

# Impediments in Translating the Holy Qur'ān (Guiding Principles for Translation)

*Dr. Khalid Mehmood Madni \**

## **ABSTRACT:**

English is an international language. Many attempts have been made to translate the Qur'ān into English by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars with different objectives. However, whatever their objectives are but it is not amiss to recall that the translation should be accurate and precise with possible human effort. On the other hand, Qur'ān is not an ordinary book; it is the very word of Almighty Allah. Of all great works, the Qur'ān is the least translatable, and Arabic is not at all easy to translate into a language which is so widely and radically different from Arabic in its structure and genius. The difficulty increases many times for an English translator due to the Qur'ānic I'ejaz, its inimitable elitism, miraculous elegance, and grandiose cadence. Moreover, it is so rich in meaning, so pithy in expressions, so vigorous in style and so subtle in implications. Therefore the nature of the problems is multidimensional which ranges from inimitability to the I'ejaz of the Qur'ān, the difference between the languages and culture, the need for bridging materials, prejudice, and lack of awareness of the sciences of the Qur'ān. To overcome these impediments, one should follow guiding principles which include sound knowledge of the sciences of the Qur'ān, deep awareness of the art of translation, and skillfulness of both the languages. This article illustrates impediments and problems while translating the Qur'ān and provides necessary techniques, requirements, tools, and guiding principles as the remedies of these problems for translators.

**Keywords:** *Qur'ānic Sciences, Impediments, Translation of the Qur'ān, Guiding principles.*

## **Introduction**

The Holy Qur'ān is the holy book of Almighty Allah which is preserved in this way that this is the only heavenly book in this universe whose all words, phrases, and verses are the very word of Allah.

Allah says:

---

\* Assistant Professor / HOD, Govt. Ambala Muslim College Sargodha.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ نَحْفُظُونَ<sup>1</sup>

“Lo! We, even We, reveal the reminder, and lo We verily are its guardian.”

The Qur’ān is not an ordinary book, the Qur’ān, the last of the previous books, the final, comprehensive, universal and authoritative summary of the teachings of Allah. Angel Jibrā‘el is the Agency who was sent to Muhammad (SAW) by the permission and order of Allah. As for as the Articles of the Qur’ān are concerned, the Qur’ān contains the foundations for an entire system of life, covering a whole spectrum of topics, which range from specific articles of faith and commandments to general moral teachings, rights and obligations, crimes and punishment, personal and public law, and a host of other private and social concerns. These topics are discussed in a variety of ways, such as direct stipulations, reminder of Allah’s favor on his creation, admonitions and rebukes. Stories of past communities are narrated, followed by the lessons to be learnt from their actions and subsequent fates.

The translations of the Qur’ān have been significant and positive contributions to humanity. For many centuries, a lot of people throughout the world have introduced the message of the Qur’ān to the man kind through their translations. English is an international, dominant and the language of the science. Muslims and non-Muslims are learning the message of the Qur’ān through its translations.

Hence, along the reviews of the prevailed translations, there should be a serious need of the study and effort to know the science of translation, its nature, problems of the translator, limitations and guiding principles for the translation.

When the art of translation came into being, it is mystery still. Nobody knows when did this trend and custom is started? Because, translation depends upon the necessity of human being. Whenever he needed, he started. Necessity started when two or more human beings interacted.

The variety of colors and languages has been described as blessings of Allah in the holy Qur’ān:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافَ اللُّغَاتِ وَالْوُانِكُمْ<sup>2</sup> فِي ذَلِكَ لَا يَتْلُو لِلْعَالَمِينَ

“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours. Lo! Herein indeed are portents for men of knowledge.”

As Adam’s progeny spread around the earth, different languages were developed. The need for communication across theses languages and the need to be benefited from the books and texts written in different languages by a greater segment of mankind have led humanity to the art of translation. Thus, translation is the one of the oldest human practices in its written and oral forms

as well. Here, first of all the meanings of the translation should be crystal clear. 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī says:

“To mold the views of any author in one’s language in such a way that there would be seemed no difference in translation and the original one”<sup>3</sup>

Translation is essential for making communication possible between people of different cultures. Translation has been considered an artistic endeavor, or a scientific study, a technical craft, a branch of linguistics, or a branch of literature.

## **The Case with Translation of the Qur'ān**

It is meant that translator tries his best to change the author’s view in his language. This definition can be applied on all types of books but not on the book whose author is Allah Almighty Himself. As Allah is great, same is the case with His last heavenly sent book; the holy Qur'ān, due to its unique style, miraculous literary and figurate chic.

Allah says in his Qur'ān:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ ۚ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ  
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ<sup>4</sup>

“And if ye are in doubt concerning that which we revealed unto our slave (Muhammad), then produce a Surah of the like thereof, and call your witnesses beside Allah if ye are truthful.”

We never meant that translation of the Qur'ān is not legitimate. It is not only lawful but indispensable and mandatory to translate in all other languages. But to translate the Qur'ān is not a child’s play. Many problems might be faced by translator to translate the Qur'ān in English.

As 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī says:

“In beginning I thought that there were many translations before me like Pickthal’s and Yusuf ‘Alī’s but when I started my work then I felt it was not an easy task”<sup>5</sup>

Apparently, it is very easy to translate the Qur'ān and many people think it a pastime job. In fact, it is a bed of thrones and translator has to opt and select the words very carefully because translation is the name of expressing author’s view in one’s own language.

The difficulties and problems while translating the Qur'ān increase hundred times due to the nature of the text of the Qur'ān and due to its unique features and qualities which are necessary to narrate earlier than describing the problems so we shall be able to comprehend the topic fully.

## **Research Question and Literature Review**

What type of the impediments while translating the Qur'ān and to what extent it is an easy task to translate the Qur'ān. When we take an eye bird's view of the literature available on this topic then a wide range is available from the early to the latest. Translation and Tafseer go side by side so Al Itqan Fi Uloom al-Qur'ān describes all basic areas of study which are necessary for translation and Tafseer. Shah Wali Ullah described basics of translation and Tafseer in his famous book, Al-Fouz ul Kabir. Translations of M. M. Pickthal, Abdullah Yousaf Ali and Daryabdi also describe the nature of the impediments and the remedies to overcome the problems. This research illustrates the impediments and gives the guiding principles for translating the Qur'ān.

### **The Qur'ān Is Not an Ordinary Book; A Miracle:**

The Qur'ān is not an ordinary book. It is the book of Allah Almighty which is inimitable and matchless in its style and rhyme. Particularly, its valuable and comprehensive meaning have no comparison in the world and this is the miracle of the holy Prophet (SAW) also. It is the unique masterpiece of Arabic language and literature. We can measure its literary altitudes by examining the challenge of the holy Qur'ān e.g., making and bringing a single verse identical in style and meaning with the Qur'ān and disbelievers could not produce a single verse in answer of this challenge. In spite of being ethnical Arabs; they could not do so.

### **Variety, Vastness and Cranium of All Studies:**

As for as the essays and the subjects of the Qur'ān are concerned; it has variety of subjects and vastness of explanation the intellectual capacity of which, is not as easy as to be understood by everyone. For instance, it has the stories of the previous Prophets and their people; this is the study subject of histology, chronology and anthropology. It tells how did the Prophets lead their subject to the right path and administered them; it is the part of law, constitution, jurisprudence and law of inheritances. Moreover, it informs mankind about the oneness of Allah, reality of angels and concept of believing divine unseen things e.g. Paradise (Jannat), Hell (Jahannum), the Day of Judgment and angels etc. This knowledge is the integral part of mythology, ethnology and metaphysics.

### **Miracle of Literature:**

It is the teaching of Allah which has a unparalleled and marvelous style, which may fascinate the people who know the pros and cons of the Arabic language and literature. It has old and nice proverbs, idiomatic phrases, symbols and ancient examples; which belongs to the study of literature, phonology, dictionary and art of expressing views in brief but comprehensive rich literary style.

Hence it is necessary and perquisite for a translator of the Qur'ān to know all arts, techniques and acquaintances and he must know the way in which the Qur'ān addresses, so that he may comprehend himself first and then make it understandable to others. Otherwise he may go the wrong path and mislead the others as well.

Hājī fakhṛī says in this context:

“A translator ought to be expert in language in which he wants to translate the Qur'ān to know each and every style and shade of that language so that, he can opt an alternate shade or style where he needs.”<sup>6</sup>

Alan Jones says about the style and translation of the Qur'ān:

“The views on the style of the Qur'ān that develops with in the Muslim community came to center on what was seen at its uniqueness and inimitability (ijaz). This is an important doctrinal area for Muslims which largely lies beyond the scope of this translation –though it should be noted that it is the basis of very traditional view that the Qur'ān cannot be translated. The developments of these views limited the extent of the analysis of the stylistic and linguistic context of the Qur'ān”.<sup>7</sup>

Famous scholar Ibn e Athir has appropriately summarized the vastness and the beauty of the expressions of the Qur'ān in the following words:

“If we begin to investigate into the wisdom and secret of the eloquence of the noble Qur'ān, we sail into a deep ocean that has no escape from it”.<sup>8</sup>

The Qur'ān is the oldest and the most unique book of the Arabic language. All schools of Muslim thought throughout the ages have been agreed upon the acceptance and veneration of its revealed Arabic text. It is the most famous masterpiece of the Arabic language and source of reference.

“The eloquence and beauty of the Qur'ān is so great that it is considered to be the ultimate authority and reference work for the Arabic rhetoric, grammar and syntax, even by non-Muslim Arabs”.<sup>9</sup>

The Qur'ān is fountainhead of the numerous of the Arabic literature and its decisive influence over the origin and development of Arabic literature is limitless. The Qur'ānic text has been and remains the standard of excellence in Arabic literature and its authority continues to be decisive for many linguistic disputes. Throughout the course of fourteen centuries, this standard of excellence has never permitted any deviation in Arabic literature at any time. As a result of this unique consistency, Arabic literature has been closely associated with the Qur'ānic standards. So, in this scenario one can imagine to what extent the sensitivity of the work of translation is difficult and translator

faces a lot of problems and impediments despite of his highly scholarship and knowledge.

## **Impediments in Translating the Qur'ān**

### **Inimitability**

ʿAbdul Mājid Daryābādī said in this context:

“Off all great works the holy Qur'ān is perhaps the least translatable. Arabic is not all easy to translate into a language so widely and radically differing from it in structure and genius as English, unless it be with the aid of loose periphrasis and lax paraphrase. Even so the fire of the original is quenched, it is vivacious perspicuity is lost and the so-called literal translation looks rugged and dreary. That the language of the Arabs abounds in nuances and both the noun and the verb are extremely flexible is a fact well known to every student of the tongue.”<sup>10</sup>

The difficulty is increased hundred-fold when one has to render into English, with any degree of accuracy and precision, a work so rich in meaning, so pithy in expression, so vigorous in style and so subtle in implications as the holy Qur'ān. To reproduce even partially its exotic beauty, wonderful grandiose and magical vivacity without sacrificing the requirements of the English idiom and usage, is the despair of the translator and an ideal impossible of attainment. The result is that every fresh attempt at translating the holy writ brings home, in varying degrees, the truth of the old saying that nothing is so unlike as original as its copy.

On these difficulties and genuine problem of translation, it is impossible to translate the Qur'ān in same harmony, style and rhyme because it is revealed by Allah Almighty who is the creator of all languages. This paucity can be shown in all translations of the Qur'ān.

### **Different Shades of the Meanings**

The Arabic language is an extremely rich and powerful language. As a result, we simply cannot convey all of the different shades of the meanings and all the fine and subtle differences in the meaning that are conveyed in Arabic in other language.

For example, word Allah cannot be translated in any language. Allama Muhammad Asad translates it as God and many others left it the same. Word Ahad (one which cannot be divided) has no brief word. Moreover, the Qur'ān uses same word in different shades of the meaning. Here translator is worried to translate. He has to comment or explain in foot notes. In spite of the problems it is very necessary to translate the Qur'ān in other languages.

Miss Somayah Berrigan says:

“Obviously those people whose language is not Arabic, at first refer to the holy book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As for as we know there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'ān available in our country.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Arabic is the Richest Language**

Translators cannot translate precise and up to the mark because English language is deprived of that comprehensive vocabulary as compare to the Arabic language.

“In the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes. For instance, culture in Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words are nearly impossible to translate into English or the meaning of some words like prostration in English is rather different with what Sajdah exactly means in Arabic”.<sup>12</sup>

### **Lack of the Awareness of the Sciences of the Qur'ān**

Some translators do not know the guiding principles of translating and explaining the Qur'ān and different types of knowledge derived from the Qur'ān, abrogation of verses, types of verses and fundamentals of both the languages. This venture needed not only the knowledge and ability in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, Islamic science and culture. The editor comments more:

“Then, it needs that those invoked, know a little bit, at least, about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with commentary. Also the phonetic sound system of the two languages; English and Arabic are different”.<sup>13</sup>

### **Brevity can't be Maintained**

Translators want to be brief but they cannot do so. Sometimes, they have to give a complete paragraph in footnote to explain a single word. It is impossible for the translators to convey the same sense, beauty and originality of the style of Qur'ān, which fascinated the Arabs while reading or hearing.

### **Unawareness of Basic References**

Sometimes unawareness or unavailability of the basic and primary sources leads the translator failure in producing good quality translation.

Even for native Arabic speakers, the Qur'ān is a difficult document. Its archaic language and verse structure are difficult hurdles to cross. The fact that translators and theologians have, over time, lost much of the Judeo-Christian cultural references rife in the Qur'ān is just one more impediment.

Khaleel Mūhmūd says:

“The urge among many translators—especially now that many adhere to the religion itself—is to produce a functional and relatively accurate English rendition. Many of these believers fail to take an academic approach to the history and the Judeo-Christian references in Islam's main document. Polished English prose should not substitute for poor scholarship. In addition, sectarian differences within Islam have undercut any Muslim consensus on a translated version. Increasingly, it looks like the quest for the perfect rendition will be endless”.<sup>14</sup>

### **Ignorance of Arabic Language**

Some translators, especially orientalist are not expert in Arabic language and style. Moreover, they have less knowledge about their culture and civilization. Resultantly, they portray a foggy picture of Islam or miss the word in translation deliberately, in which cannot be comprehended by them.

About the rhyme and rhetorical aspect of the Qur'ān, 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī writes in the preface of his translation:

“The biggest problem for this and any other translation of the Qur'an is that the text was originally intended to be recited aloud and is highly rhetorical in nature. Recitation frequently gives the text a dimension that does not come across in silent reading, showing up lines of thoughts that do not stand out clearly when one is perusing the text. Translators usually tackle this problem by adding to their translation 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. If they do not, they run the risk of being incomprehensible, however accomplished the actual translation. This is shown very clearly by Arberry's the Kor'an interpreted. The translation is very good, interpretation, despite the title. The result is that there are numerous places where Arberry's translation, though technically correct, is almost impossible to follow unless one knows the Arabic well: and if one cannot follow the translation one cannot understand it.”<sup>15</sup>

Those who speak more than one language realize that verbatim translation is not successful in imparting the understanding of a text, because the grammar and syntax of every language is different, and each has its specific procedure and methodology of speech, in addition, we often find that there is no exact equivalent between the words of one language and the words of another. This fact leads the translator to believe that nonequivalence in translation among the different languages is an expected linguistic phenomenon. The lack of equivalence among languages at lexical, textual, grammatical, or pragmatic level is a common fact and a problem that is always encountered by translators.



An expert says in this scenario:

“At the heart of translation lies the problem of meaning. Every human language has ad hoc linguistic mechanism to express a meaning and to change the meaning not only through the change of words but also through change of word order. There may be cases where meanings may overlap between some languages but these meanings cannot be totally equivalent. Therefore, all translations represent varying degrees of paraphrasing because the meaning of words and text depends so largely on the corresponding cultures.”<sup>16</sup>

Hussain Abdul-Raof explains linguistic aspect in this way:

“Languages differ considerably from each other syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. The intrinsic syntactic, semantic and pragmatic differences in languages lead to cases of both nonequivalence and untranslatability between languages; the translators are, therefore, shackled by these limitations. The translators however, have to free themselves of these shackles in order to achieve an acceptable, informative, and effective translation by observing the target language linguistic and cultural norms. Thus, the reality is that the source text suffers structural changes which are inevitable in any process of translation.”<sup>17</sup>

As for as limitations and impediments are concerned, translator has to restrict himself to many limitations due to the paucity of richness of the target language and in the case of Arabic to English it has become more difficult to translate the Qur'ān in front of its inimitable elitism, miraculous elegance, grandiose cadence, emotive and evocative force.

‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī<sup>18</sup> summed up these limitations and impediments in his preface of translation of the Qur'ān under six main points and various sub headings. Some other impediments and problems are as under:

- 1- Translator feels the comparative poverty and paucity of richness of the English language at many places.

There is a large number of Arabic verbs untranslatable into English as verbs such as:

آخرون- صادقون، شاكرون، متقون، مشركون، مستاخرون،  
مستقدمون، قانتون، معجزون، مفلحون

And one has perforce to render of each word not by a single word but by a combination of words.

The Arabic مضارع (Aorist) is both present and future tenses combined therefore no equivalent in any language of the world.

In English grammar there are only two numbers singular and plural while and there is no single word to convey the sense of the Arabic dual تثنيه in nouns and verbs as well, both in the second and third persons.

There is comparative dearth of اسماء الفاعل (Nomina Agentis) in English language, whereas they abound in Arabic.

and many similar words have to be rendered as adjectives or participles, not as substantives.

In Arabic the feminine plural in the second and third person is always distinguishable from the masculine. In English both genders are covered by you and them.

The translation of word س (seen) and سوف (soufa) and the mild difference between them is very difficult to translate.

- 2- Repetition of synonyms for the sake of emphasis is of frequent occurrence in Qur'ān. This is the literary merit and beauty but there is no sanction in English language. Thus, many such expressions as

انا نحن نزلنا الذكر وانا له لحفظون , انا نحن نحي ونميت , انا نحن نحي الموتى

Verily, we, we, we have revealed the admonition, have to remain only partly translated and deprived of the beauty of the text.

- 3- In the case of omission, the obvious duty of the translator to mention the omission, although his attempts in many cases must be hazardous. This is also the finest Arabic style and both words and phrase have to be supplied by the reader to make the sense complete.
- 4- Another perplexity is caused to the translator by the abrupt grammatical transition, in one and the same sentence frequent in Arabic
  - a. Of person, as from the first and second person to the third, or vice versa
  - b. Of number, from plural to singular, or vice versa.
- 5- A further complication is caused by what is known by انتشار ضمائر i.e. A personal or relative pronoun having different antecedents, in one and the same sentence. The translator cannot afford to allow such ambiguities; he has to make his choice.
- 6- English is not rich enough to indicate clearly the shades of the meanings of different sets of words

As to the genius of Arabic language it may not be amiss to recall a few observations made by a distinguished Arabist, as Alfred Guillaume wrote:

“Arabic is fitted to express relations with more conciseness than the Aryan languages because of the extraordinary

flexibility of the verb and noun. Thus the ideas in break, shatter, try to break, cause to break, allow to be broken, break one another, ask someone to break, pretend to break, are among many variations of the fundamental verbal theme which can, or could, be expressed by vowel changes and consonantal augments without the aid of the supplementary verbs and pronouns which we have to employ in English. the noun, too, has an appropriate form for many diverse things, such as the time and place of an action, bodily defects, diseases, instruments, colors, trades, and so on. One example must suffice. Let us take the root d-w-r which, in its simplest form, means to turn or revolve (intransitive)

Dawwara, to turn a thing round

Dawara, to walk about with some one

Adara, to make go around, and so to control.

Tadawwara, to be round in shape

Dawr, turning (noun)

Istadara

Dawwar, pedlar or vagrant.

Dawrah, one turning.

Dawran, circulation

Duwar, vertigo.

Madar, axis.

Dawwarah, mariner's compass.

Mudir, controller.

Mudarah, round water skin. none of these forms is fortuitous, but is predetermined by the structural genius of the Arabic language.<sup>19</sup>

“From the root KTB, write, we have kaTabna(we wrote), nakTubu, we will write or we write, kaTib a writer, kiTab a book, makTab a place of writing a school, mukTib a teacher of writing, takaTaba, they two corresponded with one another, takTib, I will ask him to write, wakta taba, and he got his name written down in the register, kuTTab, scribe, makaTabat, correspondence, etc.”<sup>20</sup>

In addition to these inherent handicaps many other things are also matters which include

- 1- One's own incompetence and low scholarship
- 2- Meager knowledge of Arabic and English
- 3- Ignorance of the sciences of the Qur'ān

- 4- Passion for the mission
- 5- Variations of the calibers of the translators.
- 6- The difference between Muslim translator and non-Muslim translator in the sense of comprehending and determining the meaning of a word and choice of the shade of the meaning.
- 7- An English translator cannot help enlarging the translation of the verse, in many cases he has to omit few words in translation.
- 8- Nature of the sources in front of a translator in the form of exegesis and translation works and his extent to depend upon them. If he may get true and authentic exegesis while translating, he will perform better otherwise the case will be reverse.
- 9- Poor knowledge of pre-Islamic literature

These all multi type of the problems can be minimized by acquiring the sound knowledge of different sciences of the Holy Qur'ān and taking care of some basic things which have been concluded under the heading of guiding principles.

### **Sectarianism Pre-emption and Partialism**

Many translators are pre decided and pre captured with some orientation or mission, a big problem comes up for them. They cannot produce perfect and precise translation. The antagonistic minds have done the worst possible work in which their purpose is to blacklist the holy Prophet and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful translations, mis- interpretations, mis-representations with distortion of the facts. The distortion and the mis-interpretations are so strongly plastered with such attractive linguistic emblem and the delusive logic to trap ordinary people.

Sectarianism is also a problem for a translator. He hardly decides to agree or disagree with ancient commentators. Resultantly he gives new thought which is far from the fundamentals of Islam.

### **Guiding Principles for Translation**

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'ān is necessary, because other than Arabs who, do not know about the Qur'ān. They have only one source of understanding the Qur'ān that is translation. If translator is honest and takes all measures and learns all knowledges; which I will describe in next pages, then it is the fortune of a reader that he would read what is right. On the other hand, if the translator is not well versed with Arabic or English language, moreover, he has some missionary ambitions against Islam then it would be bad luck and tragedy of a reader that he would not be familiar with real Islam and the Qur'ān. Before describing the guiding principles, I am to tell that if someone wants to understand the Qur'ān then it is his own duty especially for

Muslims, to get basic knowledge and read the Qur'ān directly and consult as many translations as he or she can to his or her own capacity.

“When the source text (i.e., the Qur'ān) is one and same, hypothetically speaking, there should not be much room for variations either between a particular translation and the original or between the different translations except for minor changes of no great importance. Yet it is found that there are significant and momentous differences, which cannot be accounted for without referring to the role of the translator, the problems of translation, the principles and procedures of translating and the issues of style. The suitable theory of translation in the light of which such a penetrative investigation can be conducted is to be chosen from among the various theories of translation.”<sup>21</sup>

In order to have more accurate and communicative translations, the translators need to meet many requirements. Riazi<sup>22</sup> explains that it is a conventionally understood that translators should meet three basic requirements

- 1- Having the command of the source language
- 2- Having a command of the target language
- 3- Expertise in the subject matter to perform their job successfully.

Many approaches and types of the theory of the translation are there to indicate and guide for the best and most appropriate way to translate anything in any other language. Now a day, the role of text structure in translation seems so important that by adding it as a basic requirement for the translators, it can contribute and lead to higher quality translations. The available literature on text analysis can be generally divided into two groups.

Micro structure and Macro structure. Whereas micro structure belongs to a detailed linguistic analysis of texts in terms of lexis and syntax and macro structure relates to the analysis and description of the rhetorical organization of various texts. Text analysis is thus becoming a useful tool in performing more reliable translations. Talking about the role of text analysis Riazi's approach for the translators is that they should first try to reconstruct the macro structure and rhetorical structure of the source text in the target language, and then look for the appropriate words and structure. This is a procedure and method that competent and skill full translators perform in the process of translation, consciously or unconsciously.

This concept of text analysis is very useful and relevant tool for understanding the Qur'ānic discourse and its translation. The theory of translation overall has had practical contributions to the translation of the Qur'ān that can be seen in many successful translations of the Qur'ān. Some basic qualifications are very important for the translators.

- 1- Faithfulness and objectivity
- 2- Well versed in Arabic and target (English) language. (A person with a rudimentary knowledge of Arabic and armed with a few dictionaries and lexicons, cannot do justice to any translation).
- 3- Knowledge of Islam and Islamic sciences (sciences of the Qur' ān; Uloom ul Qur' ān and sciences of Hadith; Uloom ul hadith) to the level necessary for a translator
- 4- Having approach to the authentic Tafseer of the Qur'ān in order to properly understand the intent of the verses.

For example, a piece from verse (18:26) ابصر به واسمع

It utilizes a certain tense that signifies amazement and wonder. This tense was apparently not understood by George Sale even, who translated the verse as “ Do thou make Him to see and to hear” Rod Well understood this as a command “ look thou and hearken to him alone” whereas the Palmer missed the whole point and translated it as rather dreary, “ He can see and hear.” A more accurate translation of the verse is Pickthal's translation, “how clear of sight is He and keen of hearing.”

- 5- Well versed with the exact meaning of the Arabic words
- 6- Awareness of different shades of meaning
- 7- No confusion between Arabic words as Menezes mistakenly translated Abu Bakr as the father of the virgin and the word for virgin is bikr not bakr
- 8- Having the ability to differentiate Arabic from Hebrew or Syriac.

These all qualifications belong to Muslims and Non-Muslims. Only Faithfulness and objectivity is missed naturally among the non-Muslims' translations and rest of the qualifications belong to one's level of caliber and interest of seeking the rules of both the languages. All these things belong to one's own scholarship. The Holy Qu'rān is not an ordinary book. Special measures should be taken while translating the Qu'rān. After studying and analyzing different Qu'rānic translations; Guiding and leading principles of translation the Qu'rān can be concluded as:

## **1. Proficiency in Both the Languages**

A translator must be fluent and well versed with the techniques, proverbs, literature, history, culture and civilization of both the languages. This deep study of both the societies helps the translator to know pros and cons of respective language. He can read between the lines and mold it easily in other language. In case of the Qur'ān after having despite of much proficiency, it is

herculean task to do justice with the translation of the Qur'ān. But the problems and difficulties can be minimized by having skillfulness in both the languages.

Hajji Ahmed Fakhri says:

“A translator ought to be expert in language in which he wants to translate the Qu'rān to know each and every style and shade of that language, so that, he can opt an alternate shade or style where he needs.”<sup>23</sup>

## **2. Awareness of the Sciences of the Qur'ān**

Allama Jalal uddīn Siūtē has describes more than twenty areas of study known as Uloom ul Qu'rān which includes context of the revelation ( Shan e Nazool), abrogation ( Nasikh o Mansookh), I'ejaz e Qu'rān, Gharaib Ul Qu'rān, pre islamic literature and many more.

On the other hand, Shah Wali Ullahh describes in his book Alfauz ul kabir five knowledges derived and described in the Qu'rān, a translator should also be well versed with these five knowledges which are the basis of all other knowledges. Those five types of knowledge are as under:

- 1- Knowledge of commandments of Allah
- 2- Knowledge of refuting disbelievers
- 3- Knowledge of Allah's symbols and his glory. 24
- 4- Knowledge of the past history (how Allah ruined the people and glorified some people)
- 5- Knowledge of the life here-after.

This attempt needed not only the knowledge and adroitness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic language and Islamic culture. The phonetic sound system of the two languages; English and Arabic IS different. It should also be studies deeply.

## **Study of the Life of the Holy Prophet**

The Qur'ān is revealed by Allah on the holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) therefore a translator cannot translate the Qur'ān until he knows the back ground and situation of that time and the life of the holy Prophet. Qur'ān was not revealed all at a time but with the passage of time. That is why it is prerequisite to know the life of the Prophet (saw). Moreover, Qur'ān is directly attached with the Prophet (saw). And the Prophet (saw) used to determine the meaning of the verses because one Arabic word has different shades of the meaning. That meaning was authentic which Muhammad (SAW) prescribed and explained. The Prophet's narrations and traditions are the basic source of determining the right meaning and explanation of any verse. For instance, Salāt, Zakāt, Hajj, Sajdha and many more, are the words which have more than

one meaning. The Prophet (saw) is the only source who tells the correct, precise and appropriate meaning of that word.

Beside this the lives of the companions of the Prophet (saw) should also be read. Because, companions of the Prophets are the second source of determining the meaning of the verses after the holy Prophet.

Qazi M. SulaYmān Salmān Mansūr Pūri says:

“Life of Muhammad is an open book; every man should think that the life of Muhammad is an example for him.” <sup>25</sup>

### **Impartial and Un-prejudiced Behavior of the Translator/Honesty**

If a translator has some orientation which is pre-decided and pre-planned, he cannot translate correct. Because in different shades of the meaning, he may use that word which, will help his mission directly or indirectly?

Somayiah Berrigan Says:

“The hostile minds have done the worst possible work which is for them to black list the holy Prophet and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful, subtle, mis-translations, mis-interpretations, mis-representations and distortion of the facts. The distortion and the mis-interpretations are so strongly plastered with such attractive linguistic colours and the delusive logic gets caught in the falsehood tempered with eloquence and they swallow the sugar-coated poisonous pills of deceit.” <sup>26</sup>

### **Follow the Unanimous and Orthodox Meaning and Explanations:**

It is the era of sectarianism. Each and every man has his own sect and many translations are being launched to introduce every one's doctrine. In this anarchy, it is necessary to obey and follow those meanings and explanations upon which our great clerics have had consensus and being followed by the majority of the Muslims in the world. If one translator turns aside this principle, then each and every translator has his own translation according to his will and sect.

### **Comparative Studies of the Religion**

The holy Qur'ān refutes those things of other religions which have been altered by so called clerics. Therefore, it is essential for a translator to know about other major religions; their teachings, their sacred books and their history. This knowledge helps the translator about terminology of other religions, basic resources of them and current and past condition of the religions.



## **Conclusion and Recommendations:**

Translation of the Qur'ān is not an easy task because it is the very word of Almighty Allah but it is necessary to translate in all the languages of the world especially, in English language due to the dominance and importance of this language. On the other hand the Qur'ān is a miracle of Arabic literature in its unique style, vigorous rhyme, beautiful assonance and epic brevity. So, there are many impediments in translating the Qur'ān which has been discussed in this paper. These impediments are inimitability, different shades of the meaning, miracles of Arabic language, lack of awareness of the Sciences of the Qur'ān, epic brevity of the Qur'ān, sectarianism and partial behavior. These impediments can be minimized by acquiring scholarship which is necessary for translating the Qur'ān.

Many things are necessary to be accompanied while translating the Qur'ān. Deep acquaintance of the science of the translation of the Qur'ān with basic tools, awareness of impediments, awareness of style and linguistic qualities of the Qur'ān and Arabic language are pre requisite for translator. Unless and until the familiarity of these sciences and basic knowledge, one translator cannot illustrate and succeed in presenting a precise, accurate and intent meaning of the Qur'ān.

- 1- Besides these guiding principles, a translator should consult those translations which are acknowledged as accurate and precise in Islamic circles.
- 2- By following these principles, a translator can do a good job and produce the right meaning of the Qur'ān.
- 3- This research paper is also helpful for the reader to judge the right translator and precise translation of the Qur'ān.
- 4- A review committee should be made in every country on the pattern of King Fahd Qur'ān Complex Madinah, which may review all new translations of other languages and certify or rectify them.
- 5- The work of translation should be done by more than one scholar because it is not the task of a single person thus it can be free from more errors.
- 6- There should be at least three top level English translations in front of a person who is intended to write new English translation.
- 7- Translation of non-Muslims must be reviewed by a special committee or competent Islamic academy and may give certificate of authenticity if it will be up to the mark otherwise, it must be banned

## **REFERENCES AND NOTES**

**Note:** *English translation of the verses of The Holy Qu'rān, used in this article has been taken from the translation of M. M. Pickthal, published from Taj company Lahore in 2013.*

- 1 Surah Al-Hijr, 15: 9
- 2 Surah Al-Room, 30: 22
- 3 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, English Translations Of The Qur'ān, Saiyyara Digest, Qur'ān Number, Part.2, Vol.13, Copy.6, 1969, Islamic Publications Ltd. Shah Alum Market Lahore, P.639
- 4 Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 23
- 5 Hājī Fakhri, Urdu Translations, Quarterly Urdu Magazine, Anjuman Taraqqe Urdu Dacan, Oct.1929, P.593
- 6 Ibid, P.594
- 7 Alan Jones, The Qur'ān, Introduction, The E.J.W Gibb Memorial Trust UK, 2015, P.15
- 8 Hasan Diauddin Itr. Al-Ahruf As-Sab'a Wa Manaazil Al Qira'at Minha, Dār Al- Bashir Al-Islamiya, Beriut, 1988, P.200
- 9 Mahmood Ubaidat, Dirasāt Fee Uloom Al - Qur'ān, Dār Amamr, Jordan, 1990, P.224
- 10 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Tafsir Ul Qur'ān, Darul Isha'at, Karachi, Vol.1, 2014, P.7
- 11 Somayiah Berrigan, Introduction, The Light Of The Holy Qur'ān, Amir-Al-Momneen 'Ali Library, Iran, Vol.1, PP.XI-XVI
- 12 Ibid., P. XVIII
- 13 Ibid., P. XV
- 14 Khaleel Mohammed, Assessing English Translations Of The Qur'ān, Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2005, PP. 58-71
- 15 Alan Jones, The Qur'ān, Introduction, The E.J.W Gibb Memorial Trust UK, 2015, P.21
- 16 E.A. Nida, Translating A Text With A Long And Sensitive Tradition, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 1997, P.57
- 17 Hussain Abdul-Raof, Qur'ān Translation Discourse, Texture, Ad Exegesis, Curzon Press, U.K, 2001, P.9
- 18 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Tafsir Ul Qur'ān, Darul Ishaat, Karachi, Vol.1, 2014, P.8
- 19 Arnold And Guillaume, Legacy Of Islam, Preface, Oxford University Press, UK, Pp.VI-VII
- 20 The Encyclopedia Britannica, Cambridge, 11th Edition, Vol.II, P.192
- 21 Khaleel Mohammed, Assessing English Translations Of The Qur'ān, Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2005, Pp. 58-71
- 22 Abdmehdi Riazi, The Invincible In Translation, The Role Of Text Structure, Paper Presented At International Conference In Language And Translation At Bahrain University, 2002, P.13
- 23 Hajji Fakhri, Urdu Translations, Quarterly Urdu Magazine, Anjuman Taraqqe Urdu Dacan, Oct.1929, PP.593-597
- 24 Shah Wali Ullah, Alfauz Ul Kabir Fe Asool Ut Tafseer, Al Faisal Publisher, Lahore, 2000, Pp.3-20
- 25 Qazi, Muhamamd Sulaymān Salmān Mansūr Pūri, Rehmat Ul Lilalamin, Maktba Islamia Faislabad, P. 14,15

26 Somayiah Berrigan, Introduction, The Light Of The Holy Qu'rān, Amir-Al-Momneen Ali Library, Iran, Vol.1, P. XVIII