Adjustments in *the Quran* Translation Based on Nida and Taber's Model (A Case Study of Three Translations of Az Zariyat Surah)

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Abstract: The conflict between form and meaning is not a new phenomenon, especially in the translation of sacred texts. The fusion of style and content in *the Holy Quran's*, as well as the unparalleled quality of its structure, have made its translation an arduous task for translators. The aim of the present descriptive study was to investigate the adjustments to form and meaning in three translations of Az Zariyat surah by Arberry (1998), Pickthall (2001), and Shakir (1980). The English and Arabic versions of this surah were contrasted based on the semantic and structural adjustments applied by Nida and Taber (2003) in the translation of *the Bible*. The results revealed that more than three-quarters of the adjustments were concerned with semantic adjustments, with lexical expansions being the most common. Furthermore, structural adjustments and reductions were made to a lesser extent compared to other modifications. Translators mostly chose to stick to the source text, describing only ambiguous or abstract words in the source text and avoiding significant reductions. This behavior can be explained by the sensitivity of the Quranic verses and the translators' willingness to remain faithful to the original text. The adjustment framework introduced in the present study may offer promising avenues for tackling the dilemmas in the way of rendering the style and content of the Quranic verses.

Keywords: Adjustment, Expansion, Reduction, Az Zariyat Surah.

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Introduction

Because sacred books are divinely inspired, their translations are fraught with difficulties, if not an outright impossibility. The legitimacy of translating Quranic verses into other languages has been a heated debate from the middle of the eighth century to the present. It is evident that no translator can mimic the Quranic style because it is a specific form with both prose and poetry elements (Arberry, 1998), and it makes excellent use of the original language's particular attributes. Furthermore, the form and content of *the Quran* are so intricately interwoven that neither a form-oriented nor a content-oriented translation can yield an equivalent translation in terms of form or content. In this regard, the rhythm and the rhetoric of *the Quran* are quite delicate, characteristic, and impressive, so much so that any attempt to translate *the Quran* in terms of these qualities tends to merely serve as an inferior rendition of the distinguished source text. In fact, the distinctiveness of *the Quran* can be approached and discussed from various linguistic and stylistic perspectives (Arberry, 1998).

Untranslatability as one of the most controversial topics in linguistics as well as translation theory can be approached from different standpoints. As Aldahesh (2014, p. 26) maintains, "a great deal of literature has been devoted to the question of the untranslatability of the Quran. Scholars in fields such as Islamic studies, theology, and linguistics have accounted for this essential issue from a variety of perspectives". In terms of the Quran's untranslatability, Abdel Haleem (2010) highlights the traditional notion that only the Arabic text of the Quran is accepted as the Quran, and that no translator can substitute it in his translation. He also admits that any translation of the Quran "is no more than an interpretation or form of exegesis to attempt to explain, in the target language" (p. 15). As a result, it is strongly advised that every Muslim read the Quran in its Arabic version.

Nevertheless, because many Muslims are unfamiliar with the Arabic language, translation has become an unavoidable task. Considering translatability, Abdul-Raof (2001) has given several plausible reasons for the Quran's untranslatability in terms of its principal linguistic and stylistic aspects. He has sought to address the issue in terms of such distinctive features as word order, form, the use of transliteration, the particular syntactic structures, Quranic style, and Quran particles. In the same vein, Hatim and Munday (2004) maintain that translatability is "a relative notion that has to do with the extent to which, despite obvious differences in linguistic structure (grammar, vocabulary, etc.), meaning can still be adequately

expressed across languages", and today there is an increasing demand for Quran translations to improve interactive understanding (p. 14). Of course, it should be noted here that the overriding need for Quran translations is not limited to Muslims or Muslim intellectuals because there is the same demand among non-Muslims, as well. Therefore, it can be implied that the translatability of the Quran as another central topic in the relevant literature on the Quran translation, including Hatim and Munday (2004), Aldahesh (2014), etc. deserves special consideration. In other words, the considerable relevance of the translatability of Quranic texts to the English language research, in general, can be partly demonstrated in terms of the unique characteristics of the rhyming Quranic texts. The strong appeal of the Holy Quran, which has transcended territorial borders, "stimulating the soul and the heart of people of different languages and cultures for over fourteen centuries", has made different researchers undertake detailed studies on various linguistic and stylistic aspects of this masterpiece (Dastjerdi & Jamshidian, 2011). In this regard, the translatability of the Quran has led to a huge bulk of applied research on English as the most widely used language worldwide, which has been undertaken by both "Quran translators and Quran translation stakeholders" (Aldahesh, 2021, p. 4).

