known months, and whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein [let him remember that] there is [to be] **no lewdness** nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage" (Translation adapted from (Pickthall 1963).

Rafath, here translated by Pickthall as 'lewdness', occurs with two other negative words, namely *fusūq* and *jidāl* (translated as 'abuse' and 'angry conversation' respectively), all of which appear in a context of prohibition. Riḍa (1920) agrees that the word is not plainspoken or harsh in itself, but rather refers to a harsh concept. However, considering what it refers to and what the other possibilities could have been in that context e.g. the disagreeable descriptive term *nayk* ('to have sexual intercourse'), it becomes clear that *rafath* is a typical euphemism and despite its negative denotations it fits the context perfectly.

Euphemism 2:

- هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ

This expression presents an image suggesting the degree of intimacy between two spouses who are likened in the verse to garments, denoting how closely linked each one is with the other. Exegetes have proposed a number of opinions with regards to the simile:

- This metaphor may act as a justification for Muslim males to approach their wives on fasting nights. That is, it was permissible for men to sleep with their wives for the reason that they are so very close, and coming into contact with them is inevitable, making self-control impossible (al-Bayḍāwi 1999; al-Zamakhshari 1998).

- It could also reflect the degree of intimacy between two spouses when they embrace each another, feeling as close as one's own garments (al-Bayḍāwi 1999; Mawdudi 1988).

- Al-Tabari (1997) thinks that another meaning that could also be understood from the text is that the two are being compared to shelters which provide warmth and safety for each other. This opinion is supported by the verse:

- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا (47:07 .Q)

Literal translation: "It is Him who created you from one soul and created from it its mate to dwell in her".

- It could possibly allude to the couple considering each other as shields from committing sins because each spouse can be considered to be an acceptable channel for the other to fulfil his or her own natural desires (al-Bayḍāwi 1999; Qutb 2003; Bewley 2003).

Although the above cited opinions interpret the text in varying ways, they all agree that the expression is used in a metaphorical way as the literal meaning is not feasible i.e. one wears the other. This, together with the contextual aids, lead one to conclude that this is a euphemism used in a very discerning rhetorical fashion.

Euphemisms 3 and 4:

- فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ (3) وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّـهُ لَكُم (4)

There are two euphemistic expressions in this part of the verse: *bāshirūhunna* and *wabtaghū ma kataba Allāhu lakum*. The verb *bāshirūhunna* (euphemism 3) is derived from the word *bashrah* (human skin) and its literal meaning implies physical contact between the skin of husband and wife (Bewley 2003). However, there have been two interpretations of this. One restricts the meaning to the literal interpretation of the word *mubāsharah* ('skin-to-skin contact') so that according to those who follow this opinion, the meaning is restricted to sexual acts stopping short of intercourse (al-Rāzi 1981). However, a second group understands the meaning of *mubāsharah* to encompass actual sexual intercourse (al-Wāhidi 2010; Ibn al-Hā'im 2003; al-Ṭabari 1973). The latter opinion is supported by the context in this instance since skin-to-skin contact had never been prohibited. The technique employed in this euphemism is part for the whole since physical skin contact can be understood to be the initial part of the whole process of intimate contact.

Euphemism four *wabtaghū ma kataba Allāhu lakum* translates as "and seek what Allah has written for you". Exegetes cite a number of interpretations

which could be extrapolated from this verse in reference to what Allah had written (al-Ṭabari 1973; al-Rāzi 1981; Bewley 2003; al-Bayḍāwi 1999):

1. *Laylatul Qadr* i.e. the Night of Power

2. Sexual relations

3. It could mean 'What Allah has permitted and commanded you to do'

4. Seeking to beget and conceive offspring

5. Follow what Allah has written for you in the Qur'ān i.e. regarding permitted and prohibited behaviour (Ibn al-Jawzi 1984: 192).

Syntactically, this expression is linked by the conjunction *wāw* with the verb *bāshirūhunna* (to have sexual relations). The first and fifth opinions, therefore, are both co-textually and contextually invalid as there is no meaningful relevance between euphemism 3 and 4. The second opinion is a repetition of the meaning of euphemism three; hence, it is not valid either because the *wāw* conjunction suggests a difference in meaning. The third opinion remains unclear as it is simply interpreting the euphemism with another euphemism that lacks elaboration and needs to be further explained i.e. what is meant by "what Allah had permitted and commanded you to do"? The fourth opinion is the most acceptable as one of the main reasons for having sexual relations is normally to have children. The technique used here is "generalisation" as the pronominal *mā* suggests.

Euphemisms 5 and 6:

- تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ (5) فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا (6)

Two parts need to be analysed in this verse: *ḥudūd Allāh* (5) and *lā taqrabūhā* (6). Lexically, the word *ḥadd* (singular of *ḥudūd*) can mean the extreme end of something, a boundary or borderline, etc. but it is used metaphorically in this verse to refer to something else. This represents the image of a protected entity surrounded by boundaries which have the power to repel so that no one can get near this entity. Again, there are a number of differing exegetical opinions on the semantic scope of the phrase *ḥudūd Allāh* (i.e. the bounds set by Allah).

There are two other groups who hint at the euphemistic function of this phrase. One group, including Ibn Kathīr, al-Shawkāni, and al-Qurtubi, posits that the part includes the commands and obligations mentioned in the verse i.e. fasting, *i'tikāf,* and copulation during this period (Rida 1920). This opinion is contextually supported and proves that it is partly euphemistic. However a second group, including Muqātil and al-Dahhāk, are of the opinion that it refers exclusively to copulation during *i'tikāf* (al-Shawkāni 1994). For this reason, they approve of the phrase's euphemistic function as the actions which are prohibited are not worded.

The second phrase i.e. *lā taqrabūhā* (literally 'do not come near them') is a warning against the proximity of the zone prohibiton and is dependent on the interpretation of the first phrase. Thus if the first phrase is interpreted as a euphemism, the second phrase must also be a euphemism. In other words, if the boundaries set by Allah which are mentioned in the verse include sexual relations, then even advancing towards the direction of such boundaries is prohibited. If the euphemistic wording used in the verse is compared with a blunter wording such as: "Do not have sex with your wives while making *i'tikāf,* or do not come near your wives lest you have sex with them while making *i'tikāf*" it becomes clear how the Qur'ān has euphemized for such an action.

6.3 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 2: (Q. 02:197)

- الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ ۚ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ اللَّهُ ۗ

وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (Q. 02:197)

This verse talks about *Hajj* (pilgrimage) and that it should be performed during specific months. While performing *Hajj,* pilgrims are prohibited from having sexual relations, evil-doing, and disputing. The euphemism examined here is the word *rafath* and as already discussed in extract number one. It is generally defined as obscenity, mainly in speech addressed to women. Contextually, however, some scholars have interpreted it as:

- Talking to women about sexual relations

- Pre-copulatory acts or foreplay such as kissing

- Sexual intercourse

In this case, there is a consensus among most exegetes that the intended meaning of *rafath* in this verse is actual sexual intercourse. This is the opinion of the most renowned Qur'ānic exegetes such as Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Jubayr, Qatādah, al-Ḥasan, 'Ikrimah, Mujāhid, al-Suddi, and al-Zuhri (al-Qaṣīmi 1957; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Zamakhshari 1998). However, Ibn 'Āshūr (1969: 234) argues that using this word specifically can hint at both interpretations, namely obscene speech and copulation. In both cases, however, it is a euphemism as both of the the actual themes being euphemized are too sensitive to be put into words.

6.4 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 3: (Q. 02:222)

ويسألونك عن المحيض ۖ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ **(Q. 02:222)**

This verse contains three separate euphemistic expressions: *fa'tazilū al-nisā', wa lā taqrabūhunna,* and *fa'tūhunna min ḥayth amarakumu Allāh.* Al-Biqā'i (n.d) points to contextual links with (Q. 02:187) (in which sexual intercourse has been allowed during the nights of fasting) and with (Q. 02:221).

Exegetes report a number of occasions to which the revelation of this verse is relevant. One of the most frequently narrated of these reports that it was unlawful for the Jews of Medina to associate with their wives during their menstrual period. They would not sit where a menstruating woman might sit, nor were they allowed to touch a woman who was having a period. One clan of the *Anṣār* (inhabitants of Medina) was familiar with the habits of their Jewish neighbours and they shared similar beliefs. Another occasion reported in exegetical books and books of prophetic *Hadīths* asserts that the verse was set down to prohibit anal intercourse (al-Wāhidi 1994; al-Suyūṭi 2003; al-Zamakhshari 1998).

Nevertheless, this verse and the next one seem to have been revealed to regulate sexual relations between husband and wife during this critical period. According to Ibn 'Āshūr (1969), it is linked to the verse preceding it which admonishes marriage between Muslims and idolators. He explains that since it was prohibited for Muslims to marry non-Muslims, Muslim men

were urged not to follow their practice of keeping physically aloof from their wives (*ibid.,*:362). Similarly, al-Zamakhshari (1998: 433) and al-Qurṭubi (2006: 475) add that because Jews used to abandon their wives totally during times of menstruation, whilst Christians would have sexual intercourse as normal ignoring that their wives were menstruating, Muslim men were asked to be moderate, neither totally abandoning their wives but at the same time not having sexual relations with them i.e. maintaining contact with them but not sexually.

The first euphemism *fa'taziluhunna* is derived from the verb *'i'tazala* which comes from the generic verb *'azala* (to isolate). Along with a number of other meanings, it means to remove one thing from another, to keep something apart from others, or to separate one thing from another (Ibn Manzūr 1980). The contextual meaning of the word in the verse is the prohibition of sexual relations during the menstrual period for it is considered harmful (al-Qaṣīmi 1957). This could also be understood from the word *maḥīḍ* which refers to 'a name of place' i.e. the vagina during the period of menstruation.

The second euphemism *wa'lā taqrabūhunna*, which is derived from the generic verb *qaruba,* meaning 'not to get close to them'. One of the derivatives of this verb is the word *qurbān* (drawing near) (al-Rāzi 1911; al-Wāhidi 1994), which is used as a metonym for sexual relations (al-Qaṣīmi 1957: 561; al-Wāhidi 1994). Scholars have concluded that husbands and wives are allowed to approach each other any way they wish as long as actual sexual intercourse does not occur.

The third euphemism is *fa'tūhunna min ḥayth amarakum Allāh* (literally: come to them from where Allah has ordered you). Exegetes have deduced that this is a euphemism for the female genital organ as it is the place from which the blood had been flowing. So the contextual meaning is: 'Then come to them from the vagina as it has now been purified'.

6.5 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 4: (Q. 02: 223)

- نساؤكُم حَرْثٌ لكُم فأْتُوا حَرْثَكُم أنَّى شِئْتُمْ ۖ وقدِّمُوا لأنفُسِكُم ۚ واتقُوا الله واعلمُوا أنكُم مُلاقُوهُ ۗ وبشِّر المُؤمنين (**Q.**

(02: 223

This verse is linked with extract 4 and occurs in the same context. Exegetes report that it was believed by the Jews of Medina that if a man has sex with his wife from behind, their child will be born squint-eyed (al-Wāhidi 1994; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-'Andalusi 1993). This verse was set down to refute this belief and to further clarify that men could have sex with their wives in whatever position they wished as long as it is 'vaginal'. Scholars have elicited this understanding from the denotations of the metonymic word 'tilth'. The likening of a wife to one's tilth denotes seeking offspring i.e. 'fruitage in the tilth'. Al-Qasimi (1957: 564) explains that the husband's seeds being inseminated into his wife's womb are similar to the seeds planted in one's land. This is quite a culture-specific figure of speech which has much to do with Arab links to cultivation.

Al-Zamakhshari (1998: 434) posits that the two phrases mentioned above along with *fa'tazilū al-nisā'* mentioned in the previous verse are all delicate euphemisms and he suggests that speakers and writers should follow this Qur'ānic style in their speech and writings. Similarly, al-'Andalusi (1993) believes that both must assert the prohibition of intercourse otherwise why would there be references to producing children. Linguistically, the word *annā* could refer to both place and time so there can be two meanings for the phrase *'annā shi'tum*, namely 'wherever you may will', and 'whenever you may will'. However, most scholars understood this word to refer to place, an opinion which is supported by co-textual and contextual clues. One of the clues is that the word *ḥarth* is a noun of place. Another clue is that the previous verse orders Muslim couples not to have sexual intercourse during the wife's menstruation due to the harmful nature of the sexual organ during her period. Al-'Andalusi (1993) and al-Biqā'i (n.d) add that this is in agreement with the phrase *fa'tūhunna min ḥayth amarakumu Allāh* ('come to them from where Allah has ordained you') in the previous verse.

6.6 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 5: (Q.02: 226)

- ‫للَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ ۖ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ‬ (Q.02: 226).

This follows a verse that deals with vows but it focuses on a specific type of vow: *al-'īlā'* i.e. 'the oath of deserting one's wife'. Ibn 'Abbās defines it as an

oath made by the husband to deny sexual intercourse to his wife (al-Qurṭubi 2006: 23). It is derived from the verb *'ālā* which means 'to do less than one ought to' as in the expression *la ya'lū juhdan,* meaning 'he spares no effort'. Yet, there is a link between the contextual meaning i.e. 'swearing not to have sexual relations' with the meaning of 'one falling short of fulfilling his own task' (Ibn 'Ashūr 1969). That is to say, deserting one's wife is likened to a husband failing to perform his marital duties as he ought to. Historically, during the pre-Islamic era men used to desert their wives for years without divorcing them (Ibn 'Ashūr 1969; al-Biqā'i n.d). The euphemism *yu'lūn* then stands for vowing to not have sexual intercourse with one's wife. The second euphemism is *fā'ū,* derived from the verb *fā'a* (to return) (Ibn Manzūr 1980). Contextually, it is used as a euphemism for returning to having sexual intercourse with one's wife (al-Wāhidi 1994; Ibn 'Ashūr 1969; al-Qurṭubi 2006).

6.7 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 6: Q.02: 230

- فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (**Q.02: 230**)

This is one of seven verses which deal with the issue of divorce and focuses on irrevocable divorce i.e. when a husband has already divorced his wife twice. In this case the couple cannot reunite as a husband and wife unless the wife has married someone else. It is only after she gets a divorce from the second husband that they can reunite. However, the verb *tankiḥ* (literally to marry) indicates that sexual intercourse should have taken place between the two before the wife is able to get a divorce and return to her previous husband (al-Biqā'i n.d; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-'Andalusi 1993). This interpretation is supported by authentic *Ḥadīths* which have further explicated this issue. In other words, the wife may not go back to her previous husband before she has sexual intercourse with her new husband who should not be *tays musta'ār* literally 'a borrowed goat' i.e. a man who marries the divorced wife only to make her lawful to her previous husband. Thus, based on the condition that sexual intercourse is a pre-determinant for them getting back together, it is argued that the word تَنْكِح is used as a euphemism for sexual intercourse rather than only signing the marriage

contract. It is worth noting here the interesting opinion of *al-Fārisī* who acknowledges that when Arabs use the expression '*nakaḥa fulānun fulānatan*' i.e. 'someone *nakaḥ* a female', they mean the marriage contract; but if they say *nakaḥa 'imra'atahu* i.e. 'someone *nakaḥ* his wife', they would then mean intercourse (Cited in al-Biqā'i n.d: 314). Therefore, the verb *nakaḥa* and its derivatives do not always refer euphemistically to sexual relations, and, for this reason, those verses in which this word means 'marriage contract' will not be included in the data (cf. Q.02:221, Q.02:232, and Q. 04:03).

6.8 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extracts 7 and 8: (Q. 02: 236) and (Q. 02: 237)

لا جُناح عَليكُم إن طَلَقتُمُ النِّساء مَا لَم تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَو تَفرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى المُوسِع قَدرُهُ وَعَلَى المُقتِر قَدرُهُ مَتَاعًا بِالمَعرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى المُحسِنِينَ (236 :02 .Q) وَإِن طَلَقتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبل أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَد فَرَضتُم لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصفُ مَا فَرَضتُم إِلَّا أَن يَعفُونَ أَو يَعفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقدَةُ النِّكَاح ۚ وَأَن تَعفُوا أَقرَبُ لِلتَّقوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا الفَضلَ بَينَكُم ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (237 :02 .Q)

These two verses occur within the same context, namely divorce, but they cover two different types of divorce. The first verse specifically explicates divorce which takes place before any sexual intercourse has occurred. In other words, it takes place at times when a couple have been legally married, having signed a marriage contract, but have not yet had any sexual relations but need to divorce. It is reported that this was revealed following a case when an Anṣāri man had to divorce his wife before he had had sexual intercourse with her and they had not agreed upon a certain amount of dowry for her. Therefore, this verse deals with this type of divorce when a husband is bound to pay a gift to his divorced wife according to his level of wealth.

