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**OPTION:TRANSLATION**

**Semantic Loss in the Translation of the Quran**  
**Case Study: Surah Al-Waqia**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture**

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## **Dedication**

To Allah the Almighty.

To my beloved parents who devoted their lives to my education and success.

To my sisters Amina , Amira , and Rayane.

To Mohamed and Youcef and Louai

To all my friends and my best friend Sabrina.

To those who, in one way or another, helped in the achievement of this work.

**Amani**

### **Dedication**

All praise be to Allah, the Almighty, for giving me strength, patience and capacity to complete this work.

I dedicate this work to my dead father, may Allah have Mercy on him. He was a guiding light in my life and I owe many of my achievements to him.

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AMANI&CHAYMA

**Abstract**

The aim of the present study is to examine semantic loss in the translation of the Quran with reference to the analysis of the two translators of surah AL- Waqia The English translations were selected from the two works of John Arberry "The Koran Interpreted" and Abdullah Yusuf Ali "The Holy Quran: text, translation and commentary". It also attempts to investigate to what extent Yusuf and John had succeeded in achieving cultural equivalence in translation of surah AL - Waqia and as a reference Several interpretations have been used .The basic hypothesis adopted in this study sets out that the English translation of the surah will show partial and complete semantic loss of meanings mostly due to mistranslations, semantic complexity of the vocabularies and culture. To test this hypothesis the Comparative analytical descriptive methodology is used.

**Key words:** Waqia-semantic loss-holy Quran

## List of Abbreviations

**SL:** Source language

**ST:** Source text

**TL:** Target language

**TT:** Target text

### **List of Tables**

**Table 3. 1:** Showing Metonymy problem in Quran translation

**Table 3. 2:** Showing Culture-bound terms problem in Quran translation.

**Table 3. 3:** Showing that Arabic and English make different distinctions in meaning

**Table 3. 4:** Showing non-lexicalized Arabic terms in Quran translation.

**Table 3. 5:** Showing semantically complex words in Quran translation.

## contents

Dedication.....	I – II
Acknowledgements.....	III
Abstract.....	IV
List of abbreviations.....	V
List of tables.....	VI
<b>General Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Aim of the study.....	1
Statement of the problem.....	1
Research questions.....	2
Research Hypothesis.....	2
Research Methodology.....	2
Structure of the Study.....	2
<b>Chapter one: theoretical perspectives on translation</b>	
Introduction.....	5
1.1 Definitions of translation.....	5
1.2 Brief history of translation.....	6
1.3 Methods of Translation.....	6
1.3.1 Free Translation.....	7
1.3.2 Literal translation.....	7
1.4 Translation problems.....	8
1.4.1. Semantic problems.....	8
1.4.2. stylistic problems.....	10
1.4.3. cultural problems.....	13
Conclusion.....	14
<b>Chapter two: Quran translation</b>	
Introduction.....	16
2.1 History of Quran translation.....	16
2.2 The importance of translating the Quran.....	17
2.3 Difficulties of translating the Quran.....	18
2.3.1 linguistic difficulties.....	19
2.3.2 syntactic difficulties.....	19
2.3.3 lexical difficulties.....	21
2.3.4 semantic difficulties.....	22
2.3.5 stylistic difficulties.....	24
2.3.6 cultural difficulties.....	26
Conclusion.....	27
<b>Chapter three: Semantic Loss in the Translation of Surat Al- Waqi'ah in two English translations</b>	
3.1 Introduction.....	30
3.2 Corpus.....	30
3.3 Identification of the selected translation.....	31
3.3.1 Abdullah Yusuf Ali.....	31
3.3.2 Background.....	31
3.3.3 Translation work.....	31
3.3.4 Arthur John Arberry translation.....	31
3.3.5 Background of the translator.....	31
3.3.6 Translation work.....	32
3.3.7 Ibn kathir's.....	32



3.4 Semantic Loss at Word Level in Quran Translation	33
Conclusion.....	42
<b>General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>44</b>

# **General Introduction**

## **General introduction**

Due to the fact that English and Arabic come from two distinct language families, it is reasonable to discover many differences between the two. Each language has its specific characteristics in terms of linguistics and culture. However, any religious text, particularly the Holy Quran, can be difficult to translate accurately into any language. Despite translators' best efforts, they are often incapable of doing so in a way that is authentic and accurate due to a variety of challenges that may be linguistic, lexical, or cultural. Since Arabic is a very complex language with many variations in word meanings, and it is the language of the Holy Quran, other languages frequently need greater wordiness to convey the meaning, which takes away some of the Quranic message's outstanding clarity. Additionally, it is a challenge to comprehend and translate the culturally particular phrases, in addition to the classical language of the Quran, which requires considerable research and significant effort.

