

Studying Gains and Losses at the Grammatical, Lexical and Stylistic Levels in Three Notable Qur'an Translations From the Context of Translation Theories

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Abstract—This study explores gains and losses at the grammatical, lexical, and stylistic levels in three eminent Qur'an translations from the context of translation theories. It also utilized the descriptive qualitative research method, Hervey and Higgins' (1992) concept of loss, and Nord's (2005) paradigm of textual analysis in the translation. The results implied that losses occur at grammatical, lexical, and stylistic levels due to the imprecision of chosen words when translating the meaning of some Qur'anic Arabic terms, expressions, and structures into English. Additionally, the intended translators subjected to inquiry on occasion seemingly grasp the meanings and subtleties of the lexemes; thus, they pick out lexemes that are appropriate and usable in their grammatical, lexical, and stylistic contexts. Such fidelity in choosing words and varied expressions resulted in gains at the grammatical, lexical, and stylistic levels. Also, the three translators espoused verbatim and loan translation strategies, which led to grammatical, lexical, and stylistic losses. Finally, it elaborates that profound linguistic repertoire, broad cultural knowledge, language proficiency, and thorough understanding of both Arabic and English, besides greater understanding of good books on exegesis and linguistics, are crucial in offering a proper translation of the Holy Qur'an generally and Qur'anic Arabic words particularly.

Index Terms—losses and gains, translation theories, Qur'anic translations, grammatical, lexical

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the characteristics of the Holy Qur'an is that it was revealed in several Arab dialects, as corroboration for the statement of the Prophet (PBUH), "The Holy Qur'an was revealed in seven different letters of 'ahruf'" (quoted in Rifa'i & Marhamah, 2020, p. 132). Indeed, in the Holy Qur'an, there are more than 270 foreign words extracted from non-Arabic languages, such as Syriac, Hebrew, Persian, and others. These foreign words prevailed because of amalgamation, migrations, and trade between people both near and far.

The Holy Qur'an emerged and was revealed in Arabic, as no other foreign tongue was given such an environment and circumstances to flourish and evolve as Arabic was, allowing it to become the medium of Allah's final message. This Holy Book employs the vivid, rich Arabic language at its highest level, along with an abundance of stylistic and figurative devices. This use of rhetorical and stylistic traits is unique and difficult for translators, particularly when rendering Qur'anic rhetorical styles. Nevertheless, even though the translator succeeds in conveying the lexicosemantic meaning of a given text (gains), an impending loss in the subtle repercussions and implicit connotations might arise on the idiomatic, rhetorical, or stylistic level, or all levels, of any provided text (El-Hadary, 2008; Awad, 2005).

The position and concept of rendering literary texts comparatively across languages, particularly as it concerns English and Qur'anic Arabic, have been problematic (Al-Malik, 1995; Al-Ananzeh, 2015). In simple words, there is no perfect match between the two texts in the context of language perception, contextual framework, and culture. It is true that, the Holy Qur'an cannot be rendered cross-linguistically without losing the most fascinating and magnificent consistency original to its ayahs (verses), immolating the emotiveness of culturally precise terms in Arabic, and so forth (Alhaj, 2015; Higgins, 2021). Moreover, the eloquence and consistency of the Qur'anic language are so unique, so impressive, so beautifully tender, and so acutely sensitive that no version of any kind of translated language can imitate or replicate the brilliant incandescence of the original (Arberry, 1955; Farghal, 1991).

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In this context, Islamic theologians, academics, intellectuals, and translation experts rather clearly assert that the meanings of the Holy Qur'an can only be conveyed to foreign tongues by rendering (Nassimi, 2008; Akrami et al., 2011). Notably, some presume that the Holy Qur'an cannot and should not be rendered into foreign tongues. Aply, some Muslim and non-Muslim translators of the Holy Qur'an have been especially considerate in adhering to the Qur'anic text, keeping its syntactic, semantic, and textual scheme regarding the translated language systems that afford it.