The second verse deals with a slightly different type of divorce, in which a dowry had been agreed but no intercourse had ocurred. In this case the wife deserves half the amount of the dowry unless the divorced wife or her guardian agrees to forego this. The euphemistic phrase in question here is *ma lam tamassūhun*. It is derived from the generic verb *massa* ('to touch'). However, it is used here as a euphemism for 'sexual intercourse' and is used in other parts of the Qur'ān as well, namely (Q. 03:47) and (Q. 19:20)

(al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Biqāʿi n.d; al-ʾAndalusi 1993 ; Ibn ʿAshūr 1969; al-Wāhidi 1994).

6.9 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 9: (Q. 03.39)

- فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (Q. 03:39)

This is preceded by the verse in which Zachariah had asked Allah to give him "good offspring" and states that the angels then gave him glad tidings of that for which he had wished. The euphemistic word in this verse is the word *haṣūr*. In this context, this word is said by exegetes to refer to a person who has no interest in sexual affairs. Rationally speaking, this could either be the result of an inherent physical defect, or be due to self-control. Context hints at the second meaning since the first would imply a physical flaw, an interpretation which would not generally be used in reference to a prophet (c.f. *Yaḥyā* or John the Baptist). Therefore, it is held to be a euphemism in this verse since it comes after the word *sayyid* which is a positive adjective meaning pious and virtuous leader or chief. It would normally be expected that leaders would be in good shape physically (al-Baghawi 1989). Moreover, lexical and exegetical references agree on defining *haṣūr* as 'one who restrains himself from women out of chastity, and while having sexual desire' (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-ʾAndalusi 1993 ; al-Qurṭubi 2006), hence it cannot be negative or even have neutral connotations.

Furthermore, the morphological pattern *faʿūl* denotes that it is an active participle i.e. a noun of agent rather than a noun of patient (Ibn Manzūr 1980) indicating that *Yaḥyā* chose not to have sexual relations and had not been born with this anomaly. What is more, the likelihood of the word being a neutral adjective is eliminated when it is compared with a term like *ʿannīn* (one who does not have sexual desire). In other words, using the word *haṣūr* rather than any of the other possibilities supports the viewpoint that it is euphemistic.

6.10 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 10: (Q.03: 40)

- قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ (Q.03: 40)

After Zachariah was told that his plea had been answered, he wondered how he was going to have a child, since he was elderly and his wife was barren. His question was the result of surprise and curiosity about whether his barren wife or another woman would have the child, and whether he could still father children at his advanced age (al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Qurtubi 2006). This opinion is supported by verses (Q. 19:05) and (Q. 19:08) which literally state that his wife used to be barren (al-Shanqīti 2006). Although the phrase *annā yakūnu li ghulāmun* is interpreted in some exegetical works as sexual potency which makes it euphemistic, the context here does not support this opinion especially since Zachariah had asked for offspring not for potency. The informative statement he makes about his wife being barren further helps to eliminate this possibility. Thus, one euphemism remains here: *balaghnī al-kibaru* (literally: 'old age has reached me'). However, the pragmatic meaning is that he was already an old man and was too weak to have sexual relations with his wife (Ibn 'Ashūr 1969). Most exegetes agree that Zachariah was around a hundred years old, and his wife was a few years younger than him (al-Qurtubi 2006; al-Zamakhshari 1998).

6.11 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 11: (Q. 03:42)

- وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَىٰ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ (Q.03:42)

Most exegetical literature on this verse has evolved around the pre-eminence of Maryam among all other women. Exegetical commentaries have mainly focused on the word *i'stafāki* (chose you) which is repeated twice. The word *tahharak* (literally 'purified you') has received less attention but elicited a range of interpretations. Some have interpreted it as purification from *kufr* i.e. disbelief in Allah (al-Qurtubi 2006; al-Mawardi 1993). Another opinion is that Maryam was purified by not menstruating like other women (al-Wāhidi 1994; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Mawardi 1993). A similar, more general opinion is that she was purified from "all bad things which women are inclined to experience" (al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baydāwi 1999). It can be argued that using generalizations such as 'all of' is a typical Arabic way of euphemising. It helps to distract the listener's or reader's mind from possibly distasteful meanings by including these in a more general expression.

A third group of exegetes posited that what was meant was that she had been purified from what the Jews of her day accused her of, namely adultery (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Ṭabari 1973). However, a fourth view commonly held by another group of exegetes, including Ibn ʿAbbās, interpreted the word as purification from having sex with men (al-Wāhidi 1994; al-ʾAndalusi 1993 ; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Baghawi 1989).

6.12 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 12: (Q. 03: 47)

- قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَى أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

(Q. 03: 47)

Maryam was curious to know how she could conceive a child without having had sexual relations with a man and her question was triggered by bewilderment (al-Baghawi 1989; Ibn ʾAshūr 1969; al-ʾAndalusi 1993 ; al-Wāhidi 1994). This seems even more miraculous than *Yahya*'s birth from Zachariah's barren wife. The word *massa* (literally 'to touch') is a euphemism for having sex with a man and Riḍa (1920: 307) argues this term is an obvious *kināyah*. Interestingly, when discussing Maryam's question, exegetes have used other euphemistic choices such as *wāqaʿa*, a variation of the verb *waqaʿa* (to fall), along with other words such as *ṣāba* ('to hit something'), *nikāh* ('marriage or intercourse') and *dhāta zawj* ('a married woman') which clearly highlights the euphemistic drive in Arabic religious literature. If the euphemistic circumlocution is eliminated in this instance, the question would read: 'How can I have a son without a man impregnating me?'.

6.13 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 13: (Q. 04: 06)

- وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ **(Q. 04: 06)**

This verse is concerned with how to deal with orphans money and advocates that their guardians should make sure orphans are mature enough to be resposnibe for their money. This verse is said to have been revealed in the relation to the story of Thābit b. Rifāʿah, an orphan whose

uncle had been taking care of him following the death of his father. His uncle came to the prophet inquiring about whether he could take some of Thābit's money (al-Baghawi 1989; al-'Andalusi 1993). The euphemistic expression used in this verse is *ḥattā 'idhā balaghū al-nikāḥa* (literally: until they have reached [the age of] marriage). Scholars have had a collective opinion on this interpretation, linking it with the 'age of puberty' which is reached when the young are able to have sexual relations. It can also be assessed by signs such as wet dreaming (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Ṭabari 1973), menstruation in the case of females, or reaching the age of fifteen (al-Baghawi 1989; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987). However, such signs may vary from a place to another according to environmental and individual differences (Ibn 'Ashūr 1969).

According to Ibn 'Āshūr (1969), it is a *kināyah* expression which denotes the phase of life when one progresses from childhood into youth. The logical relation between wet dreams and marriage is that once someone has already had a wet dream, it means he or she is physiologically ready to have sexual relations. This euphemistic expression employs *kināyah ba'īdah* which requires logical analysis and analogy to be applied to the expression. in order to fulfil its euphemistic meaning.

6.14 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 14: (Q. 04:21)

- وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنكُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا (Q. 04:21)

This verse is preceded by verse (Q. 04:20) which forbids husbands from taking back the dowry they had paid for their wives. Using *kayfa* ('how') at the beginning of the verse adds an admonitory element: How [would you] take the dowry back after you have already enjoyed an intimate relationship with them and fulfilled your desires from them? It is a scornful question: "How could you take it back?". According to Ibn 'Āshūr (1969), this question denotes that such an action is mean and unmanly. The euphemistic expression here is the word *'afḍā* which literally means 'to reach'; as in 'one reaches to the other'. However, in contexts where men and women are involved, it is used as a euphemism for a husband-wife meeting in private,

and for sexual relations with one's wife (Ibn Manzūr 1980; al-Zajjāj 1988; al-Wāhidi 1994; al-Ṭabari 1973).

Two opinions are found in exegetical works regarding the word 'afḍā. Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid and al-Suddi believe it means sexual intercourse whilst Abu Ḥanīfah thinks it is *khalwah* (i.e. privacy with one's wife) (al-Mawardi 1993). Riḍa (1920: 460) refutes the latter opinion and confirms the first one, affirms that since the verb 'afḍā is followed by the preposition 'ilā , it implies sexual relations as an end to the action. He also notes the use of *ba'ḍakum 'ilā ba'ḍ* and given that there are other expressions which could have been used instead such as 'afḍaytum ilayhunna ('husband reaches the wife') or 'afḍā ba'ḍukum ila al-'ākhar (one reaches the other), mutual sexual relations between husband and wife is evident. He concludes that it is a euphemistic expression which reflects the refined, eloquent style of the Qur'ān. Riḍa agrees with al-Jurjāni (1908: 06) who both admit that Arabs euphemise only in the case of sensitive issues which is not applicable in the second opinion regarding *khalwah*. However, whether the expression alludes to sexual intercourse or to foreplay while in privacy with one's wife, it is still considered a euphemistic expression as the word 'afḍā does not refer to its literal meaning but to some other action.

6.15 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 15: (Q. 04:23)

- حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (Q. 04:23)

This verse provides a list of women to whom marriage is prohibited including sisters, mothers, aunts, nieces, etc. The euphemistic expression used in this verse is *dakhaltum bihinna* which literally translates: 'you entered into them'. The verb *dakhal* ('to enter' as in entering a house) is commonly used in marriage contexts with inflections such as *laylat al-dukhlah* ('wedding night'), and *dakhal bihā* ('had wedding night intercourse with her') which would typically be the first sexual encounter between the couple. Scholars have slightly varied in their interpretation of this expression. Al-Tabari (1973) identifies two exegetical interpretations, namely 'sexual intercourse' and 'one

person undressing another', although there is no agreement among scholars with regard to the latter. Interestingly though, the *Ḥadīth* which is mostly quoted to support this opinion reads: *fayakshif wa ya'tass wa yajlis bayna rijlayhā* which can be translated as: '.. then he uncovers her, touches her [i.e. her private parts] and **sits between her legs**'. The bold and italicized part of the *Ḥadīth* sounds very much like a euphemism that stands for sexual intercourse owing to the fact that it the sitting action follows the typical process of a sexual encounter, starting with uncovering, then touching [the private parts], and finally having intercourse. What is more, if taken literally, sitting between one's wife's legs does not sound like a feasible action.

Most scholars agree with the first opinion, including *Ibn 'Abbās, Ṭawūs*, and *Ibn Dinār* (al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Baghawi 1989). Al-Zamakhshari (1998: 53), posits that the expression is a euphemism (*kināyah*) for sexual intercourse which is similar to *banā 'alayhā* (literally 'built on her'), *ḍaraba 'alayhā al-ḥijāb* (had the cover besieged her), and *adkhaltumūhunna al-sitr* (had them entered [i.e. women] into protection'). The clause *min nisā'ikumu allāti dakhaltum bihinna* with the explanatory phrase *dakhaltum bihinna* indicates that an intimate husband-wife relationship is involved. It does not support the interpretation of one being legally married i.e. with only a marriage contract bond. In addition, the word *min* indicates distinction between women whom one has or has not gone into (al-Zamakhshari 1998: 51). Thus, by virtue of the fact that the intended meaning refers to a sensitive issue it can be concluded that the expression discussed above is euphemistic.

6.16 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 16: (Q. 04: 24)

- والْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِن النِّسَاء إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۖ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُم مَّا وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَن تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُم مُّحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ ۚ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَاضَيْتُم بِهِ مِن بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا **(Q. 04: 24)**

This verse is linked to Extract 15 and deals with the same topic. There are two euphemistic expressions in this verse: *ghayra musāfihīna* (literally 'not drenching [with liquid]') and *fama istamta'tum bihi min-hunna* (literally 'what you have enjoyed from them'). The word *sifāḥ* although it was originally used as a euphemism, has become a synonym for *zina* (adultery), which is a case

of euphemism treadmill; the process by which over the course of time a word loses its euphemistic nuances with usage. Linguistically, the term is taken from the verb *safaḥa* which means 'to spill or shed liquid on a low surface' collocating mostly with nouns such as tears and blood (Ibn Manzūr 1980; Quṭb 2003; al-Fayrūz'abādi 1884). All exegetes have agreed that it is metaphorically used to refer to fornication. The image becomes obvious when the action of spilling, drenching, or shedding water is compared to ejaculation. Thus, the intended meaning of the euphemism is 'not intending fornication'. Moreover, the word *musāfaḥah* is in the morphological pattern *mufā'alah* denoting mutuality and cooperation between the partners (Quṭb 2003).

A number of interpretations have been suggested for the second euphemism, most exegetes believing it refers to *al-nikāḥ* i.e. marriage in its broadest generic sense. The word *nikāḥ* seems to reflect exegetes' tendency towards euphemising in their commentaries as they mostly use it to refer to sexual relations in marriage. It could also mean the act of *'aqd al-nikāḥ* (literally tying the marriage knot). Other exegetes use another euphemism for sexual intercourse: *al-waṭ'* (literally 'to set foot on something'). In addition to this opinion, exegetes including al-Rāzi (1981) and al-Zamakhshari (1998) also mention *al-khalwah al-ṣaḥīḥah* i.e. intimate privacy as it adds to a husband's enjoyment of his wife. All of these three interpretations are supported with *Ḥadīth* and rational discussion.

A further exegetical opinion, which has attracted more varied opinion, claims it refers to temporary marriage (*nikāḥ al-mut'ah*) which was lawful during the early era of Islam and was later gradually prohibited (al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Baghawi 1989; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Mawardi 1993). Linguistically, the verb *'istamta'a* is derived from *mata'a* which has the sense of using something (Ibn Manzūr 1980). The verb in this inflectional pattern implies long-lasting enjoyment of something while utilizing it (Riḍa 1920). Therefore, it is held here as a euphemism since the opinion which says it refers to sexual intercourse and sexual intimacy is supported both linguistically and contextually.

6.17 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 17: (Q. 04:25)

وَمَن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنكُمْ طَوْلًا أَن يَنكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُم مِّن فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۚ وَاللَّـهُ أَعْلَمُ

بِإِيمَانِكُم ۚ بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا

مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَّ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ

مِنكُمْ ۚ وَأَن تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّـهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (Q. 04:25)

This verse also deals with the same theme as the previous two verses i.e. marriage, and suggests solutions for those who cannot afford to get married due to their financial circumstances. The verse contains several euphemistic expressions, three of which are sex related: *musāfiḥāt*, *muttakhidhāt ʾakhdān* and *al-ʿanat*. The first sex-related euphemism has already been discussed in Extract 16. The second refers to taking *khudn* i.e. paramours to satisfy sexual desire (al-ʾAṣfahāni n.d). It is placed parallel to *musāfiḥāt* which is the feminine plural of *musāfiḥah* i.e. a fornicating woman. According to al-Baghawi (1989), al-Mawardi (1993), and al-Qurṭubi (2006), before Islam it was relatively commonplace for a woman, especially female slaves, to have a secret paramour, but having more than one sexual partner was very much denounced. Thus, this was prohibited as Islam spread. Culturally, this is further supported by well-known sayings of the kind *tajūʿu* (or *tamūtu*) *al-ḥurratu wa lā taʾkulu bi thadyayhā* which literally means: 'a free woman (as opposed to a slave girl) may starve (to death) but she should never use her breasts [i.e. femininity] to get money (i.e. to feed herself)' meaning she would not enter into prostitution even if she was dying of hunger.

The word *musāfaḥah*, conforming with the morphological inflection *mufāʿalah,* denotes multiplicity of partners and a repeated action, hence the metaphorical use. Exegetical opinions agree that *musāfiḥah* is one who practices adultery publicly while *muttakhidhat khudn* is having a secret affair (Ibn Kathīr 1999; al-Shawkāni 1994). The first is very similar to today's prostitution business whilst it can be argued that having a secret affair is less debased then publicly committing such a grave sin. Despite the fact that *muttakhidhatu khudn* refers to a fornicating woman which is still abhorrent, the expression sounds milder than words such as *zāniyah* (adulteress), *ʾāhirah* (harlot), *fājirah* (whore), and *mūmis* (slut), which makes *muttakhidhat khudn* a typical euphemism.

The second euphemism is *al-'anat* which is generally used to mean hardship and affliction as in (Q. 02:220) : *"wa law shā'a Allāhu la a'natakum"* (If Allah willed, He would have put you in hardship). However, this expression seems to have undergone a semantic journey and ended up having various senses. Originally, the word *al-'anat* was used to refer to bones breaking again after healing (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Shawkāni 1994; Riḍa 1920) but was then borrowed to mean committing adultery as in the verse underdiscussion (Ibn Manzūr 1980). The same opinion is held by al-Suyūṭi and al-Maḥalli (1987) who add that this word is used to refer to adultery which is punished during life, by capital punishment in some cases, and leads to punishment in the Hereafter i.e. trial. Similarly, al-Shawkāni (1994) and al-Qurṭubi (2006) agree that it refers to falling into the sin of adultery. This opinion is shared by Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, al-Ḍaḥḥāk and others (al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Baghawi 1989). Rhetorically however, Riḍa (1920) points that the intended meaning is the sin which is intimately associated with committing adultery. This makes it a typical part-to-whole synecdoche that is also euphemistic.

To recapitulate, some five exegetical opinions have been advanced for this euphemistic expression: (1) committing adultery, (2) the sin of committing adultery, (3) the punishment for committing adultery, (4) severe distress in life and the Hereafter (al-Mawardi 1993), and (5) a strong sexual urge. It can be seen that the actual meaning is harsher than the word *'anat* itself, and because this *kināyah* is linked in many ways to the action it euphemizes, it makes *'anat* a typical euphemism.

6.18 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 18: (Q.04: 34)

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّـهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّـهُ ۚ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا (Q.04: 34)

This verse includes a wide range of themes, starting with the duty laid upon men for the welfare of women. The Qur'ān shows that the logic for choosing men to bear this responsibility is due to their natural characteristics, and for the money they are expected to spend on women's dowry and maintenance. According to Quṭb (2003), natural characteristics are inclusive of physical, emotional and judicial abilities, even in the very genes of each sex. It follows

then, according to Quṭb (2003), that men are obliged to protect, provide for, and take care of women, while virtuous women ought to be obedient and follow their marital duties towards their husband as Allah has ordained. The verse goes on to touch upon a situation when a woman is feared not to adhere to this rule and disobeys her husband. The Qur'ān then goes on to offer gradual remedy for this situation.

The first euphemism *ḥāfiẓātun lil ghaybi* (literally, guarding the unseen) is the opposite of *shahādah* (i.e. visible). The verse hints at situations when husbands are absent, and the obligation is placed upon women to safeguard their husbands' conjugal interests. It is noticed, however, that some exegetes tend to refer to ambiguous words using similarly ambiguous or generic wording such as "what they are entrusted with" fulfilling with regards to their husbands (al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Qurṭubi 2006), or "safeguarding themselves and their husbands' wealth and properties" (al-Ṭabari 1973; al-Mawardi 1993). This again reflects the Arabic tendency even in exegetical contexts towards the politeness in language. Nevertheless, the word *al-ghayb* is interpreted in many exegetical works as 'women's private parts' (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baghawi 1989). This opinion is supported by other verses such as (Q.23:05), (Q.24:30), (Q.24:31), (Q.33:35), and (Q.70:29) which use the verb *ḥafiẓa* (to protect), with the word *farj* (private parts).

The second euphemism *'uhjurūhunna fi al-maḍāji'* (literally, desert them in beds), has been interpreted to mean 'sleeping in a different bed' (al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; Ibn Kathīr 1999), and also 'negligence by sleeping in the same bed but husband would turn away from wife in order to show contempt and displeasure' (al-Shawkāni 1994). These two opinions take the literal meaning of the expression. However, other exegetes, including *Ibn 'Abbās* and *Sa'īd b. Jubayr*, consensually agree that it is a *kināyah* expression that denotes having no sexual relations (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Bayḍāwi 1999; al-Mawardi 1993). Furthermore, al-Naṣafi (1980) illustrates that the preposition *fi* used in the expression as opposed to the preposition *'an* makes it a *kināyah* that denotes sexual relations. However, it it is clear that neither sleeping in a different bed nor turning away from a wife in the

same bed is likely to lead to sexual intercourse. Therefore, the third opinion refers very much to the result to which first two opinions are alluding.

6.19 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 19: (Q. 04: 43)

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا (Q. 04: 43)

The main topic of this verse is ritual impurity which can be the result of being intoxicated, having sexual intercourse, having answered a call of nature, or having touched women. With regards to intoxication, it was partially prohibited in verses (Q.02:219) and later abrogated by the verses (Q.05:90-91) which prohibited all liquors. Absolute prohibition was also supported by authentic prophetic *Hadīths* (Quṭb 2003; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-ʾAndalusi 1993). The verse expounds on legal ordinances concerning prayer and permission to use dry ablution in order to purify oneself for prayer. There are two euphemistic expressions: *aw jāʾa ʾaḥadun minkum min al-ghāʾiṭi* (literally 'or you have returned from the low place'), and *aw lāamastumu al-nisāʾi* ('or you have touched women'). The first one is not covered by the scope of this study as it deals with the place where people then used to go to relieve themselves. The second is a sex-related euphemistic expression, hence it will be analysed below.

As for the euphemistic expression *ʾaw lāamastumu al-nisāʾ*, there have been two major exegetical opinions. One group of scholars favoured the literal meaning of touching either by hand or bare body-to-body contact. Another group supported the metaphorical meaning i.e. sexual intercourse. The first group include Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn Masʿūd, al-Shuʿabi and al-Nakhʿi. The second group include Ali b. Abu Ṭālib, Ibn ʿAbbās, Qatādah, and Mujāhid (al-Ṭabari 1973; al-Baghawi 1989; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987). The debate has long gone on between early exegetes where each group further supported their opinions with *Sunnah* evidence. However, linguistically speaking, the word *lams* and its inflections are used to allude to sex. An example of this is the widely known idiomatic expression in Arabic *la taruddu yada lāmis* (literally: 'she does not reject the hand of a toucher' [i.e. for a sexual affair]), referring

to women who are easily persuaded into sex (Ibn Manzūr 1980). Moreover, a synonym of the same lexical item has also been used in the Qur'ān to mean sexual relations as in verse (Q. 02:236) which was analysed earlier.

6.20 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 20: (Q. 06:152)

- وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ ۖ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۖ وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (Q. 06:152)

This verse deals with a number of themes. It starts by warning the guardians of orphans not to use an orphan's money or property unless this is with the good intentions which are likely to make it grow such as investing it (al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; Quṭb 2003; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Nasafi 1980; al-Bayḍāwi 1999). The second topic instructs Muslims to give full measure and use honest scales and honest weights when buying and selling. Similarly, they are also directed to be just in their everyday dealings and in passing judgement even when relatives are involved (al-Baghawi 1989; al-Nasafi 1980).

The euphemistic expression here *ḥatta yablugha 'shuddahu* (literally 'until he reaches his peak') is in the first part and deals with the same topic as verse (Q. 04:06) which was discussed earlier in Extract 13. The word *ashuddah* appears in four other verses: (Q. 12:22), (Q. 17:34), (Q. 18:82) and (Q. 22:05). Interpretations have varied depending on the context in which word occurs. For instance, in the verse (Q. 12:22) it refers to prophet Yūsuf, and based on the historical context, exegetes have agreed that this refers to him reaching his peak of youth and strength (al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baghawi 1989; al-Ṭabari 1973). However, in this verse in reference to the financial matters of orphans, exegetes have interpreted the word differently. While certain scholars such as Abu Ḥanīfah and al-Suddi have set a certain age for this ranging from fifteen, eighteen, twenty five thirty or forty years (al-Shanqīṭi 2006), others have interpreted it as *al-ḥulm* i.e. 'reaching puberty' (al-Baghawi 1989; al-Mawardi 1993; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; Ibn Kathīr 1999; al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Bayḍāwi 1999).

6.21 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 21: (Q.07:189)

- هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا ۖ فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ ۖ فَلَمَّا

أَثْقَلَت دَّعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ (**Q.07:189**)

This verse praises Allah as the Creator, stating that all human beings came from one soul, namely Adam. It also states that his spouse Eve was created either from one of his ribs in one exegetical opinion, or from the same source from which he had been created so that he could rest or gain comfort being with her (al-Zamakhshari 1998; Ibn 'Ashūr 1969; al-Nasafi 1980). We are concerned here with two euphemistic expressions: *taghashshāha* and *ḥamlan khafīfan*. The first is derived from the verb *ghashiya* ('to cover'), and is used metonymically to mean to have sexual intercourse. This rhetorical technique is called synecdoche where there is a part-to-whole relation. That is, covering is one part of a multi-part process: sexual relations and there is consensus among scholars that the meaning is not literal but metonymic (al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baghawi 1989; al-Bayḍāwi 1999; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987). In their commentary, a number of synonymous euphemistic expressions catch the eyes of the reader such as: *'ityān, muwāqa'ah, waṭ', tadaththur, jimā', and ghishyān.*

The second euphemism is *ḥamlan khafīfan* (literally 'light pregnancy' or 'burden'). According to a majority of exegetes including *Mujāhid* and *al-Ḥasan*, it relates to semen (al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Ṭabari 1973; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Wāhidi 1994; al-Baghawi 1989). This opinion is based on some logical basis, namely that pregnancy is not light on women but it is light during the very early stages when all that is inside the woman's womb is purely male semen and one only female egg (Ibn 'Ashūr 1969). Nevertheless, there are some other individual opinions which have interpreted the expression literally as light pregnancy. They claim that Eve's pregnancy was not a heavy one but rather a light one which did not even make her feel heavy as women would normally do (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Nasafi 1980).

6.22 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 22: (Q. 11: 72)

- قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَى أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ (Q. 11: 72)

This verse is one of a number which narrate how angels came down to give Abraham the glad tidings that he would beget a son at an old age and this particular verse gives the reaction of Abraham's wife to the news. The same topic is also dealt with in more detail in (Q. 51:29): "His wife came forward, crying and struck her face, and said: 'I am an old barren woman!'". Exegetes report that the couple were aged ninety years or more when they learned the news (al-Nasafi 1980; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Mawardi 1993; al-Baghawi 1989). She found it difficult to understand how she would have a son when she was an elderly woman and her husband was so old and her use of the words 'ajūz and shaykh indirectly hints at the established fact that human potency and fertility decrease with ageing.

Potency is one of the most sensitive sexual issues and hence speakers make use of euphemism in relation to it. Most exegetes have adopted the same polite approach in depicting the verse (al-Mawardi 1993; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Ṭabari 1973). Whilst Al-Qurtubi (2006) and Ibn 'Abdussalām (1996) clearly state that Abraham's wife uses the rhetorical technique of ta'rīḍ meaning that her husband was no longer having marital relations with her, most exegetes have focused on the bizarre nature of having offspring while being elderly without touching upon the logical or physical reason behind this i.e. 'lack of potency and fertility'.

6.23 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extracts 23-26: (Q. 11:78), (Q. 15:67), (Q. 15:71) and (Q. 11:79)

The following four verses are taken from two different sūrahs but since both deal with the story of Lot and his people, they have been combined here. The people of Lot were famous for practicing what the Qur'ān considers to be the abominable sin of homosexuality and Lot urged them to stop this practice.

- وَجَاءَهُ قَوْمُهُ يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُونِ فِي ضَيْفِي ۖ أَلَيْسَ مِنكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَّشِيدٌ (Q. 11:78)

- وَجَاءَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ (Q. 15:67)

Following verse (Q. 11:77) which states that angels came to Lot in the disguise of handsome boys, (Q. 11:78) explains that his people hastened to him with lustful intentions which made him offer them his daughters in marriage (to be discussed later) but they were unrelenting (al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Zamakhshari 1998). The Qur'ānic narrative of this story is very similar to its biblical counterpart (Ukleja 1983; Eastman 1990; Rogers 2009). However, one fundamental difference is that the Bible clearly says that Lot had an incestuous relationship with his daughters (Carmichael 1997; Kutz 2005) while the Qur'ān speaks highly of all the prophets without exception. According to the Qur'ānic version, Lot was said to have knowledge and wisdom (Q. 21:74), and to be a believer who had long preached to his people (Q. 29:26).

The euphemistic expressions in the two verses are *kānu ya'malūna al-sayyi'āt* ('they used to do evil deeds'), and *yastabshirūn* ('rejoicing'). 'Evil deeds' euphemises for practicing homosexuality in this context as agreed consensually by exegetes (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; Ibn Kathīr 1999; al-Shawkāni 1994; Quṭb 2003), a hypernym (evil deeds) which is used to refer to a hyponym (practicing homosexuality). With regard to the second euphemism al-Suyūṭi and al-Maḥalli (1987) suggest that 'rejoicing' is an adverb that reflects how happy Lot's people were at the thought of having relations with the handsome angels. Quṭb (2003) explains that they were happy to learn that there were "preys" hosted by Lot, Such rejoicing, he adds, shows that they have reached the point when they commit homosexual acts openly as a group.

Exegetes styles have varied in their word choice. The expressions *fāḥishah* ('obscene act'), *al-'amr al-fāḥish* ('obscene matter'), and *rukūbu al-fāḥishah* (literally: riding the obscene act), are used as euphemisms for homosexual acts in most exegesis (al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Ṭabari 1973; al-Sha'rāwi 1999; al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baghawi 1989). It is quite noticeable that the inflections of *fuḥsh* (obscenity) have very negative connotations which by definition

contradict how euphemisms are typically used. However, here there is a case of a dysphemism that has over time lost a great deal of its dysphemistic connotations to eventually become a euphemism.

- قَالَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِن كُنتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ   (Q. 15:71)

- قَالُوا لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ (Q. 11:79)

The above two verses deal with the same story of Lot and his people. In the first verse Lot, offers them daughters in marriage while in the second verse, his people decline his offer, literally saying: "You have known that we have no claim on your daughters, and you certainly know what we want". Verses (Q. 26: 165-166) deal with same topic being analysed here and are found in *sūrah* 26. Some exegetes have opined that Lot meant his people's daughters in general and was not referring only to his own daughters (Ibn ʿAshūr 1969; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Bayḍāwi 1999). Al-Shaʿrāwi (1999) adds that since Lot, only had two daughters this strengthens the argument that Lot was referring to the girls of the whole nation.

The euphemism found in the first verse is embedded in his circumlocution: "These are my daughters if you are intending to do [something]". Al-Darwīsh (1992) affirms that there is ellipsis that could be understood from the rest of the verse and context. The meaning without ellipsis would read: these are my daughters [marry them] if you are intending to do [something]. Ellipsis is employed here as a euphemistic tool. Besides the verb 'marry them', exegetes in their interpretations have used euphemistic words such as *faʾtūhunna* ('come to them'), *ma khalaqa min al-furūji al-mubāḥati* (literally 'whatever created of lawful openings'), and *la tarkabu al-ḥarām* (literally 'do not ride the unlawful'). In the second verse, the last part is found to be euphemistic, simply because it renders Lot's people intentions with a sort of ambiguity. That is to say: *wa ʾinnaka taʿlamu mā nurīd* (literally 'indeed, you know what we want') refers to their homosexual intentions. With the use of circumlocution they could avoid stating their intentions.

6.24 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 27: (Q. 12:23)

- وَرَاوَدَتْهُ الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَغَلَّقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ۚ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ (Q. 12:23)

This verse and the following three verses are taken from *sūrah Yūsuf* (Joseph), the Qur'ānic narrative of his story. According to Islamic tradition, *Ya'qūb* (Jacob) had eleven sons and *Yūsuf* was his father's favourite, and the only one among his brothers to have been given the gift of prophecy. Envious, his brothers plotted to get rid of him and after having him thrown down a well, they claimed that a wolf had attacked and eaten him. He was then rescued by a caravan travelling to Egypt where he was sold in the slave market, finally ending up in a house of a high-ranking Minister. Some Islamic traditions claim the Minister was responsible for monetary affairs (al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Nasafi 1980). It is also established in Islamic tradition that *Yūsuf* was extremely handsome which made the Minister's wife admire him and plan to seduce him.

The verse deals with *Yūsuf*'s seduction by the Minister's wife. Although it is clear that this *sūrah* narrates *Yūsuf*'s story in detail, the section concerning the woman's all comsuming passion is differently presented and the Qur'ān does not elaborate on this theme to the extent it does about other themes in the story including the relationship between *Yūsuf* and his father and his brothers' envy.

Polite Qur'ānic style is employed including two euphemistic expressions: *rāwadat-hu* and *hayta lak*. The first one is translated as 'seduced', 'solicited', or 'allured' in most Qur'ānic translations. However, the Arabic verb *rāwad* is derived from the generic root *rawd* ('to want something or to want someone do something') (Ibn Manzūr 1980; al-Rāzi 1911). The morphological inflection *mufā'alah* also denotes asking for something while making movements (i.e. of coming back and forth) (al-Fayrūz'abādi 1884; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Nasafi 1980). It denotes an insistent, repeated action hoping to achieve a certain goal (al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; Ibn 'Ashūr 1969). These embedded meanings show how the Minister's wife would not stop following *Yūsuf*, in order to seduce him (Quṭb 2003; al-Sha'rāwi 1999).

The second euphemism literally means 'come' (al-Rāzi 1911; al-Fayrūz'abādi 1884; Ibn Manzūr 1980; al-Bayḍāwi 1999). 'Ikrimah, Abu 'Abdulraḥmān al-Sulami and Qatādah state it could also be used to mean 'I

got ready' (al-Sha'rāwi 1999; al-Baghawi 1989; al-Mawardi 1993; Ibn 'Abdussalām 1996). Both meanings denote the woman's sexual intentions and thus it is considered here to be a euphemistic expression.