Several translators, including John Arberry, Yusuf Ali, and Pickthall, have rendered the meaning of the Quran. However, since the Quran was revealed in a manner that is not fully understandable to non-Muslims, its meaning cannot be completely translated into any other language, which weakens the original meaning and decreases its true value. This has resulted in a loss that has been widely discussed in the field of translation and is one of its hardest problems.

## **Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to investigate semantic loss in the English translation of surah AL- Waqia by the two translators; John Arberry and Yusuf Ali and decide which one of the two translations is closer to the meaning of the original text in the final result.

## **Statement of the problem**

Quran translation is a difficult subject for translators since it contains particular terms that have no equivalent in the English language as well as the Quran contains many references to historical and cultural events that may not be familiar to non-Arabic speakers, leading to potential for semantic loss in translation .

## **Research questions**

In order to investigate semantic loss in Surah AL- Waqi'ah, the following questions are raised:

- 1- does semantic loss exist in both English translations ?
- 2 – What are the types and causes of semantic losses in the two English translation of Surah al Waqia?

## **Research Hypothesis**

In order to answer these questions, the research hypothesis could be stated as follows:

- If translators failed in translating Quran meaning effectively, a partial or complete loss will occur .
- If translators succeeded in translating Quran meaning effectively, a partial or complete loss will not occur.

## **Research Methodology**

The present study follows the Comparative analytical descriptive methodology, taking AL-waqia verse and its English translation as its practical corpora. where an attempt to examine and investigate semantic loss through analyzing and discussing the translated version of surah AL- waqiAAa by a Muslim, and non- Muslim translator and compare it to the original by reference to several exegeses in order to determine to what extent the translators failed or succeed in rendering the Quran components.

## **Structure of the Study**

The present study is divided into a general introduction, three chapters and a general conclusion. The introduction that reviews the work, it contains the aim of the study, statement of the problem , questions to be answered in a conclusion, hypothesis, methodology then a research structure which describes the dissertation.

The first and the second chapters are theoretical, the first one is entitled" the theoretical perspectives on translation". It is divided into four sections. The first section is

devoted to “the history of translation” . Second section covers “the definitions of translation” i.e. how it has been viewed by different scholars. The third section deals with the common “methods of translation” and the fourth section tackles “translation problems” that may face translators.

The second chapter is concerned with "Quran translation ". It is divided into three sections. The first section is about “a brief history of Quran translation in English” i.e. by whom it was produced the first. The second section tackles “The importance of translating Quran” and reasons behind its importance. The third one sheds light on the difficulties of translating the Quran with examples from Quran itself.

The third chapter is practical one, it is dedicated to the collection and analysis of data, in addition to discussion and comparison of some cases (verses) of “Arberry” and “Yusuf Ali” translations of Surah AL-Waqiah and effect on the meaning of the (ST). Finally, a conclusion summarizes the research and answers the research questions by the founded results.

# **Chapter one: Theoretical perspectives of translation**

## **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on theoretical perspectives of translation. First, it begins with a brief history of translation, followed by various definitions of translation from different perspectives. Then the chapter discusses two main methods of translation: literal and free translation. Finally, it concludes by the challenges that translators face including semantic, stylistic and cultural issues.

### **1.1 Definitions of translation**

The concept of translation has been defined by many scholars and experts especially that translation deals with the structure and meaning. According to Catford (1974), translation is the act of replacing a text written in one language with another. However, Nida and Taber (1989) defined translation as the process of transcribing the messages from one language into another keeping the meaning and style of the original language into consideration. From the two previous viewpoints translation focuses on the structure, style and meaning. when it comes to the meaning, Newmark (2010), defines translation as translating the text's meaning to a different language in the Author's original manner. Nida (1969, p.12), assumes that translation is "reproducing in the receptor language that natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning.....". In addition, Ghazