Translating the Sacred Text: A Suggested Model for Analyzing the English Translations of the Qur'an

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Abstract

The aim of the current study is to offer a proposed integrative paradigm for analyzing Qur'anic translations into English. The research utilizes a systematic assessment model in examining key features, including the description of the unseen, reasons for revelation, categorization of chapters, readings of the Qur'an, abrogation, and translation of Allah's attributes. The Qur'an: A New Translation by Muhammad Abdel Haleem (2004) and The Clear Qur'an by Mustafa Khattab (2015) are the two translations in English of the Qur'an that were chosen to apply the suggested model. Findings also indicate that Abdel Haleem captures more precision in Qur'anic explanations, but neither of the translators properly explains causes of revelation or harmonizes differences in readings of the Qur'an. Both translators also possess slight variations in chapter classifications and neither of them provides explanation of the implication of abrogation, although Khattab provides more precise translations in certain instances. Both translations reflect strengths in the transmission of Allah's qualities but possess minor linguistic, cultural, and textual weaknesses. The study highlights how particular interpretive choices can influence the intended meaning and reception of the Qur'anic message by English readers. It further stresses the need for a translation model that includes both linguistic and legislative methodologies to ensure closer fidelity of the original text. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Khattab's and Abdel Haleem's translations, this study strengthens the current discourse on Qur'anic translation and proposes improvements to forthcoming books. It emphasizes contextual accuracy, methodological consistency, and adherence to classical Islamic learning in an attempt to enhance the quality of Qur'anic translations and better cater to readerships.

Keywords: The Holy Qur'an, Translation, Criticism, Evaluation, Quality Assessment.

Introduction

English translations of the Qur'an has gained importance, particularly since so many of these translations have been distributed worldwide. There are approximately 185 translations of quran, into 114 languages, and there are roughly 1000 English interpretations of its meaning (Khorsheed and Abid 2022). Non-Muslims started working on this topic in the 11th century, and Muslims produced their first contribution in the twentieth century (Boulaouali 2021). Drugan (2013), identified the four models of Al-Qinai, House, Larose, and Williams. She distinguished between the academic models and those who are based on applied professional experience (Drugan 2013). Despite disagreements among academics regarding how to categorize the various Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) techniques, House (2014) divides them into the following three primary groups: 1) subjective and anecdotal; 2) response-focused; and 3) text-based. House characterized the first as professional approaches, the second as founded on notions of equivalence between STs and TTs, which also incorporates behavioristic and psycholinguistic approaches, and the third as incorporating the theoretical perspectives of

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prominent figures like Reiss and Vermeer (House 2014). This fundamental fact must serve as the foundation for any evaluation of translations. Chesterman divides the methods into two groups: non-quantitative models and quantitative dimension models. Schäffner (1999) distinguishes between two types of TQA theoretical methods. To determine whether the Translated Text (TT) is an exact, correct, precise, faithful, or true replication of the Source Text (ST), the first linguistic model compares the pragmatic, text linguistic, discourse, and functionalist elements of the source and target texts. The second focuses on the target text's contribution to various partial criteria (Schäffner 1999).

The language of Qur'an has unique features and the similarity among languages is impossible, thus the translators faces difficulty while translating the Qur'an e.g., lexical collocation, lexical gap, vocative, metaphor, apposition, polysemy, parable, semantic and pragmatic functions in Qur'anic verses, referential, synonymous, homonymy, passive verbs, foreground, absolute object, simile, metonymy, abbreviated letters, opening of Surah's, stylistic devices, replicated verses, pun, meaning of propositions and letters, attributes of Allah, shifting, pronouns, uncommon words and culture-cross terms. As a result, numerous mistakes and traps are discovered, which result in inaccurate translations as well as misreading or misunderstanding of the original material.

Translation criticism is one of the most problematic areas of translation studies. Baker and Saldanha (2019) has challenged scholars to employ large-scale empirical studies to formulate "intersubjective verifiable evaluative criteria" that are arrived at through the analysis of large multilingual corpora of translated texts and thus avoid the danger of "subjective, one-sided or dogmatic" judgments (Baker and Saldanha 2019).

The current study examines Mustafa Khattab (2015) and Muhammad Abdel Haleem (2004) translations of the Qur'an through an in-depth and reliable assessment. By assessing religious texts generally and Qur'anic texts specifically, the study seeks to make a significant contribution to this field by offering a paradigm for translation critique. The study emphasises on the relation between the original text and its translation, the relation between characteristics of the text, the translator and the author.

The importance of evaluation or criticism comes to reduce and investigate the previous problems and help to improve a useful works without distortion reality or core of Islam and this is the role of positive criticism. The current study aims to solve this problem through criticizing the quality of Khattab and Abdel Haleem's translations and investigate the translator's competence. While some translators remodeled the source text to present their viewpoints, others used English translations of the Qur'an to convey their aims and serve their sects. The need for ongoing high-quality translation of the Qur'an has led to producing new models and the subject dissertation seeks to present a developed model which based on linguistic turn and legislative turn to be proper with the Quranic text. Furthermore, accurate criterion led to a good quality of translation.

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1.   What are the proper criterions to criticize English translation of the Qur'an?

2.   How could these factors achieve progress in this field of knowledge?

3.   How the suggested model shall be applied?

4.   How could the suggested approach help to present an authentic translation to the readership?

Literature Review

Different approaches are suggested by scholars of translation studies to help the evaluator in his task of assessing translations.

Nazir and Ahmad (2022) investigate semantic variation in Urdu Qur'an translations, employing Julian House's quality evaluation model to assess translation accuracy and functional equivalence. Their investigation indicates the ways in which various translators handle lexical options, syntactic patterns, and cultural usage, resulting in differences in meaning and interpretative richness (Nazir and Ahmad 2022).

Mardani and Sadeqi (2022) analyze the use of cohesion and translation strategies in translating the Qur'an from Arabic into English, noting significant differences between the source and target languages. The study of Mardani and Sadeqi discusses cohesion markers, including referential links, conjunctions, and lexical repetition, which are essential in maintaining the coherence and rhetorical effect of the text. The results show that translators usually find it difficult to preserve these cohesive relationships because there are linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic (Mardani and Sadeqi 2022).

Translation Quality Assessment

According to the psycho-social approach, Mentalist views mainly focus on the quality of the translated text. They put forward a list of standards to assess translated texts and regain the features of translation lost. Supporters of this approach argue that the degree of a translated text's quality depends primarily on how the source is perceived and interpreted, leading to an "optimal translation" based on empathy, intuition, and interpretive experience (House 2015). In summary, mentalist methods of assessing the quality of translations emphasize that the subjective understanding and transfer decisions of the translator, based on her experience and intuition, contribute significantly to the quality of the translation (Pirhayati 2019). The response-based approach, was initially grounded in American behaviorism and structuralism. This approach is connected to Nida and Taber's early work on translation studies and their proposition of behavioral testing (Di and Nida 2006). Broad behaviorist criteria such as informativeness and intelligibility of the translated text were utilized in these studies. They rested on the premise that a "good" translation must be capable of producing an "equivalent response," a criterion with Nida's celebrated "dynamic equivalence" hypothesis that holds that the way in which the receptors of a translation react to the translation must be as equivalent as the way in which the receptors of the source text react to the source text (Bassnett, Jakobson et al. 2022). Thirdly, the function approach which is associated with skopos-related views. The pioneers of this approach are the German translation scholars Reiß and Vermeer (Calvo 2018).

In addition, the descriptive-historical method of translation studies, related mainly to Toury's (1995) research, examines the
translation retrospectively from the recipients' perspective regarding its forms and functions in the target literature and culture system (Toury 2012). Post-modernist and deconstructionist methods try to critically examine source and target texts from a psycho-philosophical, socio-political, and ideological perspective in an effort to expose unequal power relationships and manipulations within the text content (Fattah 2019). The linguistically focused approach which assesses the translation according to Reiss's (2014) paradigm. She tries to build a typology of the text that is applicable to the assessment of translations. As the most significant invariant for a translation, she presupposed that all additional translational

decisions are predetermined by the text type (expressive, informational, or operative) to which the original belonged. Reiss provided no clear guidelines, unfortunately, on how to determine whether and in what way the original and translated content are equivalent in terms of text type and other characteristics (Reiss 1989).

Though linguistic approaches strive to explain the relationship between the features of the text and how readers, translators, and writers perceive them, they vary in their ability to offer step-by-step procedures for analysis and evaluation. The recent past has seen a number of even more linguistically focused books on translation and assessment of translation appear, e.g., (Van Deemter and Tsagari 2013, Huertas-Barros, Vandepitte et al. 2018, Moorkens, Castilho et al. 2018, Sun, Guzmán et al. 2020).

Translation quality is the fundamental notion in measuring translation quality. The determination of the precise locations, effects, and (possibly) causes through which a translation departs from its source needs to be the target of measuring the quality of a translation. Ideational and interpersonal are the two functional elements that constitute the measurement of translation quality. In knowledge and inquiry, these two yield two different steps: the first, initial, or linguistic analysis, description, and explanation; the second, secondary, or value judgments, social and ethical questions of relevance, and personal preference (Amin 2023).

House's Translation Quality Assessment - A Model Revisited (1997) book is the primary foundation of her model for translation quality assessment (House 1997). The "double-binding nature" of translation demands an equivalency relationship between source and target texts. A translation fulfills the "demands of invariance" by applying the concept of equivalency. The role of overt translation is to provide readers with access to the function of the original in its language through the mediation of another language. The role of a covert translation is to recreate the function of the original in a new discourse frame (House 2018). The "cultural filter" is a system for encoding the sociocultural contrast between the two speech communities' standard rhetoric, preferred expectations, and prevalent behavioral and communication habits (Tavangar, Diyanati et al. 2022). For hidden translation, the cultural filter is employed in an attempt to raise the target text reader's response to a parallel level of cognition as the source text reader's response. A target text would be considered to be a covert version if it varies from the source text in some pragmatically engaging way but one which is not necessitated by target culture preferences (House 2020).

Suggested Model

Qur'anic and Theological Norms

1.   Authentic interpretations and exegesis of Quran

2.   Causes of Revelation

3.   Major and minor readings of the Qur'an text

4.   The abrogator and abrogated verses

5.   Makkah and Madinan Verses

6.   Attributes of Allah

Qur'anic Text Linguistics Norms

1.   Lexical level

2.   syntax level

3.   Semantics level

4.   Cultural level

Translator's Competence Norms

1.   Language competence

2.   Textual competence

3.   Subject competence

4.   Culture competence

5.   Transfer competence

Application Steps

1.   Identifying mistranslation of the target text

2.   Identifying misinterpretation of the target text

3.   Providing Suggestions

Methodology

The research adhere to the following procedures:

1)   Applying the proposed model on the translation to present actual assessment.

2)   Discussing how the translator interpreted the purpose of the source text, what is the method he followed, and the readership of the translation?

3)   Making inquiries about the translator's competence.

4)   Giving a selective and representative detailed of the translation with a comparison

5)   Assessing the translation in terms of the translator and the critic

6)   Mentioning the errors

7)   Suggesting correction with explanation.

Findings and Discussion

Qur'anic and Theological Norms

Authentic Interpretations and Qur'anic Sciences

Current scholarship continues to investigate various methodologies in Qur'anic interpretation, testifying to a changing environment of interpretative strategies. One such development is the focus on contextualist interpretations, which take into account the socio-political and cultural context of both the revelation of the Qur'an and modern environments. This strategy seeks to bring the Qur'an's moral teachings in line with contemporary situations without undermining its core values (Saeed and Akbar 2021). Conversely, textualist approaches hold to the unchanging meanings of Qur'anic texts, with strong reliance upon linguistic and grammatical examination of the text and Hadith. The approach holds to the timelessness and universality of the message

of the Qur'an, frequently rebuffing reinterpretation in light of contemporary contexts (Rosyada 2017).

The interplay between these approaches has resulted in a diverse discourse in Qur'anic scholarship. For example, the contextualist approach has been promoted as a way to make Islamic teachings more human-sensitive and fitting for modern-day issues, encouraging values-based interpretations of equality, justice, and fairness (Faraz and Asiya 2020). In addition, the incorporation of literary and rhetorical analysis into exegesis has become popular, with researchers such as Fādil al-Samarrā'ī making a major contribution to the comprehension of the Qur'an's rhetorical inimitability using linguistic devices (Alshawabka and Sharma 2020).

Source Text	" الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ"(البقرة:3)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	who believe in the unseen, keep up the prayer, and give out of what We have provided for them. (2:3)
Khattab (2015)	Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and donate from what We have provided for them. (2:3)

Table 1: Translation 1

Abdel Haleem and Khattab did not clarify to whom the masculine plural relative pronoun "who" refers. They did not explicit that the intended meaning is associated with the believers of Arabs before Hijra especially, so the believers of the people of scriptures are not included here regarding al-Tabari (2008), al-Suyuti (2007) and ibn Ashur (1989). As for the unseen, Abdel Haleem (2005) points out it is "What is beyond their perception, literally "absent". This applies to the nature of God, the Hereafter, historical information not witnessed, etc." (Haleem 2005). Khattab (2015) also defines the unseen as "the belief in Allah, the angels, and the Day of Judgment" (p.311) (Khattab 2015). Both translators did not transfer the whole meaning of the unseen and not adhere to the clarification of scholars of Qur'an commentaries like al-Tabari, ibn Kathir, al-Qurtubi, al-Baghawi, ibn-Algawzi, al-Alousi and ibn-Ashur who explain that the believing in the unseen includes Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, providence (Qadar), Quran, paradise, Hellfire, tales of the previous nations and resurrection (Alybroudi 2024). With respect to "wayuqimun al-ṣalata" which consists of a prefixed conjunction wa (and), 3rd person masculine plural imperfect verb, subject pronoun and accusative feminine noun, Abdel Haleem (2004) translates it "keep up the prayer", while Khattab (2015) translates "establish prayer". Surely the suggested target translation by Abdel Haleem is more accurate than Khattab in this occurrence because Abdel Haleem transfers performing it punctually and devoutly, observing the manner set forth by the Prophet Muhammed said "Pray as you have seen me Pray" (Ibn Taymiyyah 2006). Abdel Haleem (2004) translates " وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ" into "give out of what We have provided for them.", while Khattab (2015) translates into "donate from what We have provided for them". Both translators could not point out the accurate meaning here which includes compulsory Zakat (the fourth pillar of Islam), giving charity (alms), and daily required expenses regarding the affirmation of the mainstream of Qur'an interpretation scholars, such as (Ibn Al-Gawzi 1987, Ashur.T. 1989, Ibn Kathir 2000, Al-Baghawi 2002, Al-Qurtubi 2006, Al-Suyuti 2007, Al-Tabari 2008).

8.1.2- *Causes of Revelation*

The Qur'an was revealed to provide guidance to all generations and circumstances to come. Certain verses of the Qur'an were revealed under specific circumstances and at specific times, though. Sabab (pl. asbdb) is the Arabic term for "reason," "cause," and "ma'rifat asbdb al-nuzul" is "knowing about the reasons of the revelations"—that is, the specific historical circumstances

and situations behind the revelation of specific Qur'anic verses (Von Denffer 2023). Recognizing the reasons of revelation plays an important role in understanding the meaning of the Qur'an, solving problems of exegesis and support the translators in producing a sound translation of the Quran.

Source Text	" وَلَا تَنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ")البقرة:221(
Abdel Haleem (2004)	Do not marry idolatresses until they believe: a believing slave woman is certainly better than an idolatress, even though she may please you. (2:221)
Khattab (2015)	Do not marry polytheistic women until they believe; for a believing slave-woman is better than a free polytheist, even though she may look pleasant to you. (2:221)

Table 2: Translation 2

The verse was revealed in connection with a particular incident (Table 2). Marthid bin Abi Marthid Ghanavi had a girlfriend named 'Anaq in the pre-Islamic period. He migrated to Madinah after embracing Islam, whereas the woman remained in Makkah. 'Anaq asked Marthid to have intercourse with him when he was in Makkah on business, but he refused, saying that "Islam has come between me and you." But if the Prophet allowed it, he was willing to marry her. He requested permission from the Prophet to do this when he came back to Madinah.'. This revelation, prohibiting marriage with a Mushrikah (Idolatress), occurred at that moment (Syatar, Syarif et al. 2023). This incident, therefore, forms the cause or the background of revelation of this verse. Abdel Haleem and Khattab in their translations did not clarify or help their intended readership to understand the specific circumstances of revealing this verse. Both translators transferred the word "الْمُشْرِكَاتِ" correctly into "idolatresses" and "polytheistic women". However, the readership could not understand the accurate meaning of the verse without recognizing its reason of the revelation easily.

Makkah and Madinah Chapters and Verses

From the initial revelation to the hijra, the Makkah phase of the revelation lasted about 13 years (Shehu and Zejno 2020). The primary work of the Prophet in bringing people to Islam marks this stage. The principal topics of this invitation, based on the revelation of the Qur'an, are: 1) Allah and His unity (Tawhid); 2) The imminence of judgment and resurrection; and 3) Good behavior (Rafiabadi). From hijra until the Prophet's death, the Madinah period lasted for roughly ten years (Majid, Abdullah et al. 2020). The same fundamental themes of the Makkah period are still there, but the development of the Ummah and the solidarity of the Muslims as a community are now foremost. We call the surah a Makkah one, when it's beginning was revealed in the Makkah phase, even if it contains verses from Madinah. On the other hand, A surah (Chapter) Makkah period in its text (Kurniawan and Adebisi 2022). The following are the major themes of the Madinah phase: 1) completing the rituals of worship; 2) establishing a legal system that regulates the relationships of individuals, families, and society; 3) debating with Jews and Christians regarding their religions and describing their faults and shortcomings; and 4) describing the plots of the hypocrites (Hussin 2024). Knowing Makkah and Madinah help the translator arrive the proper understanding of the qur'anic text and differentiate the abrogated verses from the non-abrogated ones. The translator also could recognize the gradual revelation of Islamic law, and the procedure and methodology of Islamic call.

Source Text	إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَادُّكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ ۚ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ مَن جَاءَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَمَنْ هُوَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ) "(القصص:85)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	He who has made the Qur'an binding on you [Prophet] will bring you back home (28:85)
Khattab (2015)	Most certainly, the One Who has ordained the Quran for you will ˹ultimately˺ bring you back home "to Mecca" (28:85)

Table 3: Translation 3

This verse was revealed during the Hijrah (table 3). On the way from Makkah to Madinah, during the migration of the Prophet Muhammed. Allah revealed these to console His prophet. Abdel Haleem (2004) translated "لَرَادُّكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ" into "will bring you back home", while Khattab (2015) translates it into "Mecca". Surly, Khattab's translation is better and more accurate because it is related to what scholars of Quranic sciences mention, such as (Al-Suyuti 2007) and regarding the mainstream of commentators e.g. (Ibn Al-Gawzi 1987, Al-Baghawi 2002, Al-Qurtubi 2006). This example points out that if the translator of the Qur'an investigates the main sources of reasons of revelation, he could produce a proper, sound and accurate translated text and vice versa (Boulaouali 2021).

The criteria for distinguishing Makkah from Madinah varies in line with different views on the matter. The three general perspectives: the first is a determination based on the Migration and the Prophet's arrival in the Radiant city of Medina. Whatever was revealed before setting off for the Migration, including during the journey itself, is Meccan, whereas whatever was revealed after that is Medinan (Hardianti, Sapa et al. 2024). The second method of determining is that whatever was revealed in Mecca and its environments is Meccan, even if came after the Migration. Whatever was revealed in Medina and its environment is Medinan. Whatever was revealed outside both towns and far away from both is neither Makkah nor Medinan. The third determination is that whatever addresses the people of Makkah is Makkah and whatever addresses the people of Medina is Medinan (Shaheen Shahzadi, Ayoub et al. 2024). There are 85 Makkah chapters and 29 Medinan chapters (Klar 2022).

Abdel Haleem divides the Qur'anic chapters into 87 Makkah chapters, 25 Medinan chapters, and 2 unclassified chapters. Kattab also uses the same categories 84 Makkah chapters, 27 Medinan chapters, and 3 unclassified chapters as shown in figure 1. The differences between Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab's (2015) are related to the capacity of the translators in Qur'anic sciences and the investigation of various sources of Makkah and Madinah chapters, such as (Al-Suyuti 2007, Az-Zarkashi 2017).
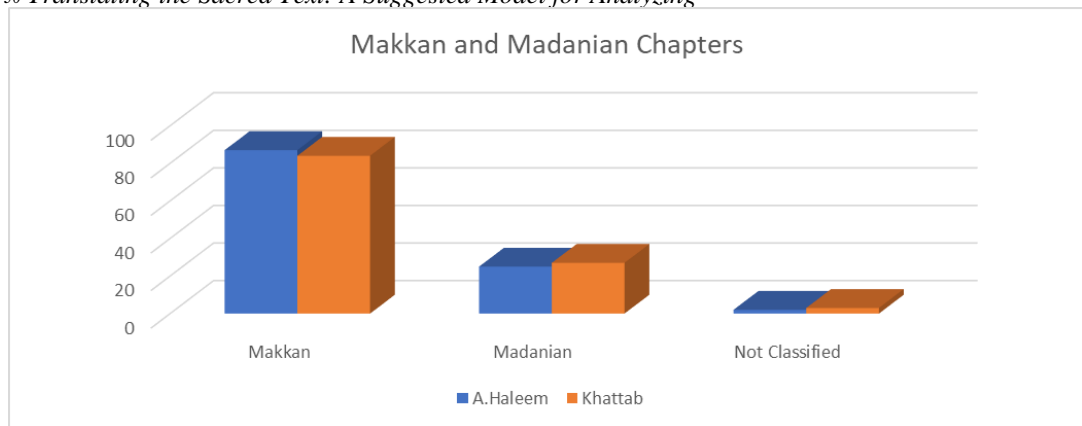
Figure 1: Makkah and Madinah Chapters regarding Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015)

The Abrogator and Abrogated Verses

The Qur'an introduces the phenomenon of naskh (abrogation) in verse 106. As it has to do with the accurate and detailed implementation of Allah's Laws, knowledge about abrogation is essential. It is concerned with legal surprises in specific for several reasons, such as the fact that it is one of the necessary conditions for the explanation (tafsir) of the Qur'an, that it is a condition for understanding and applying Islamic law, that it sheds light on the development of the Islamic legal code over time, and that it helps in understanding the literal meaning of the concerned ayah (verse). (Uthman and Paramole 2022).

Table (2) Abrogated and Abrogator Qur'anic Verses in Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015)

No	Abrogation in Qur'an	Abdel Haleem (2004)	Khattab (2015)	Note
1	(2:240)	●	✓	Khattab mentions that the verse (2:240) is abrogated by verse (2:234).
2	(2:144)	●	●	The verse (2:144) is abrogated by Sunnah. Both translators did not refer to abrogation.
3	(2:180)	●	●	The abrogated verse (2:180) is abrogated by Sunnah (Hadith Mutawateer)
4	(4:15)	•	✓	Khattab mentions that verse (4:15) is abrogated by verse (24:2).
5	(8:65)	●	●	Both translators did not refer that the verse (8:65) is abrogated by (8:66)
6	(33:52)	•	●	Both translators did not refer that the verse (33:52) is abrogated by (33:50)

7	(58:12)	●	●	Both translators did not refer that the verse (58:12) is abrogated by verse (58:12)
8	(73:1-4)	●	✓	Khattab mentions that verses (73:1-3) are abrogated by verse is (73:20).
9	(9:80)	●	●	Both translators did not refer that the verse (9:80) is abrogated by verse (63:6)

Table 4: Abrogation Occurences

Table 5 points out that Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) did cover all occurrences of abrogation in the Qur'an, however, Khattab (2015) tried to cover in 3 occurrences only. According to ibn Aqilah al-Malik (2006), the abrogated verses in the Qur'an are 249 verses in 30 chapter, while the abrogator verses are 268 verses in 37 verses. The tables shows that Khattab (2015) was aware about abrogation in the Qur'an more than Abdel Haleem (Powers 1982).

The Attributes of Allah and Ideological Impact

There"لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ" (الشورى 11) "The main rule to know the attributes of Allah is is nothing like Him and He is All Hear, All Seer" (Ash-Shura 11) (al-Hilālī and Khan 1993). Thus, it is important to understand the verses which relate to this topic without any Ta'teel (denying the meaning), Tahreef (altering the meaning) Tashbeeh (likening Allah with others), Tamtheel (resemblance), Takyeef (specifying the exact nature and reality) and Tajsim "embodying". 8.1.6.1- *Allah's Istawa*

Source Text	"ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ"(الأعراف 54)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	"then established Himself on the throne" (7:54)
Khattab (2015)	"then established Himself on the Throne" (7:54)

Table 5: Translation 5

Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) translate the verb "Istawa" in all verse (7:54), (10:3), (13:3), (20:5), (24:59), (32:4), and (57:4) as "established" (table 6). As it is known that both of the translator studied at al-Azhar in Egypt where Asha'aree method is the dominant creed in this Academic institute and its impact is very plain on produced translations by Abdel Haleem and Khattab. The belief of the Muslim mainstream in this point is to believe that Allah informs that He has a position over the throne. He is the One who knows the reality of this attribute "al-Istawa" so Imam Malik said "Istawa is known but its actuality is unrecognized". Thus, the proper translation (Allah) Istawa (rose over) the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty)" (al-Hilālī and Khan 1993).

Allah's Throne (Arsh) and "Kursi"

EX:1	Source Text	"عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ"(التوبة 129)
1	Abdel Haleem (2004)	"I put my trust in Him; He is the Lord of the Mighty <u>Throne</u>." (7:54)
2	Khattab (2015)	"In Him I put my trust. And He is the Lord of the Mighty <u>Throne</u>." (7:54)

EX:2	Source Text	"وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ"" (البقرة: 255)
1	Abdel Haleem (2004)	<u>His throne</u> extends over the heavens and the earth(2:255)
2	Khattab (2015)	<u>His Seat</u> (knowledge) encompasses the heavens and the earth(2:255)

Table 6: Difference in Translation

"Prophetic traditions bear testimony that al-Kursi is a huge creation in front of the Throne and the Throne is bigger than it," al-Qurtubi writes in his Tafsir about al-Kursi (Al-Qurtubi 2006). The throne has been referred to twenty-one times in the Qur'an. But the Kursi has been referred to only once. Sunnah teaches that if we compare Kursi with the throne, it is merely a ring. "The Kursi is only a ring thrown into open desert space compared to Arsh," Prophet Muhammad (Al-Zahabi 2003). The place, size, and description of the throne and the Kursi are similar (though there are some reports about the Kursi, Arish is explained in full). The translator of the Qur'an should point out the accurate or faithful meaning of verses that relate to the Islamic Creed. In the second example, Abdel Haleem (2004) translated "الكرسي" into "Seat", while Khattab (2015) translated it into (Seat or Knowledge). The impact of Asha'aree method is very clear on two translations.

Allah's "Shin"

Source Text	يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ "القلم 42)"
Abdel Haleem (2004)	"˹Beware of˺ the Day when horror sets in" (68:42)
Khattab (2015)	"On the Day when matters become dire" (68:42)

Table 7: Translation 6

According to Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015), the meaning has been changed because of the sever impact of Asha'aree method on them. They used ta'weel to present the meaning of the attribute "Shin" without adhering to the meaning of this verse "There is nothing like Him and He is All Hear, All Seer" (Ash-Shura 11) (Haleem and Haleem 2010).

Ibn Kathir (2002) also affirmed that the meanings of Shin as Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) presented are incorrect because these meanings do not match the Arabic language. Therefore, the suggested translation here could be "Upon the day when the Shin will be uncovered" (Ibn Kathir 2000).

Allah's Wajh (Face)

No	Source Text	Abdel Haleem (2004)	Khattab (2015)
1	كُلُّ شَىْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ" (القصص 88)"	Everything will perish except <u>His Face</u>	Everything is bound to perish except He <u>Himself</u>.
2	وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو ٱلْجَلَٰلِ وَٱلْإِكْرَامِ (الرحمن:27)	all that remains is <u>the Face</u> of your Lord, full of majesty, bestowing honour.	Only your Lord <u>Himself</u>, full of Majesty and Honour, will remain ˹forever˺
3	فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّواْ فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ ٱللَّهِ (البقرة:115)	wherever you turn, there is <u>the Face</u> of God.	So wherever you turn you are facing ˹towards˺ <u>Allah</u>.

Table 8: Translation 7

Two classes of verses exist in the Qur'an that apply to W-A-J-H. Three verses within the first category speak of Allah's face as a trait, and the second class of verses such as 2:72, 6:52, 13:22, 18:28, (30:38–39), 76:9, and 92:20 speaks of the favor of Allah. The proper understanding of the verse is derived by not performing "Ta'teel," which negates its meaning, "Tahreef," which changes its meaning, "Tashbeeh," which gives Allah similar characteristics as with all human beings, "Tamtheel," which resembles it, "Takyeef," which explains the very essence and reality, and "Tajsim," which is embodiment. In this case, it would be preferable for the translator to transliterate the word and explain its intended meaning in a footnote or between round brackets. Wajh was translated "face" three times by Abdel Haleem (2004), and "Himself and Allah" by Khattab (2015). Abdel Haleem's own translation in these three instances is actually more accurate. Abdel Haleem, however, started the ahl al-hadith approach and said that it was the same as Asha'aree. He also presumed that this method was more persuasive because it embraced the term "face of God" as it is, presumed that His face was one of His sifat (attributes), and understood that these descriptions were meaningful in relation to His glory without denying them. In any event, the Qur'anic presentation of the face of God is appropriate for His glory (Abdel-Haleem 2004).

Allah's Hands

No	Source Text	Abdel Haleem (2004)	Khattab (2015)
1	وَقَالَتِ ٱلۡيَهُودُ يَدُ ٱللَّهِ مَغۡلُولَةٌ " "(المائدة:64)	The Jews have said, 'God is tight-fisted	Some among٬ the Jews said, "Allah is tight-fisted

Table 9: Difference in Translation

Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) did not render the proper meaning of the verse and did not translate "Allah's Hands"; moreover, Khattab considers uses hands here is a literal translation. Both translators reflect the influence of Asha'aree method without sticking to the rules of believing in Allah's attribute through avoiding "Ta'teel" denying the meaning, "Tahreef" altering the meaning, "Tashbeeh" likening Allah with others, "Tamtheel" resemblance, "Takyeef" specifying the exact nature and reality and "Tajsim" embodying.

Linguistic Norms (Text Linguistics of the Qur'an)

Translator of the Qur'an faces many problems during translating the Qur'an into English. The main ones will be scrutinized to expose the difficulty of translating religious translation in general and translation of the Qur'an in particular. These main challenges which arise while translating the Qur'an relate to the following levels:

Lexical Level

The lack of equivalence of Islamic terms is a major problem and some of these terms do not have direct counterpart in English as "Taqwa" (Piety), "kufr" (Disbelieving), "shirk" (Associating others with God), "Tawbah" (Repentance), etc. English translation of these terms only depicts the closest meaning. It does not transfer the full semantic meaning of the Qur'anic terms as well.

NO	Source Text	وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٌ(الأعراف:26)

1	**Abdel Haleem (2004)**	<u>the garment of God consciousness</u> is the best of all garments
2	**Khattab (2015)**	However, <u>the best clothing is righteousness</u>.

Table 10: Lexical level

Abdel Haleem (2004) translated "لباس التقوي" into "the garment of God consciousness", while Khattab (2015) translated into "the best clothing is righteousness" (table 11). Both did not cover or clarify in text or footnotes the meaning of term "Taqwa" and present a literal translation of word "لباس". Imam ibn Al-Gawzi (2002) pointed out that there are 10 meanings of this term in this occurrence as follows: 1) good looking ; 2) good deeds; 3) having faith; 4) mindfulness of God and paying Him heed.; 5) modesty; 6) screening the private parts; 7) enginery or war machine; 8) chastity; 9) what protects against heat and cold, and 10) paradise is better than the world life. Therefore, the suggested translation is "being mindful is the best". The term "libasu l-taqwa" is not covered in translations of Abdel Haleem and Khattab.

NO	Source Text	وَٱلْمُطَلَّقَٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ <u>ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ</u>(البقرة:228)
1	**Abdel Haleem (2004)**	Divorced women must wait for <u>three monthly periods</u> before remarrying
2	**Khattab (2015)**	Divorced women must wait <u>three monthly cycles.</u>

Table 11: Lexical level 2

The word with opposite meanings resembles a lexical difficulty, such as "Qur". Abdel Haleem (2004) translated "ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ" into "three monthly period" and Khateeb (2015) transferred as "three monthly cycles". Therefore, both of them were unable to cover this obstacle (table 12). The proper translation is "Divorced women must wait for three courses" (Al-Amri,2023, p.124). The word Qur is either three menstrual cycles, or three clean intervals after menstruation before a divorced woman can remarry. This is so as to ensure that no pregnancy has taken place

Syntactic Level

NO	Source Text	إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انفَطَرَتْ (1) وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انتَثَرَتْ (2) وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ (3) وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ (4) عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ(5)
1	Abdel Haleem (2004)	1-When the sky is torn apart, 2-when the stars are scattered, 3-when the seas burst forth, 4-when graves turn inside out: 5-each soul will know what it has done and what it has left undone.
2	Khattab (2015)	1. When the sky splits open, 2. and when the stars fall away, 3. and when the seas burst forth, 4. and when the graves spill out, 5. ˹then˺ each soul will know what it has sent forth or left behind.

Table 12: Syntactic Level

The differences between languages lead to syntactic problems. One of these problems is the translation of tense especially in the translation of the Qur'an because tense has different usage in the Arabic language (Alasmari, Watson et al. 2019). Tense means the grammatical realization

of how the location in time and how location in time can be expressed in language (Svalberg 2019). Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) use the present simple tense in their translations even though the evens of the five verses shall be occurred in the future. On the other hand, the verb "infatarat" in " إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ "is in the past and it sometimes uses in Arabic to refer to the "unseen" or the future (Abdel-Haleem 2004, Khattab 2015).

Semantic Level

Ellipsis in the Quranic text

Source Text	" وَاسْأَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا فِيهَا وَالْعِيرَ الَّتِي أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَاۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ" (القصص:85)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	<u>Ask in the town</u> where we have been; <u>ask the people of the caravan</u> we travelled with: we are telling the truth (12:82)
Khattab (2015)	Ask ˹the people of˺ the land where we were and <u>the caravan we travelled with</u>. We are certainly telling the truth.'" (12:82)

Table 13: Ellipsis in the Quranic Text

Using ellipsis means engaging the reader to understand the text instead of passively receiving it (Alawad and Ahmed 2024). The translator should clarify the missing parts in the source text to present an excellent transformed target text. Ellipsis represents a special problem in translating the Qur'an (Allaithy 2020).

Abdel Haleem (2004) recognized the elliptical part in the first occurrence, so he used the proposition "in" but he translated the text literally. However, he realized the elliptical part in the second occurrence, thus he used "the people of" and produced a proper translated text. Khattab (2015) succeeded to produce the faithful meaning in two occurrences by using "˹the people of˺" in the first occurrence and "the caravan we travelled with" in the second occurrence (Abdel-Haleem 2004, Khattab 2015).

Polysemy (al-Wujuh wal Naza'air)

NO	Source Text	Abdel Haleem (2004)	Khattab (2015)
1	وَقَالَ الَّذِى نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَادَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ " (يوسف 45)	but the prisoner who had been freed <u>at last</u> remembered [Joseph]	˹Finally,˺ the surviving ex- prisoner remembered ˹Joseph˺ <u>after a long time</u>
2	بَلْ قَالُوٓا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٍ(الزخرف:22)	We saw our fathers following this <u>tradition</u>	"We found our forefathers following a ˹particular˺ way
3	إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً" (سورة النحل 120)	Abraham was <u>truly an example</u>	Indeed, Abraham <u>was a model of excellence</u>

Table 14: Polysemy

The Qur'an has many polysemic words such as the verb "da'a", the noun "ummah", "Huda", "hasana", "al-rahma", etc. Polysemy is also a semantic and linguistic feature of the Qur'an. Abdel Haleem (2004) translates "Ummah" in the first occurrence into "at last", in the second occurrence "tradition", and in the third occurrence means "truly an example". Khattab (2015) translated "Ummah" in three occurrences as "after a long time", "particular way" and "a model of excellence". According to scholars of Qur'an commentaries and Gharib al-Quran like (Al-Qurtubi 2006, Al-Tabari 2008) "ummah" in the first occurrence means "a very long period of

time i.e.7 years or to remember a matter after forgetting it", while in the second occurrence means "one religion", and in the third occurrence it means "who teaches the good, a leader, Imam or a good example". The proper translation could be "a leading paragon".

Redundancy

Source Text	أَوْلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوْلَىٰ (34) ثُمَّ أَوْلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوْلَىٰ (35)" (القيامة34-35)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	Closer and closer it comes to you. Closer and closer still.
Khattab (2015)	34. Woe to you, and more woe! 35. Again, woe to you, and even more woe!

Table 15: Redundancy

Redundancy is used to emphasize the meaning and the repetition of the word in the Qur'anic text increases the significance of the word (Omar and Gumar 2020). Abdel Haleem (2004) translated "أولى" into "closer" four times, but the intended meaning of the verse in not clear in his translation because the word "awlaa" uses for threating in the first verse and for intimidation in the second verse. Khattab used "Woe" which could transfer the intended meaning to the readership. The word "woe" is repeated four times to increase the emphasized connotation of this word. Thus, Khattab's translation is more accurate here in this occurrence (Abdel-Haleem 2004, Khattab 2015).

Metaphor

Source Text	وَتَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ"(سورة الحج 5)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	You sometimes see the earth <u>lifeless</u>, yet when We send down water <u>it stirs and swells</u> and produces every kind of joyous growth.
Khattab (2015)	And you see the earth <u>lifeless</u>, but as soon as We send down rain upon it, <u>it begins to stir</u> ˹to life˺ and swell, producing every type of pleasant plant.

Table 16: Metaphor

Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) succeeded in transferring the intended meaning. The earth's long-term shaking is likened as an animal that settles down after moving. The passage describes what happens to the world after it rains by using some characteristics of an animal. The strategy of paraphrasing is preferable in this translation to convey the intended meaning and depict the required rhetorical device (Abdel-Haleem 2004, Khattab 2015).

Cultural Level

Source Text	فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا (سورة النساء: 43)
Abdel Haleem (2004)	then find some clean sand
Khattab (2015)	then purify yourselves with clean earth

Table 17: Cultural Level

Culture-specific concepts and mistranslating them can distort the meaning. Abdel Haleem (2004) and Khattab (2015) did not mention the term Tayammum or transliterate it. They adhere

to domestication strategy to help their readership in Europe and America understand the meaning of the verse because this term "Tayammum" is not found in the western culture. In case of using foreignization, the translator could say "perform Tayammum with clean earth" as Hilali and Khan (1993) did in their translation. The suggested translation also could be " then seek performing the dry ablution" (al-Hilālī and Khan 1993).

Translator's Competence Norms

The translator should nurture a number of aspects of his ability, such as language ability, textual ability, topic ability, cultural ability, and transfer ability. For the purpose of achieving the communication objective, meaning transfer is predominantly dependent on the first four categories. Language capability includes the skill to utilize both SL and TL as mother tongues with different levels of competency in addition to knowledge about the terminology, morphology, and syntax. A requirement for text competence is the understanding of ST and TT norms and their sub-divisions by the translator. Moreover, the translator should also have the linguistic and extra linguistic competence of the text. The main concern of subject competency is highly specialized knowledge. The ability to differentiate among various text types with respect to cultural embeddedness is termed as cultural competency.

NO	Competence Norms	Abdel Haleem and Khattab
1	Language Competence	Transferring competence is the cornerstone in translation so the knowledge and the ability to use the strategies of translation, and method of transferring should be mastered. Abdel Haleem and Khattab's language competence has a little shortage in lexical, syntactic, semantic, and cultural aspects because they should be able to cover different contrastive linguistic issues.
2	Textual Competence	Abdel Haleem and Khattab exerted great efforts to translate the qur'anic text faithfully, but the ideological impact is very plain in their translations. They could cover the various branches qur'anic sciences, interpretation and translation. Thus, they could produce proper translated texts in many occurrences.
3	Subject Competence	Abdel Haleem and Khattab have a good level of knowledge related to commentaries of the Qur'ans, Qur'anic sciences; moreover, they have an excellent level in linguistic and translation studies
4	Culture Competence	Abdel Haleem and Khattab have a little shortage relating to some verses but in other occurrences, they could overcome these pitfalls by using the footnotes.
5	Transfer Competence	Abdel Haleem and Khattab's transferring competence depends on the previous ones, so they have a few pitfalls in linguistic, cultural, textual aspects, but they approximately master the subject. However, the ideological impact affects their translations in few occurrences.

Table 18: Translator's Competence

Abdel Haleem and Khattab did not transfer the whole meaning of the unseen and not adhere to the clarification of scholars of Qur'an commentaires. Abdel Haleem is more accurate than Khattab in the occurrences that relate to Qur'anic commentaires. As for causes of revelation,

Abdel Haleem and Khattab in their translations did not clarify or help their intended readership to understand the specific circumstances of verses. Abdel Haleem divides the Qur'anic chapters into 87 Makkah chapters, 25 Medinan chapters, and 2 unclassified chapters. Kattab's has same categories 84 Makkah chapters, 27 Medinan chapters, and 3 unclassified chapters. Abdel Haleem and Khattab did not refer to the differences between the readings of the Qur'an and their influence of the meaning. Abdel Haleem did not refer to the abrogation in his translation, while Khattab produced accurate translated text in many occurrences. As for the translation of Allah's Attribues, both of them presented impacted translated text in many occurrences. Finally, Abdel Haleem and Khattab's translations have few pitfalls in linguistic, cultural, textual aspects, but they presented good translations and did their best and exerted their best efforts to serve the Holy Qur'an.

Conclusion

Abdel Haleem and Khattab's Qur'an translations both have strengths and weaknesses. Abdel Haleem is more accurate in Qur'anic explanation, whereas both lack in explaining causes of revelation and differences in reading the Qur'an. Their chapter divisions are slightly different, and neither of them explains abrogation, though Khattab translates appropriately in most cases. Both translators effectively translate Allah's attributes but have minor textual, cultural, and linguistic flaws. Given these issues, their translations remain valuable contributions, bearing witness to commitment to most accurately rendering the Qur'anic message as they seek to serve the holy word with accuracy and clarity.

Strengths and Limitations

The research uses a systematic model of assessment, where there is an overall examination of Qur'anic translation accuracy. It highlights crucial aspects such as exegetical accuracy, linguistic precision, and methodological consistency. Using the contrast of two widely used translations, the research offers meaningful observations on their strengths and weaknesses, which can contribute to Qur'anic translation discussion. The study has only two translators, limiting its generalizability. It does not test the impact of these translations on different readerships. In addition, while it tests exegetical accuracy, it does not comprehensively explore theological interpretations or the ideological biases of the translators. Future studies can expand these aspects.

Future Recommendations

Future research can expand the scope by looking at additional Qur'anic translations to incorporate a more balanced evaluation of methodology and accuracy. Reading reception studies would provide valuable information on how different communities of readers perceive and engage with these translations. Additional investigation into exegetical and theological hypotheses could ascertain whether translators are sensitive to classical or contemporary Islamic scholarship. Future studies should also investigate linguistic and cultural adaptations to provide fidelity and accessibility. Lastly, having a standard model of evaluation for Qur'anic translations would enhance translation quality, consistency, and reliability across different readerships and scholarly communication.

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