Exegetes have used politely synonymous equivalents for the first euphemism i.e. *rāwadat-hu.* These include *talabat-hu li muwaqa'at-ha* ('she requested him to get down with her'), *da'at-hu 'ilayhā* (literally 'she called him to her'). For the second euphemism, exegetes have adopted a similar style in depicting the verse, using expressions such as *halumma lak* ('come and have me'), *'if'al al-'amr al-makrūh* ('do the disapproved action'), and *tad'ūh 'ila nafsihā* ('calling him into herself').

6.25 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 28: (Q. 12:24)

- وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ ۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَن رَّأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ ۚ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ (Q. 12:24)

6.25.1 This verse follows the previous one recounting the story of *Yūsuf,* and the Minister's wife. In this verse, the sexual intention is further illustrated with the euphemism *hammat bihi wa hamma bihā.* The verb *hamma* literally means 'to want something'(al-Rāzi 1911), or to want something but keep this secretly to oneself (al-Fayrūz'abādi 1884). While exegetes are unanimous about the woman's sexual intentions, this is not the case for *Yūsuf who as a prophet is believed by muslims to be infallible.* Some, such as Ibn 'Abbās, have postulated that *Yūsuf* responded to her desire but the evidence he saw from Allah protected him from committing the sin (al-Nasafi 1980; al-Baghawi 1989). This opinion accepts that *Yūsuf's* intentions were similar to hers but he did not act upon them for he had seen the evidence of Allah.

Other exegetes are of the opinion that she desired him, and had he not seen Allah's evidence, he would have desired to sin with her (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-'Andalusi 1993 ; al-Sha'rāwi 1999; al-Rāzi 1981). This opinion gets its credibility first from the principle of the infallibility of prophets and also from the linguistic basis that the verb *hamma* can be interpreted as debating

with oneself without seriously thinking of doing an action (al-Qurṭubi 2006). Another opinion presented by Riḍa (1920) posits that the woman desired him but *Yūsuf* only sought to defend himself and ran away from her.

There is little that the exegetes could prove in their interpretations regarding the part *burhāna rabbihi* (i.e. his Lord's Evidence) mentioned in the verse. Therefore, they have various interpretations of it. The literal meaning of the verse, however, would be: 'she had wanted him and he would have wanted her had not he seen his Lord's evidence'. There is an ellipsis in this verse that can be easily understood from the context and a more elaborate way of saying this would be: 'She wanted to have sex with him and he would have wanted to have sex with her had not he seen his Lord's evidence'. The euphemism here employs the technique of ellipsis so that the taboo term is not mentioned. This is a common technique used for euphemism formation found in English examples such as 'Ladies' for 'Ladies' room', or 'intercourse' for 'sexual intercourse' (Veisbergs 2000).

6.26 Textual and Contextual Analysis of Extract 29: (Q. 12: 25)

واسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِنْ دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَى الْبَابِ ۚ قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ **(Q. 12: 25)**

Continuing with *sūrah Yūsuf*, this verse narrates how *Yūsuf* and the Minister's wife both raced towards the door when she pulled at his shirt from behind and ripped it. The verse tells that when they found her husband at the door she asked him: "What is the punishment of he who had wanted to do evil to your wife, other than to be imprisoned or tortured?". The particle used is *mā* which could either be interrogative or negative. The question quoted above is based on the exegetical opinion which considers it to be an interrogative particle (al-Shawkāni 1994; al-Rāzi 1981). However, basing the translation on the other opinion i.e. that *mā* is a negative particle would change what the Minister's wife said to: "Punishment of he who wanted to do evil to your wife is *not* less than prison or painful torture" Quoted from (al-'Andalusi 1993 :297).

The potential sex-related euphemism found in this verse is the word *sū*
translated as 'evil'. Most exegetes agree that *sū'* refers to committing the sin
of adultery (al-Suyūṭi and al-Mahalli 1987; Ibn Kathīr 1999; al-Shawkāni
1994; al-Baghawi 1989; al-Qurṭubi 2006; al-Wāhidi 1994). However, al-
Andalusi (1993) thinks differently, arguing that *sū'* is generic and could refer
to *Yūsuf*, hitting her or misbehaving in any way.

6.27 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated by using textual and contextual analysis that
the selected sample are euphemistic expressions. This analysis was
supported by authoritative exegetical commentaries and dictionaries of
Classical Arabic. It has also shown the Arabic tendency even in exegetical
contexts towards the politeness in language where it has been found that
exegetes tend to use circumlocutory and general terms to explain sex-
related euphemisms rather than making direct reference to it.

The next chapter will focus on how these Arabic euphemistic expressions
have been rendered in three contemporary translations of the Qur'ān.

CHAPTER 7. Assessment and Analysis of the Translations

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter analysed the sample of 29 euphemistic ST expressions both linguistically and contextually. This chapter will focus on assessing three translations of this same Qur'ānic material. The three chosen translations Saheeh-International (1997), Abdel Haleem (2005) and Bewley (2005) will be introduced and comparative analysis of the relevant verses will follow. A literal translation will be provided in each case to accompany the three versions and here the words and phrases have been translated out of context using their most common dictionary meaning. The main purpose of this is to demonstrate the mechanics of the SL and how the sentences have been structured. The analysis will also examine whether each translator has recognised the euphemistic expression, and the methodology they have used in translating the euphemistic expressions will be evaluated.

The responses elicited from 14 informants who responded to my questionnaire have been used to aid this analysis. Translations will be classified as euphemistic and non-euphemistic. Euphemistic translations are those which translators have purposefully created to convey the euphemistic function in the ST. Non-euphemistic translations are those which did not recognise any euphemistic meaning in the part identified as having a euphemistic meaning. When there is mistranslation or a translation which is thought to be misleading, further comment will be made.

Before beginning the translation assessment, the following terms will be defined to explain what procedures translations have adopted:

Literal translation has been envisaged historically as a procedure in which the translator translates the ST word for word ignoring both context and TL syntactic norms. It has been discussed in contrast with sense-for-sense type translation which adopts a freer approach (Munday 2001). Although few favour this method, Newmark (1988: 68-69) argues that literal translation "is

correct and must not be avoided, if it secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original". In this study, literal translation is understood as a form of translation that adheres to the syntactic and lexical patterns used in the SL. It is also a procedure in which translators tend to pick the most common meaning for the SL item.

Semantic translation is a procedure which translates the intended meaning but may still ignore the connotative part of the meaning. In other words, a semantic translation of a euphemism would for instance translate a euphemistic expression with an explanatory restructuring using plain words that do not attempt to reproduce any stylistic features. In Newmark's view it differs from literal translation as it respects context (Newmark 1981: 39). When translators use this procedure the TT is likely to use paraphrasing and be circumlocutory whereas SL items employ brevity.

Idiomatic translation is a more TL-oriented approach in which translation is done by using TL idioms. This can still be called idiomatic equivalence in cases when the TL has used an idiom or idiomatic rendering when this is not the case in the source language.

Translation Analysis

7.1.1 Extract 1: (Q.02:187)

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۚ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۖ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

(Q.02:187)

Euphemism no.1A: الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ

Table 1 Translations of Extract 1 A

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
saying obscene speech to your women	to go to your wives [for sexual relations]	to lie with your wives	to have sexual relations with your wives

The Saheeh translation (henceforth T1) has attempted a euphemistic translation by using a general statement. Since the intended meaning can be easily missed in such a general statement, the translator has added an explanatory note in brackets which contains the word 'sexual'. Eight out of 14 informants who have been asked to mark the euphemistic translation extracts have marked this semantic translation in T1 as euphemistic. Bewley's translation (henceforth T3) is also semantic producing an exposed sort of euphemism by using the expression 'sexual relations'. In other words, using the word 'relations' in the translation, it is obvious that the translator has attempted to produce a euphemistic translation. However, research failed to produce evidence that the phrase 'sexual relations' can by understood as a euphemism in English. On the contrary, this expression itself is often euphemised using terms such as 'copulation', 'making love', 'sleeping with', 'action', etc. Noble (1982); (Holder 2008; Allen and Burridge 1991; Neaman and Silver 1983). Furthermore, Holder (1987: 103) posits that the more genteel usage for 'to have relations' is using the verb 'to copulate'. He claims that 'to have sexual relations' is more explicit. Therefore, on the grounds that euphemisms are intended to cover up unacceptable facts or

explicit words that are not considered suitable to be mentioned (Thomas *et al.* 2004; Fairclough 2001), using such an explicit expression contradicts the purpose of using a euphemism. T3 received the lowest response with only three responses from informants.

Abdel Haleem's translation (henceforth T2) is idiomatic. The translator uses an established biblical euphemism with the phrase "lie with your wives" which alludes to sexual relations without mentioning the word 'sex'. This may explain why T2 received the highest response level among the other two with 10 responses. Moreover, the co-text contains words which would draw the reader's mind closer towards recognizing the euphemistic meaning of the euphemism used rather than its literal meaning. That is to say, the words 'wives' and 'night' help eliminate reader expectations about the intended euphemized meaning i.e. sexual relations, and draw the reader's mind away from the literal meaning of the verb "to lie with". Euphemism wise, according to Neaman and Silver (1983: 10), this process is called semantic shift where "we use words naming the larger event in place of more precise references to the sexual relations...". In this research this process will be referred to as 'generalisation'.

Euphemism 1B: هُنَّ لِباسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِباسٌ لَهُنَّ

Table 2 Translations of Extract 1B

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
They [wives] are garments for you, and you [husbands] are garments for them.	They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them.	they are [close] as garments to you, as you are to them	They are clothing for you and you for them

T1 and T3 seem to have translated the verse literally using the same English translation for the Arabic word *libās* ('clothing'). Although this word is plain and devoid of the romantic image produced by the metaphor in the SL, T1 received 14 responses and T3 12. The reproduced image seems to have been the reason for such a high response. T2, also adopting a literal approach, sounds pragmatically clearer by adding the word 'close' to the

translation. Euphemistically, adding the word 'close' draws reader attention towards imagining how a husband and wife would be as close as garments are to one's own body. Hence, supported by this point of resemblance, the image is more likely to communicate to the reader. Thus, when hints are seeded into the translation, the reader is left with less possibility of being distracted from the intended meaning.

Euphemisms 1C and 1D:

- (1C) فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ

- (1D) وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

Table 3 Translations of Extract 1C and 1D

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
and now, you may physically contact them (1C) and seek what Allah has written for you.(1D)	So now, have relations with them (1C) and seek that which Allah has decreed for you (1D)	Now you can lie with them-(1C) seek what God has ordained for you (1D)	Now you may have sexual intercourse with them (1C) and seek what Allah has written for you (1D)

All three translations have attempted to translate euphemism 1C in three different ways. T1 has translated it semantically employing ellipsis of the word 'sexual' in order to produce a euphemistic effect. Not including the word 'sexual' in T1 makes it a euphemistic translation as the meanings invoked by the word 'sexual' are no longer able to distort the euphemistic effect. Thus it received 13 responses. T2 has also rendered the euphemistic expression idiomatically using an equivalent euphemistic expression which adopts a general statement technique. The verb 'lie with them' produces a euphemistic effect if the reader is fully aware and reading with an attentive mind. In other words, awareness and sensitivity of each reader towards language varies, and consequently this understanding varies when a metaphorical expression is employed especially if the literal meaning is also valid. T3 makes an attempt to translate the euphemism with another euphemism 'i.e. intercourse' but unfortunately failed to do so when the translator used the word 'sexual' which is fully loaded with those negative

senses which has hindered questionnaire respondents from choosing it as a euphemistic translation. Moreover, the word 'intercourse' has itself lost its euphemistic meaning (due to the euphemism treadmill).

It is worth mentioning here that one of the best attempts to render this euphemism was made by Asad (1964): "You may lie with them skin to skin". He attempted to translate the euphemism very literally hoping such literal translation would convey both the metaphorical and euphemistic functions. Despite the fact this is not a well-established euphemism in English, in my opinion, Asad's translation succeeds in presenting both formal and functional equivalences; the whole image of one lying with another, skin to skin, hints at the intended meaning in the ST. Euphemism 1B, however, was translated literally in all three translations. However, the same strategy used for euphemism formation in the SLT, i.e. generalisation, is repeated in the translation because the literal rendering of the euphemism seems to have maintained the euphemistic function.

Euphemisms 1E and 1F:

- **(1E)** تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللهِ

- **(1F)** فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا

Table 4 Translations of Extract 1E and 1F

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
Those are Allah's limits; (1E) do not get close to them (1F)	These are the limits [set by] Allah (1E), so do not approach them.(1F)	These are the bounds set by God (1E), so do not go near them. (1F)	These are Allah's limits (1E), so do not go near them (1F)

Translators vary in how they translate these two euphemisms. Yet, there were only two lexical variations for the first euphemism i.e. 'limits' and 'bounds' for *ḥudūd*, and also two lexical variations are used for the translation of euphemism 1F: 'approach' and 'go near'. All of the translators have adopted a literal translation methodology for both euphemisms which seems to have worked well in conveying the meaning. The reason for the successfulness of this translation is that English seems to accept the usage of the noun 'boundaries' with verbs like 'approach' or 'drawing near'.

This technique is what Nida (1964: 159) calls formal equivalence which adheres to both form and content in both SL and TL. This can also work for metaphors such as 'He has a heart of stone' which can be literally translated into Arabic as *ladayhi qalbun min ḥajar*, or 'I am all ears' as *kulli ʾādhānun ṣāghiyatun*. Questionnaire respondents gave 12 votes to T1, nine votes to T2, and eight votes to T3 which still shows their satisfaction with the euphemistic function in the translations.

7.1.2 Extract 2: (Q. 02:197)

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ ۚ فَمَن فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ (Q. 02:197)

Table 5 Translations of Extract 2

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
Hajj is [during] known months. He, who intended during them [i.e. the months] to perform Hajj, **should not commit rafath**, misbehaviour, nor quarrel during Hajj.	Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], **there is [to be for him] no sexual relations** and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj.	The pilgrimage takes place during the prescribed months. **There should be no indecent speech**, misbehaviour, or quarrelling for anyone undertaking the pilgrimage–	The Hajj takes place during certain well-known months. If anyone undertakes the obligation of Hajj in them, **there must be no sexual intercourse**, no wrongdoing, nor any quarrelling during Hajj.

As already stated in Chapter Six in the textual and contextual analysis for this verse, exegetes have varied in their interpretations for the word *rafath*. Some have adopted the literal meaning of the word i.e. 'indecent speech' while others have depicted it as having a metaphorical meaning i.e. 'having sex'. Consequently, translators also varied in their translations. In the above translations, we can see that T1 and T3 have dealt with the metaphorical meaning of the word (i.e. the euphemistic one) while T2 has adopted the literal meaning. Therefore, T2 will be excluded from assessment here as it is euphemistically irrelevant. Both T1 and T3 have attempted to translate the word using two euphemistic expressions: 'sexual relations' and 'sexual intercourse' respectively. Unfortunately, both translations use the adjective

'sexual' which eliminates the euphemistic function of the translation. Nevertheless, T1 has scored seven responses while T3 has scored only three responses.

7.1.3 Extract 3: (Q. 02:222)

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ ۖ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ(3A) وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ (3B) حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ(3C) إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ (Q. 02:222)

Table 6 Translations of Extract 3

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
They ask you about menstruation; say it is harm. So, **keep apart from women [while they are] in menstruation (3A). Do not get close to them (3B)** until they are purified. When they are purified, **come to them from where Allah ordained you (3C).** Verily, Allah loves the repentants and [those who] get purified.	And they ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is harm, so **keep away from wives during menstruation (3A). And do not approach them (3B)** until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves, **then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you (3C).** Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves."	They ask you [Prophet] about menstruation. Say, 'Menstruation is a painful condition, so **keep away from women during it (3A). Do not approach them (3B)** until they are cleansed; when they are cleansed, **you may approach them as God has ordained (3C).** God loves those who turn to Him, and He loves those who keep themselves clean.	They will ask you about menstruation. Say, 'It is an impurity, so **keep apart from women during menstruation (3A) and do not approach them (3B)** until they have purified themselves. But once they have purified themselves, **then go to them in the way that Allah has enjoined on you. (3C)** Allah loves those who turn back from wrongdoing and He loves those who purify themselves.

Euphemism 3A has been translated using the same technique in all the three translations and both T1 and T2 use 'keep away', with T3 opting for 'keep apart'. For euphemism 3B, all three translations have also adopted a literal translation technique and used the same word for rendering the euphemism i.e. 'approach'. Euphemism 3C was also translated using the

same technique with a general and more neutral term –similar to the SL style– being used to conceal the sensitive term i.e. 'to have sex'. It should be added here that T1 and T2 have added a footnote to explicate the intended meaning being euphemised. Abdel Haleem adds in his footnote: "The Arabic expressions used here are clear euphemisms for 'Do not have sexual intercourse with them" (Abdel Haleem 2005: 25) whereas Saheeh makes the following comment: "i.e., refrain from sexual intercourse" (Saheeh-International 1997: 44). Nevertheless, literal translation seems to have conveyed the euphemistic function and responses vary, with the highest response of 12 for T2, 10 responses for T3, and eight for T1.