In contrast, the contentions of those who claim that it is prohibited to translate the Holy Qur'an are summed up in that translating the Holy Qur'an suggests that something like it exists, and rendering the meanings of the Holy Qur'an is a matter of narrating its meaning (Khamis et al., 2023; Al-Abdullatif, 2018). Moreover, the Islamic nation has agreed unanimously that it is not permissible to narrate the Holy Qur'an in meaning, as it is sacred knowledge whose words and meanings Allah Almighty intended for people to worship Him, and it is impossible to attain this purpose in rendering its meanings into foreign languages.

Many Muslim and non-Muslim translators have spent most of their lifetimes aiming to translate the meanings of the Holy Qur'an into English; some of them died in their exertions and projects. Moreover, the three translators did excellent work and brought to light outstanding English translations of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an, and indeed, they are some of the most widely distributed translations among Muslim and non-Muslim people. However, these translations have many losses and gains at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels because of discrepancies and the disproportionate nature between English and Arabic, as well as their very dissimilar origins: the former is Indo-European, and the latter is Semitic. Hence, such sundry and sometimes inevitable loss and gain in rendering are very common.

With the expansion of Islam and the conversion of many non-Muslims to Islam, the need for translated meanings of the Holy Qur'an into non-Arab languages appeared (Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023; I-Jabri, 2012). One of the difficulties encompassing these translations is that the researchers find the hassle of translation loss in rendering Arabic Qur'anic words into other languages in general and into English in particular.

From this point, we raise the following question: what loss and gain at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels are found in the English translations of Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930)? Through this study, the researchers will attempt to address this question by dealing with the concept of loss and gain at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels in the translations of the Holy Qur'an and the varied opinions of scholars about its translation from translation theories. Furthermore, in the applied part, we will try to analyze some verses of Qur'anic translations containing loss and gain at syntactic, semantic, and textual levels.

This study concurs with As-Safi's (2011a) study that meaning loss in rendering is growingly repeated, gain is rare but possible and conceivable. A sparse and small number of studies have reviewed loss and gain in translations of the Holy Qur'an from lexical and syntactic perspectives. As much as the researchers' discernment extends, no current research has aimed at investigating loss and gain at syntactic, semantic, and textual levels in the English translations of Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930) from the perspective of translation theories. Therefore, this study seeks to address this research gap by investigating this phenomenon in the light of translation theories. To conduct recent investigation, the researchers effectively utilized the Qur'an Corpus, which was authored by Kais Dukes of University of Leeds.

A. *Research Objectives*

The first objective this research is to delve into issues of loss and gain at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels in three English translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an by Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930) in rendering some Qur'anic verses of the Holy Qur'an into English. The second objective is to determine the credible reasons behind such syntactic, semantic, and textual loss and gain. The third objective of the study is to probe how syntactic, semantic, and textual gain corroborates an accurate translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an into English. The last objective of the study is to seek how syntactic, semantic, and textual loss leads to translation loss of the meaning of some Qur'anic verses into English.

This study adopts Hervey and Higgins' (1992) conception of loss, in which they affirm that this scheme of translation loss includes any losses to replicating the original text accurately, even if this involves losing or comprising characteristics in the translated text. The study also applies Nord's (2005) model of text analysis in translation.

B. *Study Questions*

In line with the four-fold objectives of the study, the questions driving this research are:

1. What gains and losses at the grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels are found in English translations of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an by Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), Abdel Haleem (2004), and Pickthall (1930)?
2. What are plausible causes behind such gains and losses?
3. How does gain maintain a faithful translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an into English?
4. How does loss lead to translation loss of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an into English?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Significant Role of Translation in Cross-Cultural Communication*

Translation plays a very important role in advancing culture and global understanding. Markedly, translation closes the gaps between diverse languages and cultures; consequently, nations from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds can comprehend and contact each other (Trigger, 2003; Cowperthwaite, 2010). Translation is vital in the current information age and connected world where people meet others from different linguistic and social backgrounds. Translators help surpass and break barriers and conquer restrictions by translating texts, thoughts, and conceptions (Tursunovich, 2022; Janfaza et al., 2012).

Translation plays a prominent role in spreading knowledge across cultures and through the generations. Without translation, a significant proportion of knowledge, literary canon, literature, and modern texts might stay constrained to one cultural group; hence, their impact and importance would be circumscribed (Matenova & Abduganiyeva, 2022; Al-Hamad, 2014). Moreover, the translation of science enables the community to diffuse research and innovations around the globe, thus accelerating advancement in many areas.

Without cultural closeness and pervasiveness, there is no way for diverse people to contact each other, and translation would not be possible. When rendering two languages identically, translators must transfer the same connotative, pragmatic, and interwoven meanings. However, because of the differences between the cultures, semantic, syntactic, and textual equivalence are bounded (Martin-Barbero, 1988). All societies diffuse their own specific and unique culture through translation. Cultural translation plays a practical, valuable role in understanding and differentiating dissimilar cultures (Klein, 1995; Berman, 1992), such as Muslims, Christians, and Jewish worshippers. Therefore, translation ties and links cultures (Seidman, 2010; Nongbri, 2013). Translation is a cultural and intercultural exchange; however, it is also more than form, words, phrases, and replication of an entire language.

A plethora of scholars in the sphere of language and translation have confessed the complexities of retaining cultural idiosyncrasies and divergences of the original text during the translation process (As-Safi, 2011b; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023). Associative meaning is acutely related to cultural contexts and relies on specific linguistic theories for accurate translation to outperform simple linguistic transfer (Baker & Saldanha, 2019; Alhaj & Alwadai, 2024). Translation needs a multifaceted understanding of the target language receptor's cultural situations and background (Nida, 1964; Gao, 2021). The mutuality between language and culture in the Holy Qur'an poses difficulties and challenges for translators, necessitating an inclusive approach that considers linguistic, conceptual, and religious aspects.

B. Translation of the Holy Quran Into English

Translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an must be subject to requirements and rules for it to be reliable and credible; among these rules are that the translator be a native Arabic speaker, brought up so that he is innately qualified to understand its implications (Ali, 2011; Al-Jabari, 2008). Moreover, the translator must be competent in recognition of the sciences of the Holy Qur'an. According to the principles of Sharia law, the translator must have perfect mastery of the language he/she wants to render so that he/she is capable of concisely selecting the proper phraseology (Abu-Milha, 2003; Madni, 2018). The translator must also refer to the explanation and exegesis of the Holy Qur'an so that he/she may know the wide range of implications of the verses and their religious and historical contexts that help him/her understand the implied meaning and convey it in the target language.

Translations of the Holy Qur'an in general, particularly English, are necessary to convey the meaning of the religious message to all Muslims who do not speak Arabic, including both English-speaking Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide (Malik, 1997; Alhaj, 2024). Translation is communication between peoples, building bridges to fill in cultural and linguistic gaps among them. One of the challenges encountered in rendering the Holy Qur'an is that some Qur'anic lexes reflect Arabic Islamic cultural limits without any counterparts in English. Therefore, when efforts are made to render such Qur'anic lexes into English, their original sense could be lost. Moreover, some discrepancies and under-translations could occur due to failure to understand Arabic linguistics and the incapability to interpret and transfer the connotative words and their implied meanings (Tibawi, 1962; Rahman, 1988; Abdul-Raof, 2004; Arberry, 1982).

C. Translating the Holy Qur'an in Light of Translation Theories

Translation has been around since the dawn of mankind and his need to connect with others with different languages and cultures (Asad, 1986; Doherty, 2016). Translation theorists and scholars have disagreed about the duality of source and goal since the age of Cicero, Saint Jerome, John Bingham, and Hunayn ibn Ishaq (Cooper, 2017; Langermann, 2012). In the Arabian world, the translation of the Holy Qur'an does not differ from this dichotomy and the views and concepts of these two tendencies (Dakake, 2019; Sharify-Funk, 2006), which the researchers will elucidate in the following sections:

(a). Literal Translation

The original text is solemn to the pioneers of the literal movement in translation, as they start from this idea that the translator must maintain the text and all its linguistic and cultural features from which he/she is rendering; he/she has no right to include, eliminate, or change anything in it (Milavec, 2016; Al-Jabri, 2012). Among the most prominent pioneers of this movement is Berman (1984), who asks for the requirement of maintaining the oddity of the original text and not eliminating its culture, even under the pretense of attaining the mechanism of communication. He deems this sort of translation as imperfect translation (Berman, 1984).

Berman (1984) also considers the essence of translation to be dialogue and openness to the other. Thus, Berman refuses any deformation of the original wording, whether in quest for clarification, explication, quantitative or qualitative

impoverishment, or other deformities referred to in his book *La Traduction et La Lettre ou L'auberge du Lointain* (Berman, 1984). However, Venuti (1995) views that the ideal translation is appraised by the extent of its adherence to the original text and keeping of its linguistic and cultural components. For him, the translated text is where another culture comes out and through which the reader can get acquainted with the other.

(b). *Interpretive Translation*

The pioneers of this tendency start from not being connected with the original wording and culture, concentrating more on the meaning to be conveyed. Among the pioneers of this movement, we find the owners of interpretive theory, also known as the “theory of meaning” because it is predicated on the conveyance of meaning, as Seleskovitch and Lederer’s (2001) theories are built on the foundations of this theory. Both believe that attachment to original text transforms the translation process, so it is necessary to focus on the meaning emerging from it. “Loyalty to the words is the biggest obstacle to our translation” (Seleskovitch & Lederer, 2001, p. 42). Concentrating meaning is the catalyst of interpretive theory. The interpretive translation of the Holy Qur’an aims to convey the meanings without trying to imitate and produce a text equivalent to the Qur’anic text, even though it is difficult to understand all the meanings that the verses carry.

Nida (1964), however, suggested the principle of equivalence in translation, which he deduced through his translation and study of the Bible. Nida differentiated two types of equivalence: formal and dynamic. Nida determines these two types of equivalence as directing attention to the message itself in form and content, concentrated on the equivalence as far as possible between the components of the message in the original text and its equivalent in the target text. “The closest natural equivalent to the message of the original language” (Nida, 1964, p. 170).

The interest in dynamic equivalence is in the recipient’s response. This is because the effect that the translation has on the target language’s receptor must be similar and comparable to the impact that the original wording has on the original reader (Nichols, 1996; Kerr, 2011). Implementing this concept in the translation of the Holy Qur’an is difficult (Al Farisi, 2023; Stewart, 2001), if not impracticable, for translation to have the same impact that the Holy Qur’an has on its reader.

D. *The Concept of Translation Loss and Gain*

Translation loss refers to the partial conveying of the origin language in the translated text when a translator fails to render the complete cultural relevance and linguistic attributes of the target language (Alhaj & Alwadai, 2024; Gutt, 1989; Abdelaal & Rashid, 2015). In the broader sense, divergent sources, features, and encounters within languages are driving forces behind translation loss; besides, discrepancies and dissimilarities between Arabic and English lead to altogether inescapable translation loss (Hatim & Mason, 1998; As-Safi, 2011a). The level of meaning loss differs depending on the sort of target text since it is prone to occur with expressive texts and greatly anticipated with holy texts. It takes place due to linguistic, syntactic, and pragmatic disparities on all syntactic, semantic, and textual levels (Simms, 1997; Newmark, 1988). In essence, the variance of the origin and translated languages rears the syntactic, semantic, and textual lacuna between them. Therefore, many losses are inexorable. As the proportion of translation loss rises, it is the responsibility of the translator to create equilibrium with these inconsistencies either by intruding on one another (Al-Masri, 2004; Hanada, 2008) or reducing and excluding their potential by forming them within cultural ethics, constraints, ideologies, or rules of the translated language.

Loss and gain on all the grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels of translation are among the most critical problems debated by researchers. Nida (1982) argues that the fundamental aspects of translation imply that no rendition in the translated language can be identical to the Original Content (OC). In other words, Bassnett (2002) shows gain in rendering as the improvement or explication of the original text in the translating procedure and process. As-Safi (2011b) and Bassnett (2002) assert loss in rendering is mostly focused on concerns of equivalence. They also disregard what may also be gained, since the translator can sometimes clarify and explicate the text of the source language. Hence, gain allows a language to be flexible, effective, and usable in any environment and social circle. Ultimately, translation loss and gain are ineluctable given the disparities and divergences between languages, cultures, and ideologies.

E. *Previous Studies*

A study of the relevant literature revealed that several studies have been carried out to probe gains and losses in translation in general and the translation of the Holy Qur’an in particular. However, to the best of the present researchers’ knowledge, no study has been undertaken to examine losses and gains at grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels in three notable Qur’anic renditions from the context of translation theories; doubtless, this study will minimize this literature gap. Moreover, some studies have been carried out to seek the phenomena of translation gains and losses in general and translation of the Holy Qur’an in particular. For example, in their study to examine gains and losses in rendering glad tidings Qur’anic words into English, Alhaj and Alwadai (2024) found that the three translators under study employed various translation methods such as reduction and omission. The study also revealed that any loss has a significantly adverse impact on the target language receptor’s knowledge of the Holy Qur’an generally and the words of Al-Bush’rā particularly.

Abdelkarim and Alhaj (2023) carried out a study to examine the meaning loss in the English translation of some Arabic Qur’anic connotations. The authors found that a verbatim rendering is not appropriate when translating some Qur’anic Arabic into English. They also found that semantic translation may be more suitable for transferring connotations into English. Nozizwe (2014) studied rendering gains and losses concerning court proceedings and judicial activities. The

researcher found that in some courts, rendering loss dominates over gain. The major losses were due to the use of jargon and linguistic and cultural divergences between Ndebele and English. Itieba et al. (2023) explored the pragmatic sense of loss and gain in translating George Orwell's *Animal Farm* into Swahili. The researchers found that translation by omission and cultural substitution strategies led to meaning loss; however, the paraphrasing strategy made gain. Jumeah (2006) examined various aspects of ten English translations of the Holy Qur'an. The researcher reviewed the text to determine the meaning loss in rendering the Holy Qur'an into English for deciding the (un)translatability of the Qur'an. The researcher found that the meaning loss in the translations of the Holy Qur'an into English is ineluctable.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research adopts the descriptive qualitative method, as this investigation hinges on view and notion rather than quantified data. The data are Qur'anic phrases, clauses, or sentences and their English renderings that comprise loss and gain. This is descriptive qualitative research in which the researchers explore loss and gain in the translation from Arabic into English. To gather the data, some selected Qur'anic surahs are examined closely to determine the syntactic, semantic, and textual loss and gain in translation. First, the data are discussed predicated on existing loss and gain. Subsequently, loss will be reviewed in two ways: unavoidable and avoidable. However, gain will be analyzed by the translation procedure utilized. In this context, data are analyzed by looking up references such as the *Dictionary of Flags Al-Mawred* by Al-Baalbaki (1992) and *Al-Mawrid: Kāmūs Injilīzī-‘Arabā* (in Arabic) by Al-Baalbaki (1969) and *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* by Cowan (1974) and consulting some popular exegesis books such as Ibn Kathir (2009), Al-Qurtubi (1999), and Al-Tabari (1981).

B. Data Analysis

This study utilizes Hervey and Higgins' (1992) practical principles of inevitable translation loss, in which every translation contains a specific level of loss in meaning. The translator's task is to reduce translation loss rather than follow an accurate or correct translation. Moreover, this study follows Nord's (2005) model of text analysis in translation for all sorts of text as practicability and utilization. This model can handle challenges in translation and greatly supports translators seeking to recognize the role of the original wording as compared to its role in the code of the translated text. Noticeably, because of these elements of culture and language variations among the origin and the translated language texts, the translator must apply a cultural filter. The characteristic feature of Nord's (2005) model is its focus on the translator systematically hinting at the original text and examining it at every single phase of the translating procedure to translate its sense faithfully. The translator systematically examines every salient feature closely and selects the most accurate expression to convey the meaning of the origin text. Thus, in the present investigation, the researchers adopted Nord's (2005) model of textual analysis because it provides a sound basis that can help translators comprehend and understand expressive meaning, functional implication, and associative meaning and relate the original text, thus affording them the capability to use good translation strategies that convey the intended message to the translated text receptors with the smallest loss of the meaning and linguistic features or properties of the original (Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2024; Qassem, 2021; Nord, 2005).

IV. DISCUSSION

This section explores in-depth analysis of some examples of Qur'anic verses comprising loss and gain at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels. Each example of this Qur'anic verse and its original and rendered versions are arranged successively. The analytical information upon which this study is based includes four verses collected from three translated Qur'anic versions by Pickthall (1930), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), and Abdel Haleem (2004).

A. Example 1

Source Surah: الدخان Chapter 44, *sūrat l-dukhān* ("The Smoke"), Verse 45

ST: (الدخان: 45) { كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلي فِي الْبُطُونِ }

Target Text:

- Abdel Haleem (2004): "[hot] as molten metal, it boils in their bellies" (p. 322).
- Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "Like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies" (p. 676).
- Pickthall (1930): "Like molten brass, it seetheth in their bellies" (p. 354).

The Analysis

The General Meaning of the Ayah

The meaning of this verse is that Allah the Almighty tells us how He will punish the disbelievers who deny meeting with Him, "like boiling," i.e., like the sediment of oil. "It will boil in the bellies, like the boiling of scalding water," because of its heat and foulness (Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 4, p. 2048).

Loss and Gain of Qur'anic Arabic Verse 45 in Chapter 44, *sūrat l-dukhān* (The Smoke).

In example 1, verse 45 of *sūrat l-dukhān* contains the word "*kal-muhl*" كَالْمُهْلِ, which resembles the food of the infidels in Hell, which is the tree of Zaqqum. This refers to the disbeliever. More than one Islamic scholar said that it refers to

Abu Jahl: “But [it] is not about him exclusively; verily, the tree of Zaqqum will be the food of sinners” (Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 4, p. 2048). Mujhid said, “If one drop of Zaqqum were to fall on earth, it would spoil the life of the people of the earth” (Jami’at-Tirmidhi: 2585; as quoted in Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 4, p. 2048).

In example 1, Abdel Haleem (2004) uses a literal translation to render *kal-muh’li*/كالمُهْل into “molten metal”, which means, according to Al-Baalbaki (1969), “المعدن المنصهر/” Hence, Abdel Haleem’s rendering of this lexeme is inappropriate to the translated text reader, and unclear communication gives rise to loss at semantic and textual levels. In the same vein, Pickthall adopted literal translation to render the same word into “molten brass,” which means according to Al-Baalbaki (1969): “النحاس المنصهر/” (“molten copper”). Hence, Pickthall’s (1930) rendering is also inadequate and confounding to the translated text reader and leads to loss at semantic and lexical levels. On the other hand, Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), who rely on the free translation method, rendered the same word into “boiling oil,” which, according to Cowan (1974), means “sediment of oil,” and according to Ibn Kathir’s (2009) interpretation, means “*tartar akaralzayt*/عكر الزيت (“boiling oil”) (Vol. 4, p. 2048). Hence, Al-Hilali and Khan’s (1996) rendering is more appropriate as compared to “molten metal” by Abdel Haleem and “molten brass” by Pickthall. Al-Hilali and Khan’s rendering is the most appropriate in the context of the message and leads to translation gain at lexical and semantic levels.

B. Example 2

Source Surah: الواقعة Chapter 56, *sūrat l-wāqī’ah* (“The Event”), Verse 22

ST: (وَحُورٌ عِينٌ) (الواقعة: 22)

Target Text:

- Abdel Haleem (2004): “And beautiful companions” (p. 356).
- Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): “And (there will be) Houris (fair females) with wide, lovely eyes (as wives for the pious)” (p. 737).
- Pickthall (1930): “And (there are) fair ones with wide, lovely eyes” (p. 385).

The Analysis

The General Meaning of the Ayah

The meaning of this verse is that these wives will enjoy the whiteness and refinement of fresh pearls (Ibn Kathir, 2009, vol. 4, p. 2216).

Loss and gain of Qur’ānic Arabic Ayah, 22 in Chapter 56, sūrat l-wāqī’ah (The Event)

In example 2, Abdel Haleem (2004) rendered the ayah *عِينٌ وَحُورٌ*/*wa hoorun’een* into “beautiful companions.” This rendering raises problems of semantic appropriateness for the receptor and does not accurately give the true meaning because Abdel Haleem provides only a description of the other beauties of Houris (fair females) but ignores the description of their gorgeous eyes. Here, in Abdel Haleem’s rendering, one dimension of the shades of meaning is implied, but the other connotative meaning is lost. Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930) offer detailed descriptions of their wonderful and adorable eyes and their other beautiful facial features. Hence, their readings leave a small chance of ambiguity and loss at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels; that is, “And (there will be) paradise consorts with bulging, gorgeous eyes (as spouses for the pious)” and “And (there are) beautiful dames with gaping, wonderful eyes” respectively. Then, Abdel Haleem’s (2004) rendering seems second to that of Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930), where the translator uses the expression “and beautiful companions.” To conclude, Al-Hilali and Khan’s (1996) and Pickthall’s (1930) translation led to gain, whereas Abdel Haleem’s (2004) rendering caused loss at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels.

C. Example 3

Source Surah: الحاقة Chapter 69, *sūrat l-hāqah* (“The Inevitable”), Verse 36

ST: (وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسِيلِينَ) (الحاقة: 69)

Target Text:

- Abdel Haleem (2004): “And the only food he has is the filth” (p. 388).
- Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): “or any food except filth from the washing of wounds” (p. 782).
- Pickthall (1930): “Nor any food save filth” (p. 586).

The Analysis

The General Meaning of the Ayah

The meaning of this ayah is that today, he (the unbeliever) has none to save him from the torment of Allāh, the Exalted, nor any close relative or an approved intercessor. In other words, he will have no food here but the dirt from the washing of wounds, which is the worst food of the people of Hell. It was also said that it is the Zaqqum (a horrible tree in Hell) and that it will be the blood and fluid that will flow from their flesh (Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 4, p. 2374).

Loss and Gain of Qur’ānic Arabic Verse 36 in Chapter 69 sūrat l-hāqah (The Inevitable)

Example 3 contains the word *ghis’līn*/غسليين/ “(the) discharge of wounds”, which describes the food of the people of Hell. The ancestors diverged in the meaning of this word. Some of them said that it is a tree in Hell and that it is the tree of Zaqqum, and among them are those who said it is the blood and water that springs from the meat of the people of Hell, and some of them said that it is the pus of the people of Hell (Ibn Kathir, 2007, Vol. 4, p. 2374).

As is shown in this example, Abdel Haleem (2004) and Pickthall (1930) use a literal translation rendering the word *ghis'līn*/غسليين into "filth," which means, according to Al-Baalbaki (1969), *adhir fuhsh bidha'a* /قدر فحش بذاءة. Abdel Haleem's (2004) and Pickthall's (1930) renderings of this lexeme are out of context, giving rise to loss at semantic and textual levels. However, Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) depend greatly on the free translation method and render the same word into "washing of the wounds", which, according to Cowan (1974), means *ghasalat juruh alkufaar*/غسالة جروح الكفار, and according to Ibn Kathir's (2009) interpretation, it means "the washing of the wounds of the infidels who are tortured in Hell" (Vol. 4, p. 2048). Hence, Al-Hilali and Khan's (1996) rendering for the word is more adequate as compared to the lexical choices by Abdel Haleem (2004) and Pickthall (1930). Al-Hilali and Khan's rendering is the most suitable within the context of the message and leads to translation gain at lexical and semantic levels.

D. Example 4

Source Surah: يوسف Chapter 12, *sūrat Yūsuf* (Joseph), Verse 9.

ST: (9: يوسف) {اقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ أَوْ اطْرُقُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهٌ أَبِيكُمْ}

Target Text:

- Abdel Haleem (2004): "[One of them said], 'Kill Joseph or banish him to another land, and your father's attention will be free to turn to you'" (p. 145).
- Al-Hilali and Khan (1996): "Kill Yusuf (Joseph) or cast him out to some (other) land, so that the favor of your father may be given to you alone..." (p. 304).
- Pickthall (1930): "(One said): Kill Joseph or cast him to some (other) land, so that your father's favor may be all for you..." (p. 175).

The Analysis

The General Meaning of the Ayah

The meaning of this verse is: "Kill (Joseph) or exile him from your land'. They said, by murdering him or making him go away to some far land so that you can remove his trouble; hence, alone, you will really enjoy your father's love and intimacy, and after that, you will be righteous people" (Ibn Kathir, 2009, Vol. 2, p. 945).

Loss and Gain of Qur'anic Arabic Ayah 9 in Chapter 12, *sūrat Yūsuf* (Joseph)

In example 4, the translators Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930) translate the word *yakhlu*/يَخْلُ into "be given" and "be all for", respectively, because they apprehended the connotative meaning of the lexeme *yakhlu*/يَخْلُ in the ayah. Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930) sustain the original cultural expression and serve the purpose accurately, so their renderings for the word are perfect and proper in the linguistic context, maintaining adherence and coherency resulting in gain at lexical and semantic levels. Conversely, Abdel Haleem (2004) rendered the word, which carries a connotative meaning that he ignored, into "be free" by using word-for-word translation. Hence, his rendering is inappropriate and leads to loss at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that losses and gains at the grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels in three notable Qur'an translations from the context of translation theories. Loss has become more common than gain at the grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels. Moreover, the three translators under the study sometimes understand the implication of the lexeme, so they select vocabulary that is suitable in their syntactic, semantic, and textual levels. Such accuracy of selected words leads to gain in rendering. Alternatively, loss at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels and shifts in meaning occur because of the inaccuracy of selected lexemes. Many non-equivalent challenges caused lexical and syntactic losses identified in three eminent Qur'anic translations. Losses at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels take place mostly due to the lexical, cultural, syntactic, stylistic, and semantic disparities between Arabic and English and a lack of equivalence of some cultural words. The former is the Qur'anic language, which has a distinctive vocabulary that is culturally contextualized, resulting in a cultural gap. Another cause is the relatively low knowledge of some translators. It was found that the three translators employ many translation strategies, such as word-for-word and literal translation, which result in losses at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels. Thus, in the context of the difficulties and challenges of rendering the Holy Qur'an, it seems plausible to highlight the fact that the only adequate faithful translation is one that is established on a thorough understanding of Arabic and English as well as in-depth knowledge of the exegesis, such as Ibn Kathir (2009), Al-Qurtubi (1999), and Al-Tabari (1981), which will steer a translator of the Holy Qur'an in gaining true meaning of the converted language and bears possible sense of the meaning of the implied meaning.

As a result of the findings of the current study, it is recommended:

1. The translator of the Holy Qur'an must have sound knowledge of Arabic at the syntactic, semantic, and textual levels for two reasons. First, the Holy Qur'an is revealed in very elaborate rhetoric, demanding proficiency in Arabic to understand and render the associative meanings adequately in English. Second, syntax plays a very significant role in the interpretation and translation of Qur'anic text.
2. Translators must read and understand the linguistic and exegetical works of the Holy Qur'an.
3. The translators ought to be extremely skilled in the two tongues and the Arabic and English cultures to dodge overlooking any of the lexical ambiguity and implication found in the Holy Qur'an.

4. In view of the fact that losses and gains at the grammatical, lexical and stylistic levels in Qur'anic text has not yet received considerable attention, further investigations are necessary to fill in this research gap.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author extends his appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Khalid University for funding this work through the Small Research Project under grant number [R.G.P1/55/1446].

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