Content or Style?

In every kind of translation, the translator is always confronted with the conflict between form and meaning. Needless to say, content is of paramount importance, especially in the rendering of religious texts, but neglect of style results in an obscure and unintelligible translation. Preserving the content in the same line as the form is a difficult task in the case of *the Quran* because the specific style of *the Quran* generally sounds strange and incomprehensible in English. As Abdel Haleem (2010) argues, too strict adherence to the original Arabic structure and the literal translation should be avoided.

In the Quranic language, style plays an important role in conveying the message. According to Manafi Anari (2009), each translator has used a particular style of language in his rendering. Some of these translations appear uninteresting compared to the original Arabic text because the magnificent style of the miraculous Quran is largely ignored in them. Considering the fact that the Holy Quran has a variety of styles such as narrative, didactic, argumentative, and others, translating the style of the Holy Quran is difficult (Sadiq, 2008), and most English translations are unable to convey the Quranic lexemes and styles (Abdelwali, 2007).

In the conflict between form and meaning, Anari (2009) speaks of two types of fidelity: 1. fidelity to the linguistic meaning, where the message of the original is rendered without distortion, addition, or deletion. In this area, additional explanations by the translator to clarify ambiguities are placed in parentheses or footnotes to "have a distinction between what the original text says and which is given as additional information by the translator" (p. 3). 2. fidelity to form or linguistic features that have nothing to do with imitating the original style without making significant changes or alterations. In Anari's view, " to have faithfulness to the linguistic feature of the source text the translator should employ, in the target language, a style which is the closest one to that of the original to convey the same meaning" (ibid.).

Nida and Taber's (2003) semantic and structural adjustments are also introduced on the route to resolving the discrepancy between meaning and form. They believe that semantic changes are necessary to produce dynamic equivalents that have the same effect on the target reader as on the original reader. They point out that there are not as many or as frequent reductions as expansions. As a result, they are structurally insignificant. However, it is just as important to use the right reductions as the right expansions since both are based on the same basic concepts, namely the repetition of the nearest natural equivalent.

In sum, the originating of the Quran from a divine source with its unprecedented features in style and meaning, on the one hand, and the sensitivity and delicacy of rendering the words of God, on the other, have turned the Quran translation into a cumbersome task. In this regard, Nida and Taber's paradigm (2003), which has been used in the Bible translation, can provide valuable insights for translators in overcoming the challenges of translating Quranic passages into the target language. This paper provides a snapshot of adjustments in three translations (by Arberry (1998), Pickthall (2001), and Shakir (1980)) of the Surah Az Zariyat in order to unearth which types of semantic or structural modifications are most frequently applied in the rendering the content and form of this surah. The (dis)agreement of the extracted adjustments among the translators is also investigated.

Literature Review

Among the studies on different types of adjustment in the translations of *the Quran*, Aldahesh's (2014) work examined the notion of the untranslatability of the Quran and identified its different types. His study revealed that three types of untranslatability might be at work while Muslim intellectuals and *the Quran* translators translated it. Differentiating between linguistic, cultural, and theological types of untranslatability as regards *the Quran*, he argued that the

Muslim intellectuals and *the Quran* translators differed in terms of both the ways they gave priority to these aspects and how they were dealt with. While the present study takes the translatability of *the Quran* for granted and underlines different structural and semantic adjustments which account for this translatability, Aldahesh's (2014) study has focused more on the untranslatability of *the Quran* and, especially, the way Muslim intellectuals and the translators deal with it.

Abdul-Raof (2001) emphasized the dependence of some adjustments made in translating the Quran on "the socio-cultural background and expectations of the target language audience" (p. 25). He pointed out the fallacy of considering the translation of the Quran as a mere replacement of the original text, arguing that the final translation product serves as "an interpretation of the underlying meanings of the Quran" (p. 179). According to him, this contention can best be supported in the light of the Quran-boundedness of the expressions and the structures that tend to prevail. The strength of Abdul-Raof's study lay in his scrutiny of Quran untranslatability "from a linguistic and applied translation studies perspective" while formerly, it had more been tackled "from theological and historical" viewpoints. This can help both the Quran readers and translators in recognizing "the linguistic and rhetorical limitations" that challenge them, as his examination has been clearly exemplified (2001, p. 1). Nevertheless, regarding some of his practical recommendations to the Quran translators, no representative examples have been provided to illustrate the point. For instance, his belief that "explanatory footnotes are essential for the target language reader to illuminate the various linguistic, rhetorical and socio-cultural backgrounds of Quranic discourse (p. 183) remains a case of vague not exemplified clearly to the respective readers nor the translators.

Among the most recent studies on the issue of the (un)translatability of the Quran, Aldahesh's (2021) study focused on "Quranic idiomatic phrasal verbs (QIPVs)" (p. 1). To scrutinize the challenges faced by Quran translators to convey QIPVs into English and to see if the proposed model of his study worked efficiently for investigating the renditions of QIPVs a corpus, including "ten English translations of the Quran produced by leading scholars in this field" was examined in detail (p.4). The obtained results characterized the 'couplets' as "the best practical technique to compensate for the loss of meaning at the informative, aesthetic, and expressive levels" (p. 203).

Despite his assertions that his research is non-prescriptive, Aldahesh has made certain recommendations for Quran translators based on his findings from the practical component of his work. For example, he recommends Quran translators to develop "their communicative

competence and boost their syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge, to better manage the complexities of the QIPVs". Moreover, he insists that they not only "acquire advanced knowledge about the QIPVs' idiosyncrasies and consult authoritative exegetical and lexicographical works" but also adopt the proper procedures for "compensating for translation losses as by-products" (2021, p. 203). Thus, in contrast to the present study, Aldahesh's work does not tend to be an essentially descriptive study.

Jabak (2020) also studied the applicability of Nida's theory to the English translation of Ash-Shams surah. Nida's dynamic equivalence that aims at producing an equivalent effect on the target language receptor and his three stages of translation (source text analysis, transfer, and target text restructuring) are the main focus of this study. One of the strengths of this study is exploring these concepts through the textual and paratextual (editor's preface and translator's footnotes) aspects of the translated text. Not detailed explanations on how to achieve the equivalent effect and ambiguity in shedding light on the stages of the translation process are among the deficiencies that need more clarification and investigation.

Underlining the importance of precise translation of the Quran, Sajjadi and Manafi Anari (2008) introduced different procedures for evaluating translations, investigating "the English translations of some Material and Mental verbs" as "the most frequently selected process types in most of the texts", including the Quran (p. 95). Their findings revealed the mostly applied strategies to transfer "Material and Mental verbs of the Quran" by drawing on the translations of Arberry (1998), Qaraei (2005), and Yousuf Ali (2005). It was concluded that expansion served as the most employed strategy to convey such verbs, and Arberry's (1998) translation was characterized as the best translation in this respect. Thus, their study could provide some insights into the most applied process kinds in rendering the majority of the texts. Nevertheless, it merely dealt with one aspect of the Quran translation rather than investigating other dimensions involved in a comprehensive evaluation of the Quran translation.

Dastjerdi and Jamshidian (2011) tried to judge the success of Arberry (1998) and Pickthall (2001) in terms of the strategies adopted for the Quran translation and their fidelity to the Quran text. They explored "the extent of (un)translatability of puns of the Quran and concluded that both of the translators could transfer the form and the content adequately, which necessitated them "to convey the aesthetic value by the use of compensation strategy (p.133). "Alliteration and rhyming" served as other "compensatory strategies in reproducing the aesthetic effect" in the translations. However, considering the important role of puns in accentuating the sense, their findings mostly suggested the concept of "untranslatability of

puns" concerning the two Quran translations (p. 141). While their study concentrated mainly on the "(un)translatability of puns as a frequently-occurring element of the unique style of the Quran", the present study deals with the employment of expansion and reduction strategies brought about as the result of rendering its structure and content.

In his descriptive study, Davoudi (2015, p. 15) highlighted a specific "type of nominal ellipsis used in the Quran, analyzing instances of implicit direct object ellipsis (IDOEs)" as regards the procedures employed for their translations. He investigated how they were transferred in some selected English translations of the Quran with an especial focus on different types of addition as a translation adjustment technique by Nida and Taber (2003) and translation devices model by Abdul-Raof (2001). As Davoudi's (2015) study focused mainly on ellipsis and its proper rendition, his findings could elucidate the features of ellipsis transference. Considering the significant role of ellipsis in English and Arabic languages in creating cohesion within the text and improving the readers' understanding, his work suggested interesting findings on IDOEs and the procedures used for their translations. Additionally, it enjoyed the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results, improving their generalizability and research reliability. However, his research was narrowed down in its inclusion of just one type of ellipsis. Moreover, while the present study highlights both expansion and reduction adjustment strategies, Davoudi's study laid emphasis only on the addition strategy.