7.1.4 Extract 4: (Q. 02: 223)

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ (4A) فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ (4B) (Q. 02: 223)

Table 7 Translations of Extract 4

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
Your women are **tilth for you (4A)**, so come to your tilth the way you want (4B)	Your wives are a **place of sowing of seed for you (4A)**, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish (4B)	Your wives are **your fields (4A)**, so go into your fields whichever way you like (4B)	Your women are **fertile fields for you (4A)**, so come to your **fertile fields however you like. (4B)**

In T1, the word *ḥarth* was descriptively translated using a definition i.e. 'a place of sowing of seed for you'. Such a paraphrase in this semantic translation directs the reader's mind towards recognising the point of the simile, not the negative connotations of the sexual act. In T2 and T3, the word 'field', and 'fertile fields' were used as equivalent terms for the word *ḥarth* adopting a literal translation method.

Euphemism 4B was translated with 'Come to your place of cultivation however you wish', 'Go into your fields whichever way you like', and 'Come to your fertile fields however you like' by T1, T2, and T3 respectively. T1 again translated the euphemism semantically while the other two translations adopted a literal methodology which seems to have preserved

the euphemistic function. Questionnaire respondents have not made any significant variation amongst these translations: T1 received 10, T2 received nine and T3 received eight. However, their responses reflect their satisfaction.

7.1.5 Extract 5: (Q.02: 226)

لِلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ **(5A)** تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ ۖ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا **(5B)** فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ **(Q.02: 226)**

Table 8 Translations of Extract 5

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
For those **who do less with their wives (5A)**, a waiting of four months. **So, if they returned (5B)**, then Allah is [very] Forgiving and [very] Merciful.	For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their wives (5A) is a waiting time of four months, but **if they return [to normal relations] (5B)**- then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.	For those who swear that they will not approach their wives (5A), there shall be a waiting period of four months: **if they go back (5B)**, remember God will be most forgiving and merciful,	Those **who swear to abstain from sexual relations with their wives (5A)** can wait for a period of up to four months1. If **they then retract their oath (5B)**, Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful.˙

For euphemism 5A, all three translations attempted to translate it semantically using the words 'sexual relations' in T1 and T3, and the verb 'approach' in T2. However, T1 and T3 have not succeeded in producing a euphemistic translation due to their use of the word 'sexual'. T2 has succeeded in maintaining the euphemistic function by using an established euphemism. It is not surprise that this time there is a marked difference in the questionnaire results with T2 receiving 12 responses while T1 and T3 were given six and five respectively. It is clear that the translators were intentionally trying to not translate the euphemism literally. Had they done so, this would have resulted in producing a translation that totally distorts the intended meaning.

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1 I wonder if using the preposition 'up to' here is based on a sound exegetical opinion

Euphemism 5B has been translated literally in both T1 and T2 and semantically in T3. T1 has inserted the phrase "to normal relations" in order to compensate for any misunderstanding that may arise because of the verb "return" used in the translation. T2 could be misleading as readers may only catch the literal meaning of the verb "go back" i.e. to return. T3 has definitely succeeded in presenting a euphemistic translation which also maintains the intended meaning in the verse.

7.1.6 Extract 6: (Q.02: 230)

فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِن بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَن يَتَرَاجَعَا إِن ظَنَّا أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (Q.02: 230)

Table 9 Translations of Extract 6

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
she marries a husband other than him	And if he has divorced her [for the third time], then she is not lawful to him afterward until [after] **she marries a husband other than him.**	If a husband re-divorces his wife after the second divorce, she will not be lawful for him until **she has taken another husband.**	But if a man divorces his wife a third time, she is not halal for him after that until **she has married another husband.**

T1 and T3 have translated the verb *nakaḥa* with its dictionary equivalent verb 'to marry'. T2 has used a sort of idiomatic variation of the meaning of the verb 'to marry' i.e. the verb: 'to take a husband'. All three translations have not been successful in conveying the intended meaning, reflecting only the surface meaning of the phrase. With such a semantically rich text, translators have no option but to consult exegetical books which explicate the intended meaning in considerable detail. Two problems have been created here, both of which, in my opinion, are resolvable. The first concerns the misunderstanding which may arise because of the inaccurate rendering. To rectify this, translators should add either in-text or marginal explanations to clarify that the intended meaning is having a marital relationship. The

other problem relates to the euphemism which could be conveyed using an established euphemism for marital relations such as 'to consummate the marriage'.

7.1.7 Extracts 7 and 8: (Q. 02: 236) and (Q. 02: 237)

لا جُناح عَلَيْكُم إن طَلَّقْتُمُ النّسَاء مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنّ (7) أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتّعُوهُنّ عَلَى الْمُوسِعِ قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ

مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ (Q. 02: 236) وَإِن طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنّ (8) وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنّ فَرِيضَةً

فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَن يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النّكَاحِ ۚ (Q. 02: 237)

Table 10 Translations of Extracts 7 and 8

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
There is no blame on you if you divorced the women provided you have not **touched** them, (7)	There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have not **touched** (7) --------------	You will not be blamed if you divorce women when you have not yet **consummated the marriage** (7)	There is nothing wrong in your divorcing women before you have **touched** them (7)
--------------------- And if you divorced them before you have **touched** them (8)	And if you divorce them before you have **touched them** (8)	---------------- If you divorce wives before **consummating the marriage** (8)	-------------------- If you divorce them before you have **touched** them (8)

Both euphemisms 7 and 8 are inflections of the verb *massa*. T1 and T3 have opted for a strictly literal translation for the word *massa*, yet the intended meaning behind using the euphemism i.e. 'sexual intercourse' could be missed by readers. T2 has translated the euphemism semantically. Consummating marriage is indeed euphemistic and fulfils both the intended meaning and euphemistic nuance. For this reason, respondents have given a high response to all translations: 10, 11, and nine respectively. However, T3 seems to have received the lowest response rate in the data analysed so far even though it was found to be euphemistic as in this case.

Extract 9: (Q. 03:39)

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنّ اللَّهَ يُبَشّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّالِحِينَ

(Q. 03:39)

Table 11 Translations of Extract 9

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
Allah gives you good news of Yehya; believing in a word from Allah, and a master and a **restrianer**, and a prophet from the righteous	So the angels called him while he was standing in prayer in the chamber, "Indeed, Allah gives you good tidings of John, confirming a word from Allah and [who will be] honorable, **abstaining [from women]**, and a prophet from among the righteous."	The angels called out to him, while he stood praying in the sanctuary, 'God gives you news of John, confirming a Word from God. He will be noble and **chaste**, a prophet, one of the righteous.	The angels called out to him while he was standing in prayer in the Upper Room: 'Allah gives you the good news of Yahya, who will come to confirm a Word from Allah, and will be a leader and a **celibate**, a Prophet and one of the righteous.'

Translations varied in their rendering of the word *ḥaṣūr*. T1 has used a description of the meaning i.e. "abstaining from [women]". Applying paraphrase is often used when there is no equivalent vocabulary item found in the TL to convey the SL term. T2 used the word 'chaste' which refers to a person who has never had unlawful sexual intercourse. The word *ḥaṣūr* as mentioned previously exculpates the person from all sorts of sexual relations including the marital kind. The two words i.e. *ḥaṣūr* and 'chaste' are not fully equivalent as the first contains more semantic senses than the latter. Therefore, this translation is not accurate. T3 uses the word "celibate" which is a typical equivalent that covers most of the semantic components of the word *ḥaṣūr*. This time respondents gave 13 responses to T2, 10 responses to T3, and eight to T1.

7.1.8 Extract 10: (Q.03: 40)

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ (Q.03: 40)

Table 12 Translations of Extract 10

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)

He said: O' God, how can a child be for me when **old age has reached** me and my wife is barren.	He said, "My Lord, how will I have a boy when I **have reached old age** and my wife is barren?"	He said, 'My Lord, how can I have a son when I **am so old** and my wife is barren?'	He said, 'My Lord, how can I possibly have a son when I **have reached old age** and my wife is barren?'

T1 and T3 have translated the euphemism literally maintaining a similar image to that of the ST: "I have reached old age". The two translators have created what Nida referred to as formal equivalence. However, T2 translated the verse plainly, ignoring the rhetorical structure used. Two different types of literal translation have been employed: formal equivalence which imitates the SL structure, and literal rendering without reproducing the allegorical image. All three can be considered euphemistic as the intended meaning can still be elicited from their rendering, since they have not exposed the euphemised meaning.

7.1.9 Extract 11: (Q.03:42)

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَىٰ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ (Q.03:42)

Table 13 Translations of Extract 11

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
And when the angels said to Mary: verily, Allah has chosen you and **purified you** and chosen you among the women of the world.	And [mention] when the angels said, "O Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you and **purified you** and chosen you above the women of the worlds.	The angels said to Mary: 'Mary, God has chosen you and **made you pure**: He has truly chosen you above all women.	And when the angels said, 'Maryam, Allah has chosen you and **purified you**. He has chosen you over all other women.

T1 and T3 have used the same technique (i.e. literality) using the same translation for the verb *ṭahharaki* ('purified you'). Their translations have employed the same technique of generalisation used in the SL, and consequently have been able to reproduce the euphemistic meaning.

However, the meaning would have been clearer if the translators had provided some footnotes referring to the exegetical opinions made on this part. T2 deviated somewhat from a formal literal translation as the TT does not follow the formal structure of the source like the other two translations did, but is still considered literal as no expansion has been made in the translation. The euphemistic function should have been communicated in all three translations. All three translations have received similar questionnaire results: 12, 13, and 12 respectively.

7.1.10 Extract 12: (Q. 03: 47)

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

(Q. 03: 47)

Table 14 Translations of Extract 12

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
She said: O' God, how can a boy be for me when **no human has touched me**.	She said, "My Lord, how will I have a child when **no man has touched me**?"	She said, 'My Lord, how can I have a son when **no man has touched me**?'	she said, 'My Lord! How can I have a son when **no man has ever touched me**?'

All the three translations have adopted the literal translation technique to render the euphemism. In the translations, applying very basic logic, it can be easily understood from the context that here touching does not refer to normal physical contact but rather to sexual activity that would result in having a son. All three translations have successfully rendered the euphemism, receiving the following responses respectively: 11, 10, and 10. Although T1 is identical to T2 and has a very similar wording to T3, it received one more response than the other two. This supports the possibility that the position where the translation was put in the questionnaire could have affected informants' decisions (Cf. Extract 7 and 8 above).

7.1.11 Extract 13: (Q. 04: 06)

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ **(Q. 04: 06)**

Table 15 Translations of Extract 13

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
And afflict the orphans **until they have reached** [the age of] marriage	And test the orphans [in their abilities] until they reach marriageable age.	Test orphans until they reach marriageable age;	Keep a close check on orphans until they reach a marriageable age,

All three translations have rendered the euphemism with the phrase: 'marriageable age'. They have literally translated the intended meaning which encompasses the euphemistic function as well. In their translations, there is no clear hint concerning sexual potency which by definition makes it a euphemistic translation. However, co-textual links may have given readers further indications that what is meant here is sexual potency as T1 has used the phrase "in their abilities", and "Keep a close check on" in T3. This may have caused respondents to give 11 responses to both T1 and T3 whilst T2 received nine responses.

7.1.12 Extract 14: (Q. 04:21)

وكيف تأخذونه وقد أفضى بعضكم إلى بعض وأخذن منكم ميثاقا غليظا (Q. 04:21)

Table 16 Translations of Extract 14

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
and how do you take it when **some of you has reached the other** and they [wives] have taken from you a thick [solemn] oath	And how could you take it **while you have gone in unto each other** and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?	How could you take it **when you have lain with each other** and they have taken a solemn pledge from you?	How could you take it **when you have been intimate with one another** and they have made a binding contract with you?

All the three translations have translated this Qur'ānic euphemism idiomatically using three English euphemisms. T1 has used an established biblical euphemism for having sexual intercourse which did not receive many responses (only three responses) unlike euphemism 1A in verse (Q. 02:

187) which was translated with a biblical euphemism and received the most responses. T2 uses another euphemism (i.e. 'to lie with') which is marked as an obsolete expression in dictionaries, yet it received 11 responses. T3 is a euphemism that sounds perfect; it conveys both the intended and euphemistic meanings, yet in a contemporary aesthetic style. Hence, unsurprisingly it received 11 responses too.

7.1.13 Extract 15: (Q. 04:23)

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ

(Q. 04:23)

Table 17 Translations of Extract 15

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
From your women whom you have entered into	Prohibited to you [for marriage] are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your [milk] mothers who nursed you, your sisters through nursing, your wives' mothers, and your step-daughters under your guardianship [born] **of your wives unto whom you have gone in.**	You are forbidden to take as wives your mothers, daughters, sisters, paternal and maternal aunts, the daughters of brothers and daughters of sisters, your milk-mothers and milk-sisters, your wives' mothers, the stepdaughters in your care— those **born of women with whom you have consummated marriage,**	Haram for you are: your mothers and your daughters and your sisters, your maternal aunts and your paternal aunts, your brothers' daughters and your sisters' daughters, your foster mothers who have suckled you, your foster sisters by suckling, your wives' mothers, your stepdaughters who are under your protection: the daughters of your wives **whom you have had sexual relations with**

In this instance, there is a great variety in the three translations. T1 has idiomatically rendered the euphemism using an established biblical

euphemistic translation but has only received three responses. T2 has translated the phrase semantically attempting a euphemistic translation using a general expression (i.e. marriage) and received the highest response among the three translations: 13 responses. T2 used the technique of generalisation, employing a hypernym (marriage), instead of one of its hyponyms (sexual intercourse). The reader's attention is directed towards focusing on the overall meaning so that the taboo component becomes less obvious. The euphemism used in T2 is a well-established TL expression and clearly refers to the first experience of marital intercourse. However, T3 has used a more obvious translation, "sexual relations" receiving a response from five participants. The euphemistic function was obliterated by the inclusion of the word "sexual" which is found to be used in euphemistic expressions in many instances throughout the collected data.

7.1.14 Extract 16: (Q. 04: 24)

والمُحصَناتُ من النِّساء إلَا ما ملكتْ أيمانُكُم ۚ كتاب اللـه عليْكُم ۚ وأُحلَ لكُم ما وراء ذُلكُم أن تبْتغُوا بأمْوالكُم مُحصنين غيْرَ

مُسافحين (16A) فَما اسْتمْتعْتُم به مِنهُن (16B) فآتُوهُنَ أجُورهُنَ فريضة (Q. 04: 24)

Table 18 Translations of Extract 16

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- not shedding liquid on a lower surface (16A) - then what you have enjoyed from them (16B)	And [also prohibited to you are all] married women except those your right hands possess. [This is] the decree of Allah upon you. And lawful to you are [all others] beyond these, [provided] that you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property, desiring chastity, **not unlawful sexual intercourse (16A)**. **So for whatever you enjoy [of**	women already married, other than your slaves, God has ordained all this for you. Other women are lawful to you, so long as you seek them in marriage, with gifts from your property, looking for wedlock **rather than fornication (16A). If you wish to enjoy women through marriage (16B)**, give them their bride-gift—	And also married women, except for those you have taken in war as slaves. This is what Allah has prescribed for you. Apart from that He has made all other women halal for you provided you seek them with your wealth in marriage **and not in fornication (16A). When you consummate your marriage with them (16B)** give them their

	marriage] from them (16B), give them their due compensation as an obligation.		prescribed dowry.

For euphemism 16A, T1 has attempted a euphemistic semantic translation which could hold valid had it not used the word 'sexual'. T2 and T3 have both literally translated it using the word 'fornication' which sounds dysphemistic rather. It seems that the euphemism was not recognised by the translators of T2 and T3 who rendered it literally with its dysphemistic sense. The latter two translators have only recognised the dysphemistic sense which the word *sifāḥ* (i.e. fornication) has acquired. It is surprising therefore that questionnaire respondents have given T2 and T3 10 and 11 responses while T1 received only three responses.

Euphemism 16B was recognised by all three translators but two different translation techniques were adopted: literal and semantic. T1 and T2 have rendered the SL euphemistic expression literally by means of another euphemism. T3 has gone further than literality by using a more idiomatic euphemism which reads euphemistically too.

7.1.15 Extract 17: (Q. 04:25)

ومن لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنكُمْ طَوْلًا أَن يَنكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُم مِّن فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۚ وَاللَّـهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُم

بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ (17A)

فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَّ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنكُمْ (17B) وَأَن تَصْبِرُوا

خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّـهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (Q. 04:25)

Table 19 Translations of Extract 17

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- **Not taking paramours (17A)** - **That is for those among you who fear**	So marry them with the permission of their people and give them their due compensation according to what is acceptable. [They	so marry them with their people's consent and their proper bride-gifts. [Make them] married women, not adulteresses or	Marry them with their owners' permission and give them their dowries correctly and courteously as married women, not

| [getting into] (17B) hardship | should be] chaste, neither [of] those who commit unlawful intercourse randomly **nor those who take [secret] lovers (17A).** But once they are sheltered in marriage, if they should commit adultery, then for them is half the punishment for free [unmarried] women. This [allowance] is **for him among you who fears sin (17B),** but to be patient is better for you. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. | **lovers (17A).** If they commit adultery when they are married, their punishment will be half that of free women. This is **for those of you who fear that you will sin; (17B)** it is better for you to practise self-restraint. God is most forgiving and merciful. | in fornication or **taking them as lovers (17A).** When they are married, if they commit fornication they should receive half the punishment of free women. This is for **those of you who are afraid of committing fornication (17B).** But being patient is better for you. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. |

Euphemism 17A was literally translated in T1 and T3 rendering *muttakhidhāt* with inflections of the verb 'to take' and *'akhdān* using 'lovers'. T1, adding the word 'secret' in brackets, has more accurately rendered the SL expression than the other two translations. However, this version did not seem to have appealed to the questionnaire participants as it has only received five responses. Similarly, T3 has a formal correspondence with the ST but received a higher number of responses: eight. T2, however, translated the euphemism with the word 'lovers' employing ellipsis and received the highest score with 10 responses. T1 and T3 have adopted a literal translation for rendering the euphemism while T2 has taken a freer approach. Nonetheless, all three versions are viewed as euphemistic and this discrepancy in reader response could have been attributed to differences in personal taste.

Euphemism 17B was literally translated with a euphemism in T1 and T2 which employ the word 'sin' for 'anat. They have adopted the same technique used in the ST i.e. generalisation. They received responses of 13 and 10 respectively. Interestingly, T3 has ignored the euphemistic function of the word and has opted to render the word overtly using 'fornication'. The translator has thus translated the euphemism in the ST with a dysphemism that bears the same referential meaning but with opposite connotations; hence a response of six.

7.1.16 Extract 18: (Q.04: 34)

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاء بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ

اللَّهُ (18A) وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ(18B) (Q.04: 34)

Table 20 Translations of Extract 18

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- **Guarding the unseen [or the secret] by [according to] what Allah has guarded (18A)** - **And neglect them in the sleep places (18B)**	Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, **guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard (18A).** But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], **forsake them in bed; (18B)**	Husbands should take good care of their wives, with [the bounties] God has given to some more than others and with what they spend out of their own money. Righteous wives are devout and **guard what God would have them guard in their husbands' absence (18A).** If you fear high-handedness from your wives, remind them [of the teachings of God], **then ignore them when you go to bed, (18B)**	Men have charge of women because Allah has preferred the one above the other and because they spend their wealth on them. Right-acting women are obedient, **safeguarding their husbands' interests in their absence as Allah has guarded them (18A).** If there are women whose disobedience you fear, you may admonish them, **refuse to sleep with them, (18B)**

For euphemism 18A, all three translations have to a great extent adopted the same technique used in the ST i.e. generalisation. They have incorporated the same circumlocutory style in their translations which could be considered a form of literal translation closely following the form used in the ST. However, T3 has attempted a more circumlocutory translation, paraphrasing the intended meaning and adding the phrase "their husbands' interests" for *al-ghayb* which is quite a good euphemistic rendering. By adopting this literal procedure, all three translations have successfully rendered both the intended meaning and the euphemistic expression. Informant scores do not vary much this time with 11, 14, and nine responses for T1, T2 and T3 respectively.

As for euphemism 18B, this was approached differently in each case. It was translated literally in T1 with the word 'forsake' for *'uhjurūhunna*. T2 has used a semantic translation employing the word 'ignore' which succeeds in conveying the same meaning as the SL euphemism with the SL euphemism and the one used in T2 being functionally equivalent. However, T3 has used a euphemism which could be misunderstood by some readers. The phrase 'to sleep with' is an established euphemism for 'having sexual relations with' and is a very common euphemism in English; yet there is potential for misunderstanding by an international readership. That is, someone might interpret this phrase literally, understanding that a husband should refuse to physically share the same bed with his wife, whilst someone else might understand that a husband may share a bed with his wife but should refuse to have sexual relations if approached by his spouse. Indeed, the word 'refuse' has added a meaning that is not found in the ST verse.

Concluding discussion regarding the translations of this verse, T1 has rendered the euphemism literally, receiving 10 responses while T2 has employed a semantic translation receiving nine responses but both versions have successfully communicated the semantic and euphemistic meanings. T3 has deviated from the formal structure but has conveyed a euphemistic meaning by means of a semantic translation which scored eight responses.

These variations in rendering the ST could be attributed to the reliance of translators on different exegetical opinions.

7.1.17 Extract 19: (Q. 04: 43)

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّـهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا **(Q. 04: 43)**

Table 21 Translations of Extract 19

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
or you have touched the women	O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying or in a state of janabah, except those passing through [a place of prayer], until you have washed [your whole body]. And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself **or you have contacted women** and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands [with it]. Indeed, Allah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving.	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.	You who have iman! do not approach the prayer when you are drunk, so that you will know what you are saying, nor in a state of major impurity – unless you are travelling – until you have washed yourselves completely. If you are ill or on a journey, or any of you have come from the lavatory or **touched women**, and you cannot find any water, then do tayammum with pure earth, wiping your faces and your hands. Allah is Ever-Pardoning, Ever-Forgiving.

A significant aspect of euphemism translation that needs to be assessed firstly is whether the translator has recognised the euphemistic function within the verse. As already mentioned in Chapter Six in the textual and contextual analysis of this extract, the euphemistic phrase has been interpreted in two different ways. If the translator is following an exegetical opinion that does not recognise a euphemism in the expression, then there is no need to evaluate the translation with regards to this euphemistic function. However, in T3, the translator may have realised that the expression in this case euphemistic but chose to render it literally in the hope that the translation would still retain this euphemistic aspect. This technique seems to have worked as questionnaire respondents were able to recognise the euphemistic function in this translation and gave it eight responses.

T1 seems to have recognised the euphemistic use of the word *lāmas* ('to touch'), and hence used the word 'contacted' in this version. Yet, although one can argue that the translator could have made the euphemism clearer by adding the adverb 'physically', this choice corresponds to what Warren (1992) refers to as 'novel contextual meaning', a process in which words in some contexts acquire new meanings different to those found in the usual context. In other words, co-textually the different senses of the word 'contacted' could be minimised to imply sexual relations as the word itself inherently involves touching or proximity in this co-text. T2 has also recognised the euphemistic expression and translated it euphemistically. The euphemism used, however, is an established one but is clipped here. In other words, the euphemism is usually worded as 'sexual intercourse' but has been clipped here, appearing without the adjective 'sexual'. The fact that this translation scored the least number of responses could indicate that the well-known euphemism of "intercourse" has already started to decline in its euphemistic sense, experiencing what is referred to as 'euphemism treadmill'.

7.1.18 Extract 20: (Q. 06:152)

ولا تَقرَبوا مال الْيَتيم إلا بالْتي هي أخسَنُ حَتَّى يَبلُغَ أشدَّه (Q. 06:152)

Table 22Translations of Extract 20

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
until he reaches his peak	And do not approach the orphan's property except in a way that is best until he reaches maturity.	Stay well away from the property of orphans, except with the best [intentions], until they come of age;	And that you do not go near the property of orphans **before they reach maturity**

The ST euphemistic expression is metaphorical. T1 and T3 have translated the euphemism semantically using the phrase 'reach/es maturity' whereas T2 has used an idiomatic expression that is established in the TL. T1 and T3 are considered semantic because they have rendered the word 'ashuddahu (a keyword in the SL euphemism) by using the term 'maturity' which is a semantic rather than a literal rendering of the SL word. All three translations have recognised the euphemistic expression and did not deal with the ST literally. Had they dealt with this metaphorical expression literally, this would have produced either a case of mistranslation or a translation that makes no sense at all. Questionnaire respondents gave 13, nine, and eight responses for the translations respectively.

7.1.19 Extract 21: (Q.07:189)

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغْشَّاهَا (21A) حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا (21B) فَمَرَّتْ

بِهِ (Q.07:189)

Table 23 Translations of Extract 21

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- **When he covered her (21A)** - **she carried a light load (21B)**	It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he might dwell in security with her. And when he covers her (21A), she carries a light	It is He who created you all from one soul, and from it made its mate so that he might find comfort in her: when one [of them] lies with his wife (21A) and she	It is He who created you from a single self and made from him his spouse so that he might find repose in her. Then when he covered her (21A) she bore a light load (21B)

	burden (21B) and continues therein.	conceives a light burden, (21B) going about freely,	and carried it around.

Two euphemisms are found in this verse: *falammā taghashshāha* (21A) and *ḥamalat ḥamlan khafīfan* (21B) literally: 'when he covered her' and 'she carried a light burden' respectively. T1 and T3 have both rendered euphemism (21A) literally using the equivalent dictionary word for *taghashshā* ('to cover'). T2 has used a TL euphemism that conveys the same meaning but is not formally equivalent to the SLT euphemism. Translators typically resort to this technique when the literal rendering of the euphemism would result in mistranslation or a non-euphemistic translation. T1 and T3 have resorted to a literal translation which is not an established euphemism in the TL and both ran the risk that readers might miss the intended meaning. Fortunately, T1 has provided a footnote explaining that an allusion to sexual intercourse was intended.

Euphemism (21B) was again literally translated in T1 and T3 using 'to carry' and 'to bear' for the Arabic verb hamal and 'burden' and 'load' for the noun haml. It can be argued that their rendering is euphemistic since the same degree of ambiguity found in the ST is maintained in the translation. T2 has used the verb 'to conceive' which is closely linked with pregnancy. This is a semantic translation procedure, but keeping the phrase 'light burden' in the translation still helps to maintain the euphemistic function created by the ambiguity. Respondents have given T1 nine responses while T2 and T3 both received 11 responses. Once again, variation could be attributed to the personal preferences of respondents as there is no linguistic variation noticed between the three translations.

7.1.20 Extract 22: (Q. 11: 72)

قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَىٰ أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَٰذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ (Q. 11: 72)

Table 24 Translations of Extract 22

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)

and this is my husband; an old man	She said, "Woe to me! Shall I give birth while I am an old woman and this, my husband, is an old man? Indeed, this is an amazing thing!"	She said, 'Alas for me! How am I to bear a child when I am an old woman, and my husband here is an old man? That would be a strange thing!'	She said, 'Woe is me! How can I give birth when I am an old woman and my husband here is an aged man? This is indeed an astonishing thing!'

In rendering this euphemistic expression, the three translations have adopted a literal procedure that follows the SL form as well. T1 and T2 have both used the phrase 'old man' for the Arabic shaykhun kabīr which according to the dictionaries consulted, means a man over 50 or a man on whom signs of aging have appeared (Ibn Manzūr 1980; al-Fayrūz'abādi 1884). Despite this, the translations have managed to avoid the potentially distasteful reference to impotence employing the same technique found in the SL text i.e. metonymy. Respondents have given T1 eight responses, T2 nine responses while T3 received 11 responses which could be attributed to the use of the word 'aged' instead of 'old'.

Extracts 23-26:

The following four verses are taken from two different sūrahs but since they both deal with the story of Lot and his people, they have been presented together here.

7.1.21 Extracts 23 and 24: (Q. 11:78) and (Q. 15:67

(Q. 11:78) (23) وَجَاءَهُ قَوْمُهُ يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

(Q. 15:67) (24) وَجَاءَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

Table 25 Translations of Extracts 23 and 24

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- they used to do evil deeds, (23) - and came the people of the	- And his people came hastening to him, and before [this]	- His people came rushing towards him; they used to	- His people came running to him excitedly – they were

city rejoicing (24)	they had been doing evil deeds. (23) - And the people of the city came rejoicing (24)	commit foul deeds. (23) - The people of the town came along, revelling, (24)	long used to committing evil acts. (23) - The people of the city came, exulting at the news. (24)

For euphemism 23, the translators have used literal translation to render the euphemism *al-sayyi'āt* with the expressions 'evil deeds', 'foul deeds', and 'evil acts'. This literal rendering has maintained the same linguistic technique adopted for the formation of the SL euphemism i.e. hypernym-hyponym technique. Although all three translations have avoided suggesting the culturally sensitive issue of homosexuality, it is quite difficult for the TL reader to deduce the intended meaning from the expressions used in the translations without knowing the contextual background to the verse. A useful procedure in this case would be to add a footnote to explain the intended meaning clearly. In this instance all the translations received the same score of 10 responses.

Euphemism 24 was dealt with in a similar manner to euphemism 23. T1 and T2 have adopted a literal approach to translation, reflecting the formal structure of the ST with two lexical choices: 'rejoicing' and 'revelling' respectively. T3 has opted for a semantic translation adding the phrase 'at the news' which further explicates on their intentions. Respondents have given T1 and T3 scores of 10 and 11 respectively whereas T3 received nine responses.

7.1.22 Extracts 25 and 26: (Q. 15:71) and (Q. 11:79)

قَالَ هَؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِن كُنتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ (25) (Q. 15:71)

قَالُوا لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيذُ (26) (Q. 11:79)

Table 26 Translations of Extracts 25 and 26

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- If you are doing. (25) - verily you know what we want (26)	- [Lot] said, "These are my daughters - if you would be doers [of lawful marriage]. (25) - They said, "You have already known that we have not concerning your daughters any claim, and indeed, you know what we want." (26)	- He said, 'My daughters are here, if you must.' (25) - They said, 'You know very well that we have no right to your daughters. **You know very well what we want.'** (26)	- He said, 'Here are my daughters if you are determined to do something. (25) - They said, 'You know we have no claim on your daughters. **You know very well what it is we want.'** (26)

Euphemism 25 has been translated in a variety of ways. T1 has translated it in a very formal literal way but in order to avoid any misunderstanding caused by the ellipsis employed in the SL expression, the translator added comments in parenthesis to make the meaning clearer. As compared to the other two translations, this translation was given a surprisingly high score of responses: nine. T2 has duplicated the elliptic style of the SL idiomatically creating a clever euphemism that corresponds with the TL rules too, yet respondents have only given it five responses. T3 however, has translated the euphemistic phrase with another semantic and euphemistic translation, adopting a circumlocutory manner and using the key word 'something' as a euphemistic marker. The lack of specificity evoked by the word 'something'

reflects the cautious attitude towards the term 'homosexuality' and the desire to avoid mentioning this. Even so, respondents have given T3 only four responses.

Euphemism 26 has been dealt with very similarly in all three translations, with the translators literally rendering the expression and following the same technique used in the SL to create an equivalent euphemistic expression in the TL i.e. generalisation. However, there are some differences in their literal translation. T1 has very much followed the SL structure and received 12 responses while T2 and T3 have produced versions that expressed the SL emphatic 'inna using the adverbial 'very well' and received 9 responses each.

Extract 27: Q. (12:23)

وَرَاوَدَتْهُ (A) الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَغَلَّقَتِ الأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ (B) قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ (Q. 12:23)

Table 27 Translations of Extract 27

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
- Literally untranslatable (27A) - Come (27B)	And she, in whose house he was, **sought to seduce him.** (27A) She closed the doors and said, **"Come, you."** (27B) He said, "[I seek] the refuge of Allah. Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed."	The woman in whose house he was living **tried to seduce him:** (27A) she bolted the doors and said, **'Come to me,'** (27B) and he replied, 'God forbid! My master has been good to me; wrongdoers never prosper.'	The woman whose house it was **solicited him.** (27A) She barred the doors and said, **'Come over here!'** (27B) He said, 'Allah is my refuge! He is my lord and has been good to me with where I live. Those who do wrong will surely not succeed.'

Two euphemisms are found in this verse: *wa rāwadat-hu* (27A) and *hayta lak* (27B). Euphemism 27A is translated as 'seduced', 'solicited', or 'allured' in most Qur'ānic translations, all verbs which hint at an offer of unlawful sex

without this being explicitly worded. The first verb is used more excessively in sex-related contexts especially when a female agent is involved in the action. T1 and T2 have directly translated the euphemism with the verb 'seduced'. Nevertheless, T1 has used the verb "sought to" in order to compensate for the action of repetition imbedded in the SL verb rāwadat-hu. What these two translations provided is very much a translation of the intended meaning rather than looking for an equivalent euphemism to convey this meaning. Interestingly, respondents gave T1 10 responses while T2 only received six. T3 scored seven responses and has also adhered to the semantic meaning using the verb 'solicited' which denotes how the woman earnestly craved for Yūsuf. All translations can be considered semantic in this instance.

Unlike euphemism 27A, 27B seems to have been consciously dealt with as a euphemism. All three translations have included the verb 'to come' in their translation of the Arabic hayta. However, none of their semantic renderings was precise enough to convey the sense of seduction in the phrase hayta lak. For the English reader this dialogue sounds like a conversation between a domineering woman and a chaste man while the SL expression sounds more seductive. Respondents have therefore given the translations five, eight and eight responses respectively.

7.1.23 Extract 28: (Q. 12:24)

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ (Q. 12:24)

Table 28 Translations of Extract 28

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
she had wanted him and he wanted her	And she certainly determined [to seduce] him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord.	She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her if he had not seen evidence of his Lord.	She wanted him and he would have wanted her, had he not seen the Clear Proof of his Lord

All three translations in this instance have followed the exegetical opinion which posits that Yūsuf did not yield to the woman's seduction. However, the translators have differentiated between the words hammat and hamma, as is clearly seen in their translations. T1, for example, has used the verb 'to seduce' for the first and 'to incline to her' for the second one and received nine responses. T2 did not follow the SL structure but scored 11 responses for a creatively euphemistic version. T3, however, is a direct literal translation using the verb 'to want' in both instances, and it received only six responses. To recapitulate, three translation procedures are found here. The first in T1 uses a semantic translation technique which adheres to the meaning of the SL with a minimal adherence to the euphemistic function. The second technique was literal translation which follows both the literal meaning and the structure of the SL as in T3. The third procedure is reflected in T2 which adopted an idiomatic sort of a translation. All three translations are considered euphemistic in this instance.

7.1.24 Extract 29: (Q. 12: 25)

وَاسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِنْ دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَى الْبَابِ ۚ قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ

يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (Q. 12: 25)

Table 29 Translations of Extract 29

Literal Translation	Saheeh (T1)	Abdel Haleem (T2)	Bewley (T3)
Who had wanted [to do] evil to your family	And they both raced to the door, and she tore his shirt from the back, and they found her husband at the door. She said, "What is the recompense of one **who intended evil for your wife** but that he be imprisoned or a painful punishment?"	They raced for the door– she tore his shirt from behind– and at the door they met her husband. She said, 'What, other than prison or painful punishment, should be the reward of someone **who tried to dishonour your wife**?'	They raced to the door. She tore his shirt at the back. They met her husband by the door. She said, 'How should a man **whose intention was to harm your family** be punished for what he did except with prison or painful punishment?'

T1 maintains the literal translation strategy, the most commonly adopted one found in the data analysed so far. The word sū˙ was translated directly using its dictionary equivalent: 'evil'. Unfortunately, this literal rendering removes the intended euphemistic sense because of the negative connotations of the TL word 'evil'. For this reason T1 seems to have received a lower response of eight compared to the other two translations. T2 has adopted another method for rendering this euphemism. In this case the translator seems to have understood the intended meaning and then reworded this using a term that is generic enough to include the SL word connotation, using generalisation. This semantic translation has definitely succeeded in producing a TT with a similar euphemistic function to that of the SL and thus scores the highest number of responses here: 12. T3, however, seems to have deviated from exegetical opinion on the interpretation of the verse since the translation reads like a literal one which has been paraphrased. Although it could be understood from T3 that the word 'harm' used in the translation could refer to the shame that might affect the Minister's family, the literal meaning of 'harm' i.e. 'physical damage' is more likely to overwhelm the former meaning. It has received a score of 10 responses, nonetheless.

Conclusion

This chapter has descriptively analysed the chosen sample of translations for the SL euphemistic expressions which were analysed in Chapter Six. The translations were textually analysed and the questionnaire results were also used to support these textual findings. It has been found that the most often adopted procedures are literal and semantic translations. Idiomatic and free translations were made in fewer instances as Tables 30, 31 and 32 in the appendices section show. The final chapter provides a more detailed summary of all the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 8. Conclusion

The final chapter of this thesis provides a summary and a review of the content of the study together with a discussion of the results and findings of the research. It also identifies implications for future work in this field, highlighting some of the limitations of this study, and recommending areas for future investigation.

8.1 Overview of the Study

This study focused on the translation of Qur'ānic sex-related euphemisms into English with the aim of investigating how three contemporary translations of the Qur'ān have dealt with this linguistic phenomenon. Qur'ānic euphemisms are envisaged in this study as functional utterances, used to achieve certain effects on the reader. The spectrum of translation strategies has two extremes: TL-oriented translation which largely conforms to TL norms and culture, and SL-oriented translation which tends to retain much more of the SL structure. Qur'ānic euphemisms are assessed here as a means of exploring what this reveals about the relative success of different translation strategies in rendering sensitive ST material.

As initially hypothised, euphemism enjoys some degree of universality with both Arabic and English euphemising a number of similar themes. Although these two languages vary both in terms of their reasons for using euphemistic expressions and the range of categories these cover, the theme of sex is euphemised in both languages. Since the Qur'ān never bluntly addresses sensitive issue including sex, Qur'ānic discourse proves to be a good source for studying this linguistic element. An initial data collection phase identified a large number of verses which were found to contain sex-related euphemisms. Yet, the decision was made to focus on just over a third of the whole sections of the Qur'ān since the available time frame was not sufficient to allow analysis of cover all the relevant expressions.

The functional approach of this study has combined three key translation theories: Skopos, equivalence and response-oriented. Skopos theory was

chosen because it theorises purpose-based translation. Within the Skopos paradigm, Nord's version of the theory was chosen as the primary theoretical framework since it values both SL and TL unlike other scholarly attempts within the Skopos paradigm which are solely TL-oriented. Along with this theory, elements of Nida's and Newmark's versions of equivalence and response-based theories were also used. This led to the inclusion of a questionnaire to gauge reader satisfaction with the sample of translations of euphemisms. It was argued that given the unique status which the Qur'ān holds for Muslims, the ST could not be matched by any translation. Therefore, non-equivalence could be said to occur at both a macro- and a micro-level due to some linguistic and cultural challenges.

The data which was collected from sections 1-12 of the Qur'ān covers 12 out of its 30 sections. Although analysis had identified a large number of euphemistic expressions related to a wide spectrum of themes in the Qur'ān, the focus was directed solely towards sex-related euphemisms. Textual analysis of the relevant sections was carried out using both classical Arabic dictionaries and *Tafsīr* books mainly those which had approached Qur'ānic text linguistically in order to establish the relevance to the study criteria of the collected euphemisms. At this stage, a number of expressions were eliminated from the data since consensual agreement had not been firmly established among commentators with regards to their euphemistic function.

Three translations have been chosen as subjects for our analysis: Saheeh-International (1997), Abdel Haleem (2005), and Bewley (2005). These translations were textually analyzed, and questionnaire feedback was sought to support this textual analysis. The questionnaire was sent out to hundreds of potential Qur'ān translation readers but perhaps due to its unavoidable length only 14 responses were received.

Key Findings:

Although the major focus of the research was analysis of data elicited from the Qur'ān and three Qur'ān translations, the study has revealed a number of interesting findings in relation not only to translation practices but also to nature of Qur'ānic exegetical discourse. It was discovered that a similar

euphemistic style was an omnipresent feature used by *Tafsīr* commentators when consulting relevant exegetical books. They frequently used circumlocutory expressions in their discourse when referring to and explaining sex-related euphemisms in the Qur'ān. This could be said to reflect the deeply rooted tendency towards avoidance of mentioning culturally sensitive issues.

Two of the three translations which were chosen as the TL data source were produced by Muslim converts whose first language was English (T1 and T3). The third one (T2) was done by a scholar of Arabic with a proven knowledge of the special linguistic patterns of the Qur'ān. In creating his translation however he consulted his students who were native speakers of English. Having done so, his translation gained the highest number of votes by questionnaire respondents. Therefore, in addition to linguistic expertise, knowledge about the sciences of the Qur'ān can be said to facilitate a more accurate rendering of the text. Textual analysis of T2, which tended to present a translation that enjoyed a freer style than the others, revealed it had not over-translated the text as would normally occur with free translation but rather made the text flow in an easy and natural manner.

Textual analysis of the chosen translations demonstrated that all three Qur'ān translators were very faithful in handling the process of translation as they had promised in the prefaces to their translations and in the interviews conducted. Although they tended to adhere to the SL structure and form rather than producing a TL-oriented translation, their translations conform to the TL-norms and read quite well. Yet, one of the specific difficulties the translators had faced was deciding how much information they should provide in their translations given that readers vary considerably in their knowledge about the Qur'ān and its content. This may explain why some translations are more detailed than others and why functional aspects of these translations vary accordingly.

With regards to translation procedures, a further key finding of this study is that most of the strategies involved in the process of translating sex-related euphemisms from Qur'ānic Arabic into English reflect a strong tendency towards adherence to the ST. The predominant procedure noted throughout

the data analysis was literality with a few instances where other procedures were followed such as idiomatic and free translations. Thus, literal procedures could be classified into two types in this study: formal correspondence and literal translation. Formal correspondence (similar to what Nida (2000) refers to as literalness of form) occurs when the translator follows the same linguistic technique adopted in the formation of the SL euphemism, namely generalisation. In literal translation, however, the translator renders the euphemistic expression using the most common dictionary meaning.

It was observed in the analysis that literality worked efficiently in fulfilling the euphemistic effect in the translations which could be attributed to the fact that euphemisms are often created by procedures such as generalisation which is lexical-based. Therefore, when the same method is re-used in translation it often produces the same effect as the original. However, when the euphemistic function is the result of a metaphor or metonymy which are paralexical features, literality is more likely to betray the euphemistic function since in the SL this was produced by a non-lexical feature. In other words, when the intended meaning is direct, it can be elicited by a surface interpretation of the text (i.e. literality) but when meaning is made by virtue of an idiomatic use of the language, a less superficial approach is required when interpreting the ST and when creating a functional translation. Therefore, literal translation technique should not be automatically eliminated from the translator's options as generally recommended since in certain circumstances it can be a very effective procedure.

The translation procedures followed in the three Qur'ān translations which were analysed suggest that the translations are SL-oriented since both the literal and semantic translation procedures which were adopted in most instances are SL-oriented, while in fewer instances TL-oriented procedures were followed. These included idiomatic translation using Biblical euphemisms or a non-Biblical established euphemism, and free translation in which the translator employed ellipsis, for instance, deviating from formal equivalence as shown in Table 30.

One of the more innovative aspects of this study is the incorporation of data relating to reader assessment of the translations which was elicited by Questionnaire. This provided a valuable addition to the QTQA (i.e. Qur'an Translation Quality Assessment) since it gauged the reactions of a sample of the real target readership to the translations. Respondent feedback generally concurred with the textual analysis except for a small number of cases in which personal taste or familiarity with a certain translation could have been the reason why some translations scored fewer votes. I observed on a number of occasions that T3 was judged less favourably than the preceding two translations, even though it had rendered the euphemistic function just as accurately. This could be attributed to the order in which the translation was presented (as the third and the final option) which may have influenced respondents' feedback. Nevertheless, questionnaire results show that target readers were generally satisfied with translations of the sample of sex-related Qur'ānic euphemisms into English. Overall T1 received a total of 310 votes, T2 339, while T3 gained 280 responses. These scores should not be understood as reflecting how good or bad the translations were but rather indicating whether these translations have functionally rendered the expressions as sex-related euphemisms.

With regards to Qur'ānic euphemism translation, the translation process followed a particular manner. Based on the analysis conducted, I have devised the following model which summarizes the Qur'ānic euphemism translation process:

Diagram 1 Euphemism Translation Model
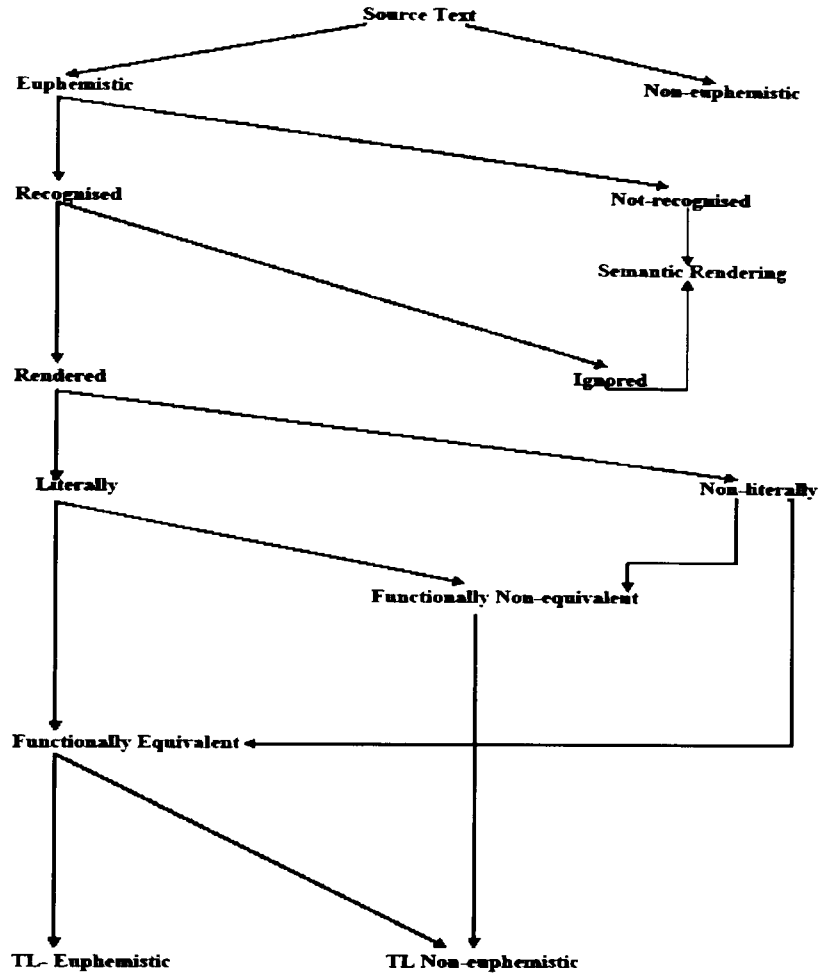
The diagram shows that euphemistic expressions can go unnoticed by translators. When this happens and translators fail to recognise the euphemistic effect in the SL expression, the result is a semantic translation which renders the meaning without conveying the euphemistic function produced by the formal structure of the SL. However, this could also be attributed to the translator having followed an exegetical opinion that had interpreted the verse differently. An example of this is found in verse 2 when

T2 adopted a literal rendering supported by an exegetical opinion that advocated the literal meaning of the word *rafath*.

When a translator recognises the euphemistic function of the SL expression, he or she may choose to either translate it euphemistically or ignore the euphemistic expressions and render them semantically instead. When the translator translates semantically, the intended meaning is conveyed in plain words that ignore its aesthetic and connotative meanings. Data analysis showed that in most cases when the translator goes for translating the expressions euphemistically, these are rendered literally. As illustrated in the diagram, fewer instances were translated non-literally. For example, some SL expressions were translated with a TL euphemistic expression; some of which drew on biblical language while others were idiomatic.

8.2 Limitations of the Study and Recommendations:

The functional approach adopted in this study made it possible to examine the euphemism as a linguistic variation produced to fulfil a certain function. However, creating a theoretically sound comprehensive approach towards assessing the quality of Qur'ān translations is a highly complex task and would require further scholarly efforts sponsored by appropriate organizations in order to design a comprehensive assessment model which could be used for Qur'ān translation quality assessment to be known as QTQA.

Since the study has highlighted the fact that English is a rapidly changing language and due to the phenomenon of euphemism treadmill, there is real need to produce new translations or at least to revise the current versions so that each new generation can gain access to the original text in a version which best serves their linguistic needs. Moreover, since English is an international language which is most likely to provide access to those who are unable to read the Qur'ān in Arabic, different versions of translations are maybe required in order to cater for the individual needs of a broad range of readers.

Furthermore, since this study focused on the translation of sex-related euphemisms from the Classical Arabic of the Qur'ān into English, it was thus limited only to this pair of languages. Qur'ānic style is different from Modern

Standard Arabic and therefore these findings may not be generalised. Moreover, this study has restricted itself only to the theme of sex-related euphemisms which happened to be mutually euphemised in both these languages. Yet, this may not be the case with other themes. However, this thematic limitation made it possible to focus on making a detailed study investigating how these two languages cope with sensitive themes. Other themes could be considered for further studies, for example euphemisms relating to bodily functions.

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Appendices:

Table 30 A Summary of the Translation Procedures Used

Number	Euphemism	T 1	T 2	T 3
1.	الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُم	Semantic NE	Idiomatic E	Semantic NE
2.	هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُم وَأَنتُم لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
3.	فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ	Semantic E	Idiomatic E	Idiomatic NE
4.	وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّـهُ لَكُم	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
5.	تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
6.	فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
7.	فَلَا رَفَثَ	Semantic NE	NA	Semantic NE
8.	فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
9.	وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
10.	فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
11.	نِسَاؤُكُم حَرْثٌ لَكُم	Semantic E	Literal E	Literal E
12.	فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُم أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُم	Semantic E	Literal E	Literal E
13.	لِلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِسَائِهِم	Semantic NE	Semantic E	Semantic NE
14.	فَإِنْ فَاءُوا	Literal E	Literal E	Semantic E

15.	بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنكِحَ زَوْجًا	NA	NA	NA
16.	مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ	Literal E	Semantic E	Literal E
17.	قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ	Literal E	Semantic E	Literal E
18.	وَحَصُورًا	Semantic E	Literal E	Literal E
19.	بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ	Literal E	Semantic E	Literal E
20.	وَطَهَّرَكِ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
21.	يَمْسَسْنِي	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
22.	حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
23.	وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ	Idiomatic E Biblical	Idiomatic E	Idiomatic E
24.	مِن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ	Idiomatic E Biblical	Idiomatic E	Semantic NE
25.	غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ	Semantic NE	Literal NE	Literal NE
26.	فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ	Literal E	Literal E	Idiomatic E
27.	وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ	Literal E	Free (ellipsis) E	Literal E
28.	ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنكُمْ	Literal E	Literal E	Semantic NE
29.	حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّـهُ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
30.	وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ	Literal E	Semantic E	Semantic E

31.	أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ	Literal E	Free (ellipsis) E	Literal E
32.	حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ	Semantic E	Idiomatic E	Semantic E
33.	فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا	Literal E	Idiomatic E	Literal E
34.	حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا	Literal E	Semantic E	Literal E
35.	وَهَٰذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
36.	كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
37.	يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ	Literal E	Literal E	Semantic E
38.	إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ	Literal E	Idiomatic E	Semantic E
39.	وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ	Literal E	Literal E	Literal E
40.	وَرَاوَدَتْهُ	Semantic E	Semantic E	Semantic E
41.	هَيْتَ لَكَ	Semantic E	Semantic E	Semantic E
42.	وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا	Semantic E	Idiomatic E	Literal E
43.	مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا	Literal NE	Semantic E	Literal NE

Table 31 Translation Procedures Shown as Numbers

Literal E			Literal NE			Semantic E			Semantic NE			Idiomatic E			Idiomatic NE			Free (ellipsis) E		
72			3			24			8			11			1			2		
T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1
25	20	27	2	0	1	7	9	8	5	0	3	2	7	2	1	0	0	0	2	0

Table 32 Translation Procedures Shown in Percentages

Literal E			Literal NE			Semantic E			Semantic NE			Idiomatic E			Idiomatic NE			Free (ellipsis) E		
59.50%			2.48%			19.83%			6.61%			9.09%			0.83%			1.65%		
T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1	T3	T2	T1
20.66%	16.53%	22.31%	1.65%	0.00%	0.83%	5.79%	7.44%	6.61%	4.13%	0.00%	2.48%	1.65%	5.79%	1.65%	0.83%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.65%	0.00%

Politeness in Qur'an Translations

Assalam Alaikum Wa Rahmat Allah Wa Barakatuh It has been found that the Qur'an never elaborates on sensitive or distasteful themes such as sex or defecation but rather employs linguistic tools to deal with them; a linguistic phenomenon called euphemizing in English. This study hopes to assess whether such Qur'anic politeness has been conveyed in Qur'an translations. The following items are quoted from three published Qur'an translations as translations for (euphemistic expressions) verses which have dealt sex-related themes. Every item should have included a euphemistic expression to cater for the Qur'an politeness. The number of the verse is provided (e.g. Q. 02:187 = Surat Al-Baqara, Verse no. 187) and supporting text is provided to give some brief contextual background about the verse. However, if you further need more information about a specific verse and you think it could affect your answer, please refer back to the Qur'an and read the verse within its context. An exegetical book could also help to explicate on the verse even further. An on-line source of such is http://quran-tafsir.org/pdf.html which offers a commentary on most of the verses. You are kindly requested to tick the item or items which you feel reads polite or politically correct. You may tick as many in one single question if you think they are polite enough and are not harsh or embarrassing to read. Only the items which do not read as such should be left blank. When you feel you would like to add any comments please feel free to do so in the box provided tagged as 'Other'. This questionnaire could take 15 to 25 minutes, so kindly do it when you have enough time as the results will contribute to a research study findings. Your time is very much appreciated; may Allah SWT reward you for your precious time. Wa Assalam Alaikum Wa Rahmat Allah Wa Barakatuh Mohammed Al Barakati PhD Researcher, University of Leeds Email: malbarakati@ymail.com Mob. 07907274444

* Required

Which translation/s do you use more often? *Kindly mention name of translation/s or the translator/s

1- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02:187: The theme of the verse is having marital relations during the month of Ramadan

⌐ A- It has been made permissible for you the night preceding •
fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]

⌐ B- You [believers] are permitted to lie with your wives during the •
night of the fast

⌐ C- On the night of the fast it is lawful for you to have sexual •
relations with your wives

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

2- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02:187: A metaphor is used on having marital relations during the month of Ramadan

⌐ A- They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them. •

⌐ B- they are [close] as garments to you, as you are to them •

⌐ C-They are clothing for you and you for them •

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

ick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You
' tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02:187: Now it is
ved for men to approach their spouses for marital relations

A- So now, have relations with them and seek that which Allah •
decreed for you

B- Now you can lie with them- seek what God has ordained for •

⌐ C- Now you may have sexual intercourse with them and seek •
what Allah has written for you

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾‾ •

4- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You
may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02:187: This part
orders those who are being on i'tikaf not to have any sexual relations with
their wives.

⌐ A- These are the limits [set by] Allah, so do not approach them. •

⌐ B - These are the bounds set by God, so do not go near them. •

⌐ C - These are Allah's limits, so do not go near them •

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾‾ •

5- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You
may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02:197: The verse
states that during Hajj, there should be no marital relation or any sort of
(erotic) speech which may lead to that

⌐ A - Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj •
obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there
is [to be for him] no sexual relations

⌐ B - The pilgrimage takes place during the prescribed months. •
There should be no indecent speech

⌐ C - The hajj takes place during certain well-known months. If •
anyone undertakes the obligation of hajj in them, there must be no
sexual intercourse

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾‾ •

6- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 2:222: The theme of this part is having sexual relations while wives are on their times of the month

⌐ A - And they ask you about menstruation. Say, "It is harm, so •
keep away from wives during menstruation. And do not approach
them until they are pure. And when they have purified themselves,
then come to them from where Allah has ordained for you.

⌐ B - They ask you [Prophet] about menstruation. Say, •
'Menstruation is a painful condition, so keep away from women during
it. Do not approach them until they are cleansed; when they are
cleansed, you may approach them as God has ordained

⌐ C- They will ask you about menstruation. Say, 'It is an impurity, •
so keep apart from women during menstruation and do not approach
them until they have purified themselves. But once they have purified
themselves, then go to them in the way that Allah has enjoined on
you.

⌐ Other:⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

7-Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 2:223: This part likens one's wife to a cultivation field

⌐ A- Your wives are a place of sowing of seed for you, so come to •
your place of cultivation however you wish

⌐ B- Your wives are your fields, so go into your fields whichever •
way you like

⌐ C- Your women are fertile fields for you, so come to your fertile •
fields however you like.

⌐ Other:⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

8- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q.02: 226: This part deals with situations when some husbands may vow not to have marital relations (sexual intercourse) with their wives

Γ A- For those who swear not to have sexual relations with their •
wives is a waiting time of four months, but if they return [to normal relations] ...

Γ B- 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 ...

Γ C- Those who swear to abstain from sexual relations with their •
wives can wait for a period of up to four months . If they then retract their oath ...

Γ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

9- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 02: 236: The verse is dealing with divorce situations when husband never has had a sexual relation with his wife.

Γ A- There is no blame upon you if you divorce women you have •
not touched

Γ B- You will not be blamed if you divorce women when you have •
not yet consummated the marriage

Γ C- There is nothing wrong in your divorcing women before you •
have touched them

Γ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

10- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 03:39: Zachariah had asked Allah to give him "good offspring". Angels in this verse give him

glad tidings of what he had wished yet a son who never engages in sexual relations

⌐ A- Allah gives you good tidings of John, confirming a word from •
Allah and [who will be] honorable, abstaining [from women]

⌐ B- 'God gives you news of John, confirming a Word from God. He •
will be noble and chaste, a prophet

⌐ C- Allah gives you the good news of Yahya, who will come to •
confirm a Word from Allah, and will be a leader and a celibate

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾ •

11- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q.03:42: Angels tell Mary that she had been chosen among women and purified from the accusation of adultery said by the Jews.

⌐ A- And [mention] when the angels said, "O Mary, indeed Allah •
has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women
of the worlds.

⌐ B- The angels said to Mary: 'Mary, God has chosen you and •
made you pure: He has truly chosen you above all women.

⌐ C- And when the angels said, 'Maryam, Allah has chosen you •
and purified you. He has chosen you over all other women.

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾ •

12- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 03:47 and 19:20: Mary, pbuh, is bewildered how she would have a child without having had a relation with a man.

⌐ A- She said, "My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has •
touched me?

⌐   B- She said, 'My Lord, how can I have a son when no man has   •
touched me?'

⌐   C- My Lord! How can I have a son when no man has ever   •
touched me?

⌐   A- She said, "How can I have a boy while no man has touched   •
me and I have not been unchaste?"

⌐   B- She said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched   •
me? I have not been unchaste,'

⌐   C- She said, 'How can I have a boy when no man has touched   •
me and I am not an unchaste woman?

⌐   Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾‾   •

13- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used.
You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04:06: This
verse is concerned with dealing with orphans' money. It advocates that
guardians of orphans' money should test orphans maturity until they reach
the age of puberty.

⌐   A- And test the orphans [in their abilities] until they reach   •
marriageable age.

⌐   B- Test orphans until they reach marriageable age;   •

⌐   C- Keep a close check on orphans until they reach a   •
marriageable age

⌐   Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾‾   •

14- TTick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used.
You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q: 04:21: This

verse forbids husbands from taking back the dowry they had paid for their wives if they had already had a sexual relation with them

⌐ A- And how could you take it while you have gone in unto each •
other

⌐ B- How could you take it when you have lain with each other •

⌐ C- How could you take it when you have been intimate with one •
another

⌐ Other: |‾‾‾‾‾‾| •

15- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04:23: This verse enumerates women to whom marriage is prohibited such as sisters, mothers, aunts, nieces, step-daughters whose mothers have been engaged with in sexual relations.

⌐ A- and your step-daughters under your guardianship [born] of •
your wives unto whom you have gone in

⌐ B- the stepdaughters in your care– those born of women with •
whom you have consummated marriage,

⌐ C- the daughters of your wives whom you have had sexual •
relations with

⌐ Other: |‾‾‾‾‾‾| •

16- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04:24: This verse states that apart from the relatives mentioned in the previous verse, other women are lawful to marry

⌐ A- And lawful to you are [all others] beyond these, [provided] that •
you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property, desiring

chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse. So for whatever you enjoy [of marriage] from them

r   B- Other women are lawful to you, so long as you seek them in   •
marriage, with gifts from your property, looking for wedlock rather
than fornication. If you wish to enjoy women through marriage

r   C- He has made all other women halal for you provided you seek   •
them with your wealth in marriage and not in fornication. When you
consummate your marriage with them give them their prescribed
dowry.

r   Other: |‾‾‾‾‾| •

17- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04:25: The verse suggests that those who fear they would commit the sin of adultery but cannot financially afford to get married; they can marry bondmaids.

r   A- [They should be] chaste, neither [of] those who commit   •
unlawful intercourse randomly nor those who take [secret] lovers. But
once they are sheltered in marriage, if they should commit adultery,
then for them is half the punishment for free [unmarried] women.

r   B- so marry them with their people's consent and their proper   •
bride-gifts. [Make them] married women, not adulteresses or lovers. If
they commit adultery when they are married, their punishment will be
half that of free women.

r   C- Marry them with their owners' permission and give them their   •
dowries correctly and courteously as married women, not in
fornication or taking them as lovers. When they are married, if they
commit fornication they should receive half the punishment of free
women.

r   A- This [allowance] is for him among you who fears sin, but to be   •
patient is better for you.

r   B- This is for those of you who fear that you will sin.   •

⌐ C- This is for those of you who are afraid of committing •
fornication.

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾| •

18- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04: 34: The verse hints to situations when husbands are absent, and to the obligation casted upon women to guard their husbands' conjugal interests.

⌐ A- So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the •
husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard.So righteous
women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence
what Allah would have them guard

⌐ B- Righteous wives are devout and guard what God would have •
them guard in their husbands' absence

⌐ C- Right-acting women are obedient, safeguarding their •
husbands' interests in their absence as Allah has guarded them.

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾| •

19- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04: 34: This part of the verse is concerned with situations when a woman is feared to get refractory

⌐ A- But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise •
them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed

⌐ B- If you fear high-handedness from your wives, remind them [of •
the teachings of God], then ignore them when you go to bed' absence

⌐ C- If there are women whose disobedience you fear, you may •
admonish them, refuse to sleep with them

Γ Other: ⌐_____ •

20- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04: 43: This part is concerned with ritual impurity caused by having a sexual intercourse

Γ A- And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the • place of relieving himself or you have contacted women

Γ B- if you are ill, on a journey, have relieved yourselves, or had • intercourse

Γ C- If you are ill or on a journey, or any of you have come from the • lavatory or touched women

Γ Other: ⌐_____ •

21- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 04: 156: This verse tells that the Jews who had accused Mary of committing adultery were cursed

Γ A- And [We cursed them] for their disbelief and their saying • against Mary a great slander

Γ B- and because they disbelieved and uttered a terrible slander • against Mary

Γ C- And on account of their kufr, and their utterance of a • monstrous slander against Maryam

Γ Other: ⌐_____ •

22- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 06:152: This

verse orders orphans' guardians to use orphan's money or property only in a best manner that is likely to make it grow until the orphan becomes an adult.

☐ A- And do not approach the orphan's property except in a way • that is best until he reaches maturity.

☐ B- Stay well away from the property of orphans, except with the • best [intentions], until they come of age

☐ C- And that you do not go near the property of orphans before • they reach maturity

☐ Other: ☐ •

23- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 07: 189: The verse talks about Adam and Eve and that he had a relation with her she became pregnant.

☐ A- And when he covers her, she carries a light burden •

☐ B- when one [of them] lies with his wife and she conceives a light • burden

☐ C- Then when he covered her she bore a light load •

☐ Other: ☐ •

24- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 11:172: The verse tells what Abraham's wife said when she was told by the angels she would have a son

☐ A- this, my husband, is an old man? •

☐ B- I am an old woman, and my husband here is an old man? •

⌐ C- I am an old woman and my husband here is an aged man? •

⌐ Other:⌐‾‾‾‾‾⌐ •

24- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 11: 78: and Q. 15:67 tell how Lot's people who had been practising homosexuality reacted when they knew he had received good looking guests (angels disguised)

⌐ A- And his people came hastening to him, and before [this] they • had been doing evil deeds.

⌐ B- His people came rushing towards him; they used to commit • foul deeds.

⌐ C- His people came running to him excitedly – they were long • used to committing evil acts.

⌐ A- And the people of the city came rejoicing •

⌐ B- The people of the town came along, revelling, •

⌐ C- The people of the city came, exulting at the news. •

⌐ Other:⌐‾‾‾‾‾⌐ •

25- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 15:71: Lot offers his daughters for marriage to his people instead.

⌐ A- [Lot] said, "These are my daughters - if you would be doers [of • lawful marriage]."

⌐ B- He said, 'My daughters are here, if you must.' •

☐ C- He said, 'Here are my daughters if you are determined to do something.' •

☐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾ •

26- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 11:79: Lot's people decline his offer and tell him they want something else (i.e. to have relations with his guests).

☐ A- They said, "You have already known that we have not concerning your daughters any claim, and indeed, you know what we want." •

☐ B- They said, 'You know very well that we have no right to your daughters. You know very well what we want.' •

☐ C- They said, 'You know we have no claim on your daughters. You know very well what it is we want.' •

☐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾ •

27- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 12:23: This verse tells the story of Joseph with the minster's wife when tried to harass and seduce him

☐ A- And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him •

☐ B- The woman in whose house he was living tried to seduce him •

☐ C- The woman whose house it was solicited him. •

☐ A- She closed the doors and said, "Come, you." •

☐ B- she bolted the doors and said, 'Come to me,' •

⌐ C- She barred the doors and said, 'Come over here!' •

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

28- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 12:24: Joseph's story when the minster's wife who tried to harass and seduce him

⌐ A- And she certainly determined [to seduce] him, and he would • have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord.

⌐ B- She made for him, and he would have succumbed to her if he • had not seen evidence of his Lord

⌐ C- She wanted him and he would have wanted her, had he not • seen the Clear Proof of his Lord.

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

29- Tick the translation where you feel a polite expression is being used. You may tick as many statements as you feel applicable:Q. 12:25: The part of the story when he ran away from her and met her husband at the door

⌐ A- She said, "What is the recompense of one who intended evil • for your wife but that he be imprisoned or a painful punishment?"

⌐ B- She said, 'What, other than prison or painful punishment, • should be the reward of someone who tried to dishonour your wife?'

⌐ C- She said, 'How should a man whose intention was to harm • your family be punished for what he did except with prison or painful punishment?'

⌐ Other: ⌐‾‾‾‾‾ •

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