

Loss & Gain and Translation Strategies with Reference to the Translations of the Glorious Qur'an

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Abstract

Due to the discrepancies between English and Arabic as two languages of different families, one is Endo-European and the other Semitic, loss in translation is very common, varied and sometimes inevitable vis-à-vis avertable loss. Losses occur on all language levels: morphological, syntactic, textual and stylistic/rhetorical. It is, perhaps axiomatic to propound that the more meticulously and consummately the text texture is, the more inevitable losses are expected, as in the plethora of translations of the glorious Qur'an. Gain, on the other hand, is not only rare but also not always feasible. To bring about some gain in the translated text is a laborious task on the part of the competent translator who has to resort to certain strategies, such as those of compensation, domestication, annotation and explication. On the textual level, for instance, the translator may utilize exophoric reference; and on the stylistic/rhetorical level he/she may adopt the strategy of compensation whereby he could plant in the target text a metaphor equivalent to non-metaphor in the source text to atone for an inevitable loss of a preceding rhetorical feature in the source text. Furthermore, an equilibrium should be maintained with regard to loss and gain in the translation which aspires after merit.

O. Preliminaries:

It is perhaps unanimously accepted that complete symmetry or sameness can hardly exist between languages descending from the same family, let alone those belonging to remote origins, which results in divergency on all planes. In fact, the more divergent the languages are, the more losses in translating from one language into another, English and Arabic are not an exception.

The asymmetrical character of these two languages underlies the linguistic/stylistic discrepancies on phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, textual, stylistic and cultural levels. Cultural differences, to take the last level, give rise to lexical gaps evinced in incongruous ideological, social and ecological terms which relate to highly sensitive issues such as religion and politics or those pertaining to institutions and nomenclature. Hence the process of translation between Arabic and English is sometimes clogged up by linguistic, rhetorical and cultural barriers which engender inevitable losses with very serious consequences especially in dealing with a highly sacred text like the Qur'an.

1. Kinds and Levels of Losses

There are two kinds of losses:

First, **inevitable loss**: It occurs because of the divergent systems of the two languages regardless of the skill and competence of the translator who can not establish equivalence and therefore resorts to compensatory strategies. Second is an **avertable loss** which is attributed to translator's failure to find the appropriate equivalence. Both kinds of loss can be seen on all levels.

Levels of Loss

1.1. Morphological Level

On the morphological level, Arabic infix is an essential element in the morphological structure of the tri-literal root as in the infix *alaf* which indicates duality and reciprocity among other things, e.g., *faa'ala* فاعل or *tafaa'ala* تفاعل . The infix in English, on the other hand, is restricted to few count nouns as in *tooth* (sing) and *teeth* (pl). To compensate for this loss, the translator opts to add a reciprocal pronoun, i. e., *each other* or *one another*, e. g.,

- يتقابلان في الدائرة . أو : في الدائرة يتقابلان.

- They meet each other/ one another in the office.

Likewise, the divergent number systems in the two languages engender grave loss unless skilfully compensated. Arabic classifies count nouns into three categories: singular, dual and plural; whereas English has a binary classification whereby count nouns are either singular or plural. To transfer duality from Arabic into English, a lexical item such as *both or two* must be added by way of compensation . Unless compensated for, this loss may cause inaccurate intelligibility, ambiguity or misinterpretation, especially in dealing with a sacred text like the Qur'an. In *Al-Rahman* (Most Compassionate) *sura* the *aya* فبأي الآء ربكما تكذبان repeated 31 times evinces duality in *rabbikumaa* ربكما (your Lord : Lord of the two of you) and *tukadhibaan* تكذبان (you *both* deny) where the English pronouns denote either singular or plural.