Theoretical Framework

Adjustments

Based on the framework applied in the current study (Nida &Taber, 2003) adjustments are divided into two broad categories of semantic and structural adjustments each of which has its own sub-categorization.

Semantic Adjustments

Expansions. According to Nida and Taber (2003), there are two types of expansions: syntactic (or formal) expansions and lexical (or semantic) expansions (Figure 1).

Lexical Expansions. There are three forms of lexical extensions: (1) classifiers, (2) descriptive equivalence, and (3) semantic restructuring. Classifiers are quite common and can be used whenever a borrowed term requires some semantic redundancy so that the reader understands at least something about its structure and/or purpose. When the word length of the target text is changed and words are expanded, descriptive equivalence occurs. Since the words

in the target text are longer than in the original text, it is important to include as many lexical items as possible to illustrate the function and form of the event and object. Finally, semantic restructuring occurs when some statements in the original text are so condensed that they need to be expanded considerably in the target language (2003, p. 166).

Syntactic Expansions. The most common expansions required by the syntactic structure of the target languages are: 1) identification of the participants in events, 2) identification of objects or events with abstracts, 3) more explicit indication of relationals, and 4) filling out of ellipses (Nida & Taber, 2003). They are discussed below.

1. In the classification of the participants in events, the first category of syntactic expansion, various contributors to the sentence are clarified, for example, nouns must be used in place of pronouns to identify explicit participants; this can also be seen as a substitution (Nida & Taber, 2003).

2. The identification of objects and events with abstracts might be a fairly straightforward matter, as in the example of "know the truce", which can be extended to "know the true word" or "know the true message." On the other hand, these expansions can be quite complex, as in Luke, where "turn... the disobedient to the wisdom of the just" might require a significant expansion, for instance, "to change the disobedient persons so that they will act wisely as the just people do" (Nida & Taber, 2003, p. 166).

3. A more explicit indication of relationals is the third category of syntactic expansion. According to Nida and Taber (2003), relationals in one language often require a more explicit indication in another. For example, "Be angry but do not sin" could be broken down into two fairly clear imperatives (p. 166). They are both legitimate and may be related in some way. In order to be fair in translating these kinds of semantic statements, the translator must explain the relationships adequately. For example, this remark could be rephrased as, "Even if you do get angry, you must not sin" (p. 167).

4. Filling out ellipses is the fourth type of syntactic expansion (Nida & Taber, 2003). Every language uses ellipsis, but ellipsis patterns vary greatly from language to language. In several languages, the sentence "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" must be translated as two separate positive-negative statements, "the Sabbath was made for the sake of helping people; people were not made for the sake of honoring the Sabbath." In this case, there are two types

of ellipsis: (a) the absence of the verb in the second clause and (b) the fact that the events in the two examples are quite different. As a result, the implicit expressions "helping" and "honoring" must be added (p. 115).

Reductions. In order to achieve dynamic equivalence in the target language, the translator may need to shorten some expressions during the translation process. During the reduction process, the translator comes across several phrases that express the sense of a phrase in the original language. Thus, one of the few words is deleted (Manafi Anari, 2009). There are seven basic types of reduction, according to Nida and Taber (2003, p. 168):

1. Simplification of doublets: Words with the same meaning are reduced to a single word in this reduction. For example, "answering", he said, "becomes" he answered";

2. Reduction of repetitions is a type of reduction used to reduce repeated words, such as "verily, verily", which must be reduced to one "verily."

3. Omission of specification of participants", for example, a reduction in the number of times a participant is mentioned as the subject of so many sentences;

4. Loss of conjunctions: It includes the reduction of hypotactic structures to practice structures. The term hypotaxis refers to the usage of subordinate clauses in a sentence. The term "parataxis" refers to the placement of related clauses one after the other without the use of linking words.

5. Reduction of formulas, for example, using 'to' instead of 'to the extent of' in 'to his' reduces the fixed phrase to a shortened one.
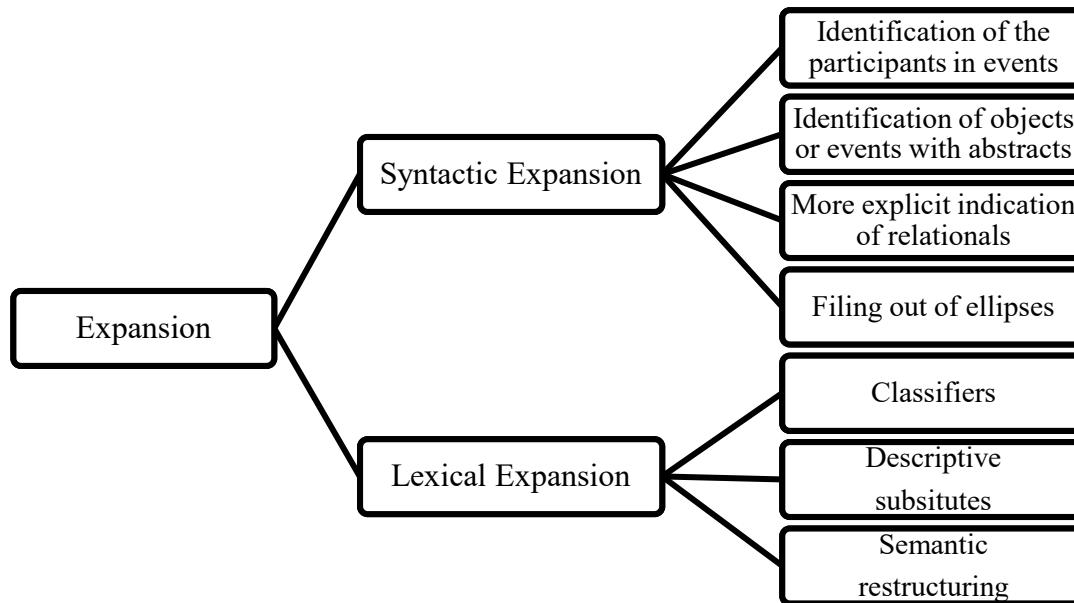
Figure 1. *Various Kinds of Expansions (Adopted from Nida and Taber (2003))*

Structural Adjustments

All aspects of linguistic structure can undergo adjustments in the translation process. Structural adjustments are made to avoid incomprehensibility and awkwardness in the target language, as previously indicated. Manafi Anari (2009, pp. 8-9) classifies major areas of this kind of adjustments into some categories:

1. Active ↔ passive
2. Adjustments of tenses
3. Singular ↔ plural
4. Change in the word levels, for example, nouns ↔ verbs, nouns ↔ pronouns, etc.

Method

Design of the Study

The aim of the present study was to investigate adjustments made to form and meaning in three translations of the Surah Az Zariyat by Shakir (1980), Arberry (1998), and Pickthall (2001). This sample study was a descriptive study whose data were analyzed in light of Nida and Taber's framework (2003). In this vein, the source text (Arabic version), as well as its respective translations, were to be examined in terms of different types of adjustments at the levels of content and style.

Materials

The materials used for collecting the relevant data of the study included the original Arabic text and its three English translations. The reason for selecting the translations of Shakir (1980), Arberry (1998), and Pickthall (2001) was that they are faithful and exhaustive compared to other existing Quranic translations. Az Zariyat surah is the fifty-first surah of the Quran revealed to the Prophet in Mecca. Thematically, it revolves mainly around the denial of the resurrection by the disbelievers. The oneness of God and His signs in the universe are also included in the verses, with some references to the stories of Moses and Ibrahim and the fate of some rebellious peoples (Aad, Thamud, and Noah). This surah was chosen because its translation has not been studied before. According to Nosrati, Sazhini, and Yousefi (2017), it has special linguistic and literary features, and its illustrations arouse readers' emotions. These characteristics may indicate the need to make appropriate adjustments to achieve a similar effect on the receptive reader.

Procedure

In this study, the word was used as an analytical unit. The researchers adopted the following procedures to conduct the study: Firstly, a contrastive analysis was conducted on the English and Arabic versions of the surah against the semantic and structural adjustments of Nida and Taber (2003) in their study of the Bible. Secondly, both types of adjustments, as well as their subcategories were carefully examined and located in the data. In this way, an attempt was first made to locate semantic adjustments that consisted of the expansion and reduction types. Then their subclasses were identified in each category. This part of the study entailed immersion in the content of the verses and their corresponding equivalents. However, identifying structural adjustments was concerned with deviation from the linguistic elements in the source and target texts. Finally, all the extracted adjustments were quantitatively explored through Microsoft Excel to obtain the percentages of each classification and their subcategories for each translator and in the whole data.

Results

Lexical Expansions

Classifiers

Classifiers, as the name implies, provide us with information about the categorization of a word to clarify its purpose or structure. This type of expansion occurs with unfamiliar or culturally

specific words that need to be clarified for readers. Only two instances of this category were applied by Pickthall (2001). In the following example, "Thamud", an ancient Arab tribe whose misdeeds were punished by God, may not be familiar to readers in the target language. As a result, Pickthall chose to expand the meaning of the word by providing details about its nature or classification in order to make it more obvious and understandable.

Source text: ﴿٤٣﴾ وَفِى ثَمُودَ إِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَمَتَّعُوا حَتَّى حِينٍ

Target text: And in **(the tribe of)** Thamud (there is a portent) when it was told them: Take your ease awhile.

Descriptive equivalence

The second type of lexical expansion is descriptive equivalence, which aims to break down a term and describe it with additional words to remove any ambiguity for the reader. The largest proportion of adjustments was found in this category (30.8%). In the following case, Shakir (1980) has translated "قَوْلٍ مُخْتَلِفٍ" into several words to convey its intended meaning. More examples of this kind of equivalent are presented in Table 1.

Source text: ﴿٨﴾ قَوْلٍ مُخْتَلِفٍ

Target text: Variance with each other in what you say.

Table 1. *Examples of Descriptive Equivalents*

Target text	Source text
and in the mornings they would ask for forgiveness (Arberry, 1998)	﴿١٨﴾ وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ
Lo! those who keep from evil will dwell amid gardens and water springs (Pickthall, 2001)	﴿١٥﴾ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ
And in the earth, there are signs for those who are sure (Shakir, 1980)	﴿٢٠﴾ وَفِى الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ

Semantic restructuring

In this category, the meaning of the original text is rephrased in the recipient language in such a way that the spirit of the message is not distorted, but the source and target texts do not correspond literally. About five percent of the adjustments were found in this domain. In the following case, "ذَنُوبًا" in its literal meaning means "sins or faults", but here it refers to "the

outcome of sins or faults." Therefore, Pickthall (2001) chose to use the phrase "the evil day", which does not fully match the surface meaning but conveys its interpretation to the target readers. Table 2 gives more examples of this procedure.

Source text: فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا **ذَنُوبًا** مِثْلَ ذَنُوبِ أَصْحَابِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٥٩﴾

Target text: And lo! for those who (now) do wrong there is an evil day like unto **the evil day** (which came for) their likes (of old); so let them not ask Me to hasten on (that day).

Table 2. *Examples of Semantic Restructuring*

Source text	Target text
(It is) the day when they will be tormented at the Fire (Pickthall, 2001)	يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ **يُفْتَنُونَ** ﴿١٣﴾
that left nothing it came upon, but made it as stuff decayed (Arberry, 1998)	مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَىْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ **كَالرَّمِيمِ** ﴿٤٢﴾
Have they charged each other with this? Nay! They are inordinate people (Shakir, 1980).	**أَتَوَاصَوْا** بِهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

Syntactic Expansions

Identification of the Participants in Events

In this type of expansion, the implied subjects of the sentences are clarified. Few cases of this expansion (3.3%) were found in this category. The following example is a part of the story of Abraham narrated in the surah, in which Abraham asked two angles sent down to him about their mission. The subject of the statement is not indicated in the original text, but it can be extrapolated from the narrative. The translator, however, has decided to include the word "Abraham" in the parentheses. In Table 3, more examples are presented.

Source text: **قَالَ** فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

Target text: **(Abraham) said**: And (afterward) what is your errand, O ye sent (from Allah)?

Table 3. *Examples of Identification of Participants in the Events*

Target text	Source text
So withdraw from them (O Muhammad), for thou art in no wise blameworthy (Pickthall, 2001)	فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنتَ بِمَلُومٍ ﴿٥٤﴾
Then those (angels who) distribute blessings by Our command (Shakir, 1980)	فَالْمُقَسِّمَاتِ أَمْرًا ﴿٤﴾
Hath the story of Abraham's honored guests reached thee (O Muhammad)? (Pickthall, 2001)	هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

The identification of objects and events with abstracts

Within this category, the translator puts extra information concerning objects or events into the sentence to avoid ambiguity. In the current study, 10.8% cases of this expansion were found. In the following example, Pickthall (2001) identifies the nature of "various opinions" for his readers by providing them with some accounts in the parentheses. Other examples of this type of expansion are given in Table 4.

Source text: إِنَّكُمْ لَفِى قَوْلٍ مُخْتَلِفٍ ﴿٨﴾

Target text: Lo! ye, forsooth, are of various **opinions (concerning the truth).**

Table 4. *Examples of Semantic Restructuring*

Source text	Target text
And those who distribute (blessings) by command (Pickthall, 2001)	فَالْمُقَسِّمَاتِ أَمْرًا ﴿٤﴾
Who are in a gulf (of ignorance) neglectful (Shakir, 1980)	الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِى غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ ﴿١١﴾
(And it will be said unto them): Taste your torment (which ye inflicted). This is what ye sought to hasten (Pickthall, 2001)	ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ هَذَا الَّذِى كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

Filling out of ellipsis

Ellipsis mostly happens to the words that are implied in the text, and their deletion is unlikely to cause problems in understanding the intended message. Nevertheless, some translators opt for filling out the place of these ellipses to avoid the slightest misunderstanding by the receiving reader. About seven percent of this procedure was found among the data. In the following

example, the phrase "too, there is a potent" is implied in the second verse, but Pickthall (2001) has chosen to insert it in the target language. Further examples are presented in Table 5.

Source text:

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَفِى مُوسَى إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

Target text:

And We left behind therein **a portent** for those who fear a painful doom.

And in Moses **(too, there is a portent)** when We sent him unto Pharaoh with a clear warrant.

Table 5. *Examples of Filling Out of Ellipsis*

Source text	Target text
When they entered unto him, saying 'Peace!' he said'Peace! You are a people unknown to me (Arberry, 1998)	إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾
And in your own souls (too); will you not then see? (Shakir, 1980)	وَفِى أَنفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾
(It is) the day when they will be tormented at the Fire (Pickthall, 2001)	يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

Reductions

The noticeable result was the paucity of reductions in the current study. In Nida and Taber's words (2003), the reduction procedure is not as numerous as the expansion, and here, since we are encountered with a sacred book, this dearth becomes severe. In the present study, 18.5% of reduction cases were extracted. These reductions were mostly limited to the "loss of conjunctions" and the "omission of the specification of the participants" that brings no ambiguity or distortion to the source text. Two examples of these two reduced forms are presented here, respectively:

Source text: فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذَنُوبًا مِثْلَ ذَنُوبِ أَصْحَابِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٥٩﴾

Target text: the evil-doers shall have their portion, like the portion of their fellows; so let them not hasten me! (Arberry, 1998).

Source text: وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

Target text: And ere the dawning of each day would seek forgiveness (Pickthall, 2001)

All kinds of semantic adjustments found in the present study are shown in the following table:

Table 6. *Semantic Adjustments Extracted from Az Zariyat Surah*

Translators	Semantic adjustments										Total
	expansions						reductions				
	lexical			syntactic			omissions of specification of participants	loss of conjunctions	using more extensive ellipses	reduction of repetitions	
	Descriptive equivalent	Semantic restructuring	classifiers	Identification of participants	Identification of objects or events with	filling out of ellipsis					
Arberry (1998)	8.7%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	2.7%	4.9%	1.1%	1.6%	21.7%
Pickthall (2001)	7.6%	1.6%	1.1%	2.2%	7.0%	4.9%	1.1%	1.6%	0.0%	1.1%	28.2%
Shakir (1980)	12.5%	2.2%	0.0%	1.1%	3.8%	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	2.2%	25.1%
	28.8%	5.4%	1.1%	3.3%	10.8%	7.1%	3.8%	8.7%	1.1%	4.9%	75.0%
Total	35.3%			21.2%			18.5%				
	56.5%										
	75.0%										

Structural Adjustments

Inconsistencies in the structures of the two languages were not as frequent as the extracted expansions (Table 7). They mainly concerned the replacement of words in the singular and plural, the adjustment of tenses (when the tenses in the source and target texts do not match), and the change of word levels (when the word levels in the source text and the translated version do not match). Some of their examples are presented here:

Singular ↔ plural:

Source text: ﴾٢٣﴿ فَوَرَبِّ **السَّمَاءِ** وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِقُونَ

Target text: And by the Lord of the **heavens** and the earth! It is most surely the truth, just as you do speak (Pickthall, 2001).

Source text: ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمِنْ كُلِّ **شَىْءٍ** خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Target text: And **all things** We have created by pairs, that haply ye may reflect (Pickthall, 2001).

Adjustment of tenses:

Source text: ﴿٣٠﴾ قَالُوا كَذَلِكِ **قَالَ** رَبُّكِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ

Target text: They said, So **says** thy Lord; He is the All-wise, the All-knowing (Arberry, 1998).

Source text: ﴿٢٧﴾ فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا **تَأْكُلُونَ**

Target text: So he brought it near them. He said: What! **will you not eat**?

Changes in the word levels:

Source text: ﴿٢٣﴾ فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِثْلَ مَا أَنَّكُمْ **تَنْطِقُونَ**

Target text: So by the Lord of heaven and earth, it is as surely true as that you have **speech** (Arberry, 1998).

Source text: ﴿٢﴾ **فَالْحَامِلَاتِ** وِقْرًا

Target text: And t**hose** that bear the burden (of the rain) (Pickthall, 2001).

Table 7. *Structural Adjustments Extracted from Az Zariyat Surah*

translators	Structural adjustments			
	change of level	Adjustment of tenses	Singular- plural	total
Arberry (1998)	2.2%	3.8%	0.0%	6.0%
Pickthall (2001)	3.3%	4.3%	1.1%	8.7%
Shakir (1980)	1.1%	6.5%	2.7%	10.3%
Total	6.6%	14.6%	3.8%	25.0%
	25.0%			

Discussion and Conclusion

Rendering the message of the source text into another culture creates some challenges for translators, and the religious type of the text adds to the severity of these difficulties.

Conducting some modifications to the source text may pave the way for conveying the original message and avoid unnatural and obscure translation. Nida and Taber's model (2003) for adjustments, previously applied in a religious context, provides this opportunity for Quranic translators to render God's message in a faithful and natural channel. The Jabak (2020) study also examined the applicability of Nida's model in Ash-Shams surah in terms of creating dynamic equivalents in the target language, which is more comprehensively explored in the present study by shedding light on how this dynamic equivalent is achieved through adjustments in the form and content.

In the current study, the most frequent adjustments applied in translating Az Zariyat surah were lexical expansions, among which "descriptive equivalent" was found with the highest proportion. The descriptive equivalent, which entails a description of the source text in the target language, is more straightforward and closer to the original words compared to the two other lexical expansions (semantic restructuring and more explicit indication of relationals). Consequently, it is a safe claim that translators had an eye on the delicacy of the text and resorted to the least deviation from the meaning of the source text.

In line with the findings of Aldahesh's (2021) study, the results of the present research shed light on the mostly applied translation procedure for rendering the Quranic texts. Nevertheless, rather than following a somehow prescriptive approach based on the findings of comparing and contrasting different translators' renditions, the current study seeks to describe how the translators draw on adjustments in dealing with the challenging task of translating *the Quran*.

Regarding the second subcategory of semantic adjustments, that is, the reduction strategy, the results of this article are consistent with the results of most previous relevant studies, including Sajjadi and Manafi Anari's (2008) research, which states that 83% of the total cases are associated with expansion, while only 17% of the cases belong to reduction. The rarity of the reduction strategy applied in the current study is also consistent with Nida and Taber's (2003) estimation of the lower frequency of reductions in comparison to expansions. However, they claimed that both strategies have the same significance and contribution to the achievement of dynamic equivalence in the target language.

Arberry's (1998) adjustments conducted in the present study denoted a deviation from the translations of Shakir (1980) and Pickthall (2001), in which the most concise and straightforward equivalents were found, alongside with most frequency of reductions, while the two other translations were similar in the proportions of expansion and reduction strategies.

The rationale for this concise and succinct style of translation by Arberry, in spite of his translations of *the Quran*, called *The Quran Interpreted* that denote a more explanatory target text, is not obvious and needs more investigation.

In terms of translatability and untranslatability as the two underlying concepts in the field of translation studies in general and *the Quran* in particular, it should be noted that the results of the current study implied *the Quran* translatability. Of course, this point does not hold true as regards the findings of some other studies, including Aldahesh's (2014) research, which lays particular emphasis on the untranslatability of *the Quran* viewed from the standpoints of both Muslim intellectuals and translators.

Similar to the present study, Davoudi's (2015) findings have both qualitative and quantitative nature, making the results more reliable and generalizable in comparison with the results of some previous works. Nevertheless, his findings related to just one type of ellipsis, whereas in this article, the ellipsis is examined as merely one of the subcategories of the syntactic expansions that take place in *the Quran* translation. In this way, the results do not tend to be narrowed down in the same way that Davoudi's (2015) findings seemed to be.

While the present study attempted to contribute to and affect the common perception of the different types of adjustments at work in Quranic translation beyond the basic linguistic levels, it faced some limitations. The corpus used in this research does not provide the possibility of generalizing the findings to other surahs as it is not comprehensive enough. As a result, future research can address a more inclusive corpus of the Quranic verses. In this vein, future studies are suggested to focus on other Quran surahs to see if the same adjustments have occurred in the relevant translations. Additionally, further studies can deal with comparing the frequency of diverse types of adjustments among English-speaking vs. Persian-speaking translators.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest to report.

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