According to the majority of classical commentators and exegetes, the dual form of address is meant to be invisible

beings, i. e., *jinn* and mankind (see Az-Zamkhashari, bn Kathir, Qarani, among others). Al-Razi, however, maintains the duality of address, but he thinks the reference is the two categories of human beings, i. e., men and woman, to both of whom the Qur'an is addressed. In fact the whole *sura* is a symphony of duality which leads to Unity: all creation is in pairs (see footnote 5180 in the translation referred to as 'Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah by published by King Fahd Holy Qur'an Printing Complex). In this *sura*, the things and concepts are presented in pairs: sun and moon, stars and trees, corn and plants, two easts and two wests, pearl and coral, Majesty and Honour, jinn and mankind (repeated 4 times), fire and brass, forelocks and feet, rubies and coral , date palms and pomegranates, green cushions and beautiful mattresses, equivalent in Arabic to:

- الشمس والقمر - النجم والشجر - الحبّ والريحان - المشرقين والمغربيين
- اللؤلؤ والمرجان - الجلال والاكرام - السموات والأرض - الجن والانس
- نار ونحاس - النواصي والأقدام - الياقوت والمرجان - نخل ورمان
- رفرف خضر وعبقري حسان

In translating this *sura* into English translators can be classified into five categories.

1. Those who failed to sense and therefore transfer duality and have not even attempted compensation, which results in distorted loss of the *sura*, as can be noted in the translations of Yusuf Ali and Pickthall:

- Then which of the favours of *your* Lord will ye deny?

(Yusuf Ali:1368)

- Which is it, of the favours of your Lord that ye deny ?

(Mohammad Pickthall: 707)

By employing back-translation technique, the *aya* will be :

فبأي الآء ربك تكذب/ربكم تكذبون ؟

(The archaic personal pronoun *ye* أنتم is the plural of *thou*. أنت)

2. Those who have compensated for the loss of duality by adding an indicative word such as *both*.
- So which of your Lord's blessings do *both* of you deny ?

(Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley:527)

- So which of your Lord's bounties will *both of* you deny ?
(Irving: 531)

- Which of your Lord's bounties will you and you deny ?
(Arberry:557)

3. Those who add a word of duality and employing exophoric reference.

- Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny ?

(Hilali and Khan: 728)

4. Those who resort to foot-noting

- Then which of the favours 5180
Of your Lord will ye deny ?

(Footnote 5180 refers to duality and presents detailed elucidation of the sura.)

(Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawaitah)

- Which of your Lord's blessings would you 2 deny ?
(Footnote 2 : the pronoun is in the dual number, the word being addressed to mankind and the jinn. This refrain is repeated no less than 31 times)

(N.J. Dawood: 19)

5. Those who add a word of duality, i.e., *both*, and provide a footnote

- Then to whichever of your Lord's boons do you (both) 6 cry lies ?

(Footnote 6 : i.e., the jinn and mankind)

(Ghali: 531)

1.2. Syntactic Level

On the syntactic level , the discrepant systems of English and Arabic generate loss which necessitates compensatory strategies to aid the translator to look for functional rather than formal equivalence. Here are but two examples: tense and condition.

When tense and aspect combined together there are 12 tenses in English, some of which have no equivalents in Arabic, such as present perfect and present continuous or progressive. The Arabic past or perfective tense refers to past, present or future time. The failure to capture the exact reference to time may result in a serious semantic loss. This can be illustrated by the verb *jaa'a* جاء in the following Quranic *ayas*

1. جاء السحرة فرعون (الاعراف : 113)
2. وجاءت سكرة الموت (سورة ق : 19)
3. قلّ : جاء الحق وزهق الباطل (الاسراء : 81)
4. وسيق الذين كفروا الى جنهم زمرا حتى اذا جاءوها وفتحت أبوابها (الزمر : 71)

The verb *jaa'a* جاء in the above four *ayas* denotes past, present, present perfect and future tenses respectively :

1. The sorcerers **came** to Pharaoh
2. And the agony of death **comes** in truth
3. Say : Truth **has (now) come** and falsehood has vanished
4. And those who disbelieve *will be driven* in throngs to hell, till they **have come** to it , the gates thereof **will be opened**

Translators, however, differ with regard to tense and time. Instead of the present tense adopted by Arberry,

Asad, among others, some think the future is meant in the second *aya* above:

- And death's agony **comes** in truth

(Arberry:540)

- And (then,) the twilight of death **brings** with it the (full) truth

(Asad: 798)

- And the stupor of death **will come** in truth

(Hilali and Khan: 703)

The agony of death **will come** (and confront you) with truth

(Irving:519)

And the stupor of death **will bring** truth (before his eyes)

(Yusuf Ali: 1349)

The fourth *sura* refers to the Day of Judgment or the Doomsday, where the English modals *will* and *shall* (the latter used by Arberry) explicitly express futurity, which Pickthall seems to have missed by opting for present tense:

- And those who disbelieve **are driven** unto hell in troops till, when they reach it, and the gates thereof **are opened**

Condition is another problematic syntactic area where loss in translation can be detected. In English, there are four kinds: real (factual), probable (likely to happen), improbable (unlikely to happen) and impossible. Each kind is determined by the verb tense or form in both the main clause (apodosis) and the subordinate clause

(protasis). The conditional particles *if* and *unless* do not play any role in the determinacy of any of the above kinds. In fact, the conditional complex sentence may not contain any particle where an auxiliary verb *had*, *were* or the modal *should* introduces the dependent clause.

In Arabic, on the other hand, there are two main kinds: real or factual and improbable/impossible. Both the real and the hypothetical are determined by conditional particle: *inn* ان , *idhaa* اذا and *law* لو The first two articles in Arabic denote the first two kinds in English, whereas the third Arabic particle لو denotes the other two, and requires prefixing the main verb with *laam* ل. In the Qur'an only *inn* ان and *law* لو are used for explicit condition while *idhathaa* اذا is a temporal particle, sometimes with implicit condition, equivalent to *when*.

Here are ten English translations of a Quranic *aya* wherein the first three employ verb forms indicating impossible condition which semantically contradicts the second part of it.

ولو شاء الله لذهب بسمعهم وابصارهم ان الله على كل شئ قدير.
(البقرة : 19)

- And if Allah **had** so **decided**, He **would** indeed **have gone** away with their hearing and their beholdings. Surely, Allah is Ever Determiner over everything.

(Ghali : 4)

- *Had* God **willed**, He **would have taken** away their hearing and their sight. Truly, God is powerful over everything.

(Arberry : 3)

- And if Allah **willed**, He **could have taken** away their hearing and sight. Certainly, Allah has power over all things.

(Hilali and Khan : 6)

The other translators have rightly opted for the improbable condition because it is not impossible for God Who is Capable to do all things, but He does not will this - that is, He does not preclude the possibility that “those who have taken error in exchange for guidance أولئك الذين أشتروا الضلالة بالهدى may one day perceive the truth and mend their ways” (cf: footnote 12 in Asad, p.6).

- If Allah **wished**, He **could take** their hearing and their sight. Allah has power over all things.

(abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley: 4)

- And if God so **willed**, He **could** indeed **take** away their hearing and their sight: for verily, God has the power to will anything.

(Asad: 6)

- If Allah **pleased**, He **could take** away their sight and hearing; He has power over all things.

(N.J. Dawood: 327)

- If God **wanted**, He **would take** away their hearing and sight; God is Capable of everything.

(Irving : 4)

- If Allah **willed**, He **could destroy** their hearing and their sight. Lo! Allah is Able to do all things.

(*Pickthall : 4*)

- If Allah **willed**, He **could take** away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for Allah hath power over all things.

(Yusuf Ali : 20; and Musshaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiah)

Perhaps the cognate object or accusative المفعول المطلق poses a serious challenge for any translator from Arabic into English, simply because it is very common in the first and very rare in the second in few instances such as: *live a life* or *dream a dream*. This object serves as an effective means for emphasis and persuasion as well as a rhetorical function of musicality. The loss is not only inevitable but also hardly compensatable. In the Glorious Qur'an, the cognate object or accusative 'adhaaban عذابا following the verb adhaba عذب recurs in eleven suras, in two of which more than once. To compensate for this loss, the translators of the Qur'an have adopted three strategies: first, deriving the noun from the verb as in *punish* (v) and *punishment* (n), *chastise* (v) and *chastisement* (n), *torment* (v and n) thus producing unnatural rendition in English for quite natural Arabic counterpart; second, using a different noun; third, using an adverb of manner so as to be somehow natural in English. The first three of the following ten translators of the two *ayas* from suras Al-Umraan and An-Nisaa' seem to have adopted the first strategy, the other five the first and the second, and the last two the second and the third:

- فأما الذين كفروا فأعذبهم عذابا شديدا (آل عمران: 56)
 - وأما الذين استنكفوا واستكبروا فيعذبهم عذابا الیما (النساء: 173)
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1. Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley (50; and 92) :
 - As for those who are kafir, I will **punish** them with a harsh **punishment**.
 - As for those who show disdain and grow arrogant, He will **punish** them with a painful **punishment**.

2. Arberry (55; and 97)

-As for the unbelievers, I will **chastise** them with a terrible **chastisement** .

- and as for them who disdain, and wax proud, them He will **chastise** with a painful **chastisement**.

3. Ghali (57; and 105)

- So, as for the ones who have disbelieved, then I will **torment** them a strict **torment**

- So, as for (the ones) who disdained and waxed proud, then He will **torment** them a painful **torment**

4. Ali, Yusuf (142; and 240)

- As for those who reject faith, I will **punish** them with terrible **agony**.

- But those who are disdainful and arrogant, He will **punish** with a grievous **penalty**.

5. Asad (75; and 137)

- And as for those who are bent on denying the truth, I shall cause them to *suffer a suffering* severe in this world

- whereas those who felt too proud gloried in their arrogance He will **chastise** with grievous **suffering**

6. Hilali and Khan (77; and 140)

- As for those who disbelieve, I will **punish** them with a severe **torment**

- But as for those who refused His worship, He will **punish** them with a painful **punishment**

7. Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah (157; and 273)

- As for those who reject faith, I will **punish** them with severe **chastisement**

- But those who are disdainful and arrogant, He will **punish** them with a grievous **chastisement**

8. Pickthall (71; and 132)

- As for those who disbelieve I shall **chastise** them with a heavy **chastisement**
- and as for those who were scornful and proud, them will He **punish** with a painful **doom**

. 9. Irving (57; and 105)

- As for those who disbelieve, I will **punish** them **severely**
- He will **punish** those who act scornfully and proud with painful **torment**

10. Dawood (401; and 374)

- The unbelievers shall be **sternly punished**
- As for those who are scornful and proud, He will **sternly punish** them

In *aya* 83 of *surat* Mariam (Mary) two of the above ten translators have ventured to imitate the Arabic style and derived a cognate noun thus producing not only unnatural English but also far from the intended meaning.

ألم تر أنا أرسلنا الشياطين على الكافرين تؤزهم أزا (مريم : 83)

- Art thou not aware that We have let loose all satanic forces upon those who deny the truth – (forces) that **impel** them (towards sin) with strong **impulsion** ?

(Asad : 467)

- Have you not seen that We sent Ash-Shayatins against the disbelievers, **alluring** them by (every manner of) **allurement**? (Ghali:311)

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The other eight preferred loss over unacceptability:

- Do you not see that We send the shaytans against those who are kafir to **goad them on**?
(Aabdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley: 292)
- Seest thou not that We have set the Evil Ones on against the Unbelievers, to **incite them with fury**?
(Ali, Yusuf : 761)
- Hast thou not seen how We sent the Satans against the unbelievers, to **prick them** ?
(Arberry : 309)
- Know that we send down to the unbelievers who **incite them to evil**
(Dawood: 37)
- See you not that We have sent the shayatins (devils) against the disbelievers to **push them to do evil** ?
(Hilali and Khan : 412)
- Have you not seen how We send devils to disbelievers, to **provoke to them to fury** ?
(Irving : 311)
- Seest thou not that We have set Satans on against the unbelievers, to **incite them with fury** ?
(Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah : 874)
- Seest thou not that We have set the devils on the disbelievers, to **confound them with confusion** ?
(Pickthall : 403)

It should be noted that all the above translators and perhaps others as well have not assimilated the semantic implication of the cognate accusative “**azzan** أزا” which echoes the sound of the hissing steam arising from a boiling kettle, derived from the verb **yu’uzz** يؤز which implies seduction with hastiness and annoyance. Explicitly, they have all lost the concepts hastiness and hissing, as evinced in At-Tonji’s explication of the phrase “**uzzuhum** تؤزهم ‘as to push them towards sins with hissing, hastiness and annoyance’.

1.3. Semantic Level

This kind of loss is very common and often inevitable in translation as it is a corollary of the lack of equivalence in English and Arabic, especially in the domain of culture-specificity: many religious and cultural words have no equivalents in the two languages such as terms of kinship. Explicitly, the most serious loss in translation is when the meaning, be it denotative or connotative, is lost or distorted, which undermines the purpose or skopos and even the justification of translation as an act of bilingual communication. The loss is aggravated when the Qur'an, the Word of God is involved. Here are two examples of the denotative and connotative loss in the following *ayas*:

- فاذا فرغت فانصب (الانشراح : 7)

Arberry has completely missed the intended denotative meaning, i.e.,

The completion of work and has chosen an uncontextualized one, i.e., *empty*: This loss is, obviously, avertable.

- So when thou art **empty**, labour (Arberry: 649)

An example of another avertable loss in connotation is the translation **amaani** أمانى the plural of **imniyah** إنيمة in the following *ayas*:

- ومنهم اميون لا يعلمون الكتاب الا أمانى وان هم لا يظنون (البقرة : 78)

(
- وقالوا لن يدخل الجنة الا من كان هودا أو نصارى - تلك أمانيتهم (البقرة :
(111

The first *aya* refers to the Jews among whom are illiterate or unlettered people who have no real knowledge of the Old Testament, yet they depend on or trust false desires or just wishful thinking: they simply guess or speculate. Likewise, the second of the above *ayas* speaks of the Jews and Christians who think they alone will enter Paradise, which is again but false desires or no more than wishful thinking.

Obviously, the intended Quranic meaning has a pejorative or derogatory sense, i.e., vain or false desires, a sort of wishful thinking. Irving, however, has mistranslated this lexical into 'amen' which has an appreciative connotation, because this interjection is used at the end of a prayer, invocation or hymn meaning 'so be it' or 'may it be so' as in saying 'Amen to that' meaning 'I certainly agree to that'.

- Some of them are illiterate and do not know the Book except to say 'Amen' to it.

- No one will enter the Garden unless he is a Jew or a Christian. Those individuals are merely saying 'Amen' (to their leaders)

(Irving : 12 and 17).

1. 4. Textual Level

Cohesion is one the most significant constituents of the text:. It can be achieved via certain cohesive devices such as conjunctions, referring expressions, ellipsis, substitution, repetition, and parallelism. Arabic and English deal with coordination and subordination in different ways: coordination is employed to express thoughts which are syntactically and semantically equal. The excessive use of coordinated, conjoined clauses in English may make the text rather boring to read and hard to focus on the ideas expressed in it, whereas subordination is deemed more elegant, and by corollary, more preferable than coordination based on parallelism which is a rhetorical device or figure of speech

and a salient feature of good style in Arabic. Furthermore, the Arabic coordinators are in many cases functionally equivalent to English subordinators. The disregard of such kind of functional equivalence will result in loss of cohesion the target text. The Arabic most recurrent coordinator *wa* الواو which recurs 157 times in *surat Yusuf* (Joseph) performing a binary task of both coordination and subordination which is not always adopted in the translations of the Qur'an, thus creating loss on the textual level as explicated below.

In *aya* 3 of the above *sura*, *wa* is equivalent to the English subordinator *though*, *even though* rather than the additive coordinator *and*; four of the following ten translators have rightly opted for subordination, two for coordination, one has lexicalized phrase, i.e., seeing that and three have missed it altogether:

نحن نقص عليك أحسن القصص بما أوحينا إليك هذا القرآن و ان كنت
من قبله لمن الغافلين (يوسف : 3)

- We tell the best of stories in revealing this Qur'an unto thee, (O Prophet,) **even though** you were unaware of it before it came.

(abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley: 218)

- We shall relate to thee the fairest of stories in that We have revealed to thee this Koran, **though** before it thou was one of the heedless.

(Arberry : 226)

- In revealing the Koran We will recount to you the best of histories, **though** before We revealed it you were heedless of Our signs.

(Dawood : 38)

- We narrate unto thee (Muhammad) the best of narratives in that We have inspired in thee this Qur'an, **though** afore time thou wast of the heedless.

(Pickthall : 301-302)

- We relate unto you (Muhammad) the best of stories through Our Revelations unto you, of this Qur'an. **And** before (i.e., before the coming of Devine Revelation to you), you were among those who knew nothing about it (the Qur'an)

(Hilali and Khan : 304)

-We, Ever We, narrate to you the fairest of narratives in that We have revealed to you this Qur'an, **and** decidedly before it you were indeed one of the heedless.

(Ghali : 235)

- In the measure that We reveal this Qur'an unto thee, (O Prophet,) We explain it to thee in the best possible way, **seeing that** ere this thou wert indeed among those who are unaware (of what revelation is)

(Asad : 337)

- We do relate unto thee the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to thee this (portion of the) Qur'an: before this, thou wast among those who knew it not.

(Ali, Yusuf : 546)

- We relate the best stories to you, since We have revealed this Reading to you. You were someone quite unaware previously.

(Irving : 235)

- We do relate unto thee the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to thee this (portion of the) Qur'an: before this, thou too was among those who knew it not.

(Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah: 623)

1.5. Stylistic/Rhetorical Level

Loss, mostly inevitable, is expected in translating a stylistically *sui generis* text such as the Qur'an, which is matchless and inimitable. The common rhetorical device metaphor is a clear case in point. Where literal rendition into English may not only cause unintelligibility but also a comic response, as it can be conspicuously demonstrated in the translation of the metaphor *libaas* as *garments* of which the singular means a sort of covering, as *vestment* meaning a ceremonial garment especially one worn by a priest in church, or as *raiment* which is archaic, denoting clothing in general in the *aya* 187 in *surat Al-Baqara*. (The Cow):

- هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لِهِنَّ (البقرة: 187)

They (referring to women) are **libaas** to men, and you (men) are **libaas** to them (i.e. women) According to At-Tabari and Ibn Kathir, among others, *libaas* means *sakan* which denotes the pleasure and comfort enjoyed by husbands living with their wives. *Aya* 189 in *surat Al-A'raaf* endorses this denotation in stating the God has created human beings from a single person, i.e. Adam and he has created from him his wife, i.e., Eve, in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her. i.e., *sakan* :

- هو الذي خلقكم من نفس واحدة وجعل منها زوجها ليسكن اليها
(الاعراف: 189)

To compensate for the inevitable loss, some translators have adopted the strategy of turning the metaphor into simile while others have rightly opted for the ground of the metaphor as is shown below.

- They are your garments
And ye are their garments

(Ali : 76)

-They are a **garment** for you, and you are a **garment** for them
(Ghali : 29)

- They are **garments** for you while you are **garments** for them
(Irving : 29)

- They are your **garments**
And ye are their **garments**

(Mushaf Al-Madinah Al-Nabawiyah: 77)

- They are a **vestment** for you, and you are a **vestment** for them

(Arberry : 24)

- They are **raiment** for you and ye are **raiment** for them
(Picklthall : 35))

- They are **clothing** for you and you for them
(Abdalhaqq and Aisha: Bewley : 25)

- They are **as a garment** for you, and you are **as a garment** for them

(Asad : 39)

- They are a **comfort** to you as you are to them
(Dawood : 343)

Hilali and Khan (p.38) have employed a dual strategy of transliteration and explication in which they presented one meaning of *libas* as *sakan* quoting *aya* 189 in *surat* Al-A'araf mentioned above.

- They are *libas* (i.e. body cover, or screen, or *Sakan* (i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with them – as in 7: 189) , for you and you are the same for them.

(Hilali and Khan : 38)

Likewise, the verb *ya''kul* يأكل in *aya* 275 in *surat Al-Baqara* and *aya* 130 in *Al-Umran* *ya''kulu-l-iba* has been rendered literally as *eat, devour, gorge, or feed* by eight of the following ten translators. Instead of translating the metaphor its ground should be rendered, i.e., take or practice *riba*. Only two seem to have adopted a TL-oriented approach by opting for the ground.

الذين يأكلون الربا لا يقومون الا كما يقوم الذي يتخبطه الشيطان (البقرة
(275

يأيها الذين آمنوا لا تأكلوا الربا أضعافا مضاعفة (آل عمران : 130
(
- You who have
believed, do not **eat** *riba*, double (and) redoubled

(Ghali : 66)

- O you who believe! **Eat** not *Riba* (usury) doubled and multiplied

(Hilali and Kan : 92)

- O believers, **devour** not usury, doubled and redoubled
(Arberry : 61)

- O ye who believe!
Devour not usury
Doubled and multiplied

(Ali : 161)

- O ye who believe!
Devour not Usury
Doubled and multiplied

(Mushaf Al-Madinah An-Nabawiyah: 180)

- O ye who believe! **Devour** not usury, doubling and quadrupling (the sum lent)

(Pickthall : 83)

- O YOU who have attained to faith! Do not **gorge** yourselves on usury, doubling and re-doubling

(Asad : 87)

- You who have iman! Do not **feed** on riba, multiplied and then remultiplied

(Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley :59)

- Believers, do not **live** on usury, doubling your wealth many times over

(Dawood : 407)

- You who believe, do not **live** off usury which is compounded over and over again

(Irving : 66)

6.

Gain

The generic differences in the two language systems naturally generate loss on all levels. Gain, on the other hand, is very rare, if ever, because, as Bassnett (2002:38) points out, translation theoreticians as well as practitioners are mainly concerned with matters of equivalence and the like, “ignoring what can also be gained, for the translator can at times enrich or clarify the SL text. Moreover, what is often seen as ‘lost’ from the SL context may be replaced in the TL context”. By the same token, Nida and Taber (1974:106) aver that “whereas one inevitably loses many idioms in the process of translation, one can also stand to gain a number of idioms.” It can be achieved mostly on the stylistic/rhetorical level through the following strategies, among others:

1. Adopting a TL-oriented strategy so as to reproduce an original piece of literary art, implementing the principle : “the best translation is the one that does not sound as a translation, but a genuine product”;

2. Repudiating the formal equivalence which produces literal, wooden and unnatural translation towards a functional, dynamic one;

3. Introducing an idiom or a rhetorical device in the TL text for a non-existent one in the SL text . Here are some examples:

In translating the poem by Jamil bn Mu'amar or Jamil Buthayna, Nicholson likens Jamil's pure, Platonic love for Buthayna to rain, echoing Shakespeare's similitude of mercy to rain when Portian addresses Shylock to show mercy to Antonio:

The quality of mercy is not strained
It droppeth as gentle rain from heaven

سمة الرحمة لا تحدها حدود
تنزل من السماء كالمطر الودود

Nicholson has not only introduced the metaphor 'rain', the heavenly blessing and vital for the Arabs, but also some metaphors which do not exit in the original text.

النص العربي :
الا لبيت ريعان الشباب جديد
فنغنى كما كنا نكون وانتم
الا لبيت شعري هل اببتن ليلة
وهل القين فردا بثينة مرة
ودهرا تولى يا بثين يعود
قريب واذ ما تبذلين زهيد
بوادي القرى اني اذن لسعيد
تجود لنا من ودنا ونجود

Oh, might it flower anew that **youthful prime**
And **restore** to us, Buthayna, the bygone time
And might we again be **blest** as we wont to be
When thy folk were nigh and
Grudged what thou gavest me.
Shall I ever meet Buthayan alone again,
Each of us, full of love, as a cloud of rain?

To counterbalance the inevitable loss in the translation of Du'a Al-Karawan(The Call of the Curlew) with its poetic style and

highly classical and Quranic language, the present researcher has painstakingly attempted to achieve some gains by creating, for instance, an idiom or a metaphor that has no counterpart in the original.

- وهلم نذكر تلك المأساة التي شهدناها معا وعجزنا أن ندفعها أو نصرف شرها عن تلك النفس الزكية التي **أزهقت** وعن الدم البريء الذي سفك (دعاء الكروان : 10)

So that together we may evoke the tragedy to which we were witnesses , which we could not prevent happening and whose evil we could not **keep away from** that soul which was **extinguished**, and that blood which was shed.

The passive verb in Arabic “**uzhiqat** **أزهقت**” literally means ‘perish’ or ‘be dead’, yet the translator has opted for ‘extinguished’ to show that that soul is a light or a flame. (p.4)

- والخطوب تنتقل بهن من قرية الى قرية ومن ضيعة الى ضيعة **يلقين بعض اللين هنا ويلقين بعض الشدة هناك** (دعاء الكروان : 16)

- Mishaps **tossed** them from village to village, from one district to another, **here they would find tenderness, and there bitterness.** (p.8)

- أين أجد القدرة على أن أدفع يدي مع هذه الأيدي واحرك فمي مع هذه الأفواه !
انما أنا جالسة بين هؤلاء النساء أنظر اليهن ضيقة بهن وأتلهى عن الجوع بهذا الخبز الرقيق (ص 34)

- Where could I find the strength to **put out** my hand amidst these hands or make my jaws **labour** like those other jaws ? All I could do was to sit among those women, glancing at them, irritated by them, **cheating** my hunger with small, fine pieces of bread ? (26)

- وذكرت كيف انتهينا الى هذه القرية مجهودات مكدودات آخر النهار نجلس الى شجرات من التوت ساعة وبعض ساعة نستريح لا تكاد واحدة منا تتحدث الى صاحبتيها بشيء حتى اذا طال علينا الصمت وشقت علينا الراحة وثقل علينا التفكير قالت امنا ... (ص: 23)

- I recalled how, weary and exhausted, we had arrived in this village at the **close** of the day; we had sat beneath some mulberry trees to rest for an hour or so. We scarcely spoke to one another. But as **silence lasted too long, our inactivity became *fretful*** and **thinking was too *oppressive***, our mother said.... (pp.14-15)

ثمّ ذكرت ذلك الخطب الذي ألمّ بها

Then I **brought to memory** the mishap which had utterly **crushed** her. (13)

7. Conclusion

The discrepant systems of English and Arabic generate loss on all levels: morphological, syntactic, semantic and stylistic/rhetorical. There are two kinds of loss: inevitable and avertable. The former is due to the differences between the two languages, the latter to the translator's incompetence and failure to pick up the appropriate equivalents. Both kinds should prompt the translator to resort to compensatory strategies. Loss has serious consequences on the accurate intelligibility and interpretation of a sacred book like the Qur'an, the inimitable Word of God. In fact the more intricately the text is textured, the more losses are expected.

Gain on the other hand, is rare as it is arduous to attain mostly on the stylistic/rhetorical level and specifically in literary translation which is, by definition, an act of aesthetic communication which requires a painstaking task of creativity. Unlike loss which is in inverse proportion to the translator's competence and industry, i.e., the less competent, the more losses; gain is in direct proportion, i.e., the more competence and industry on the part of the translator the more gains achieved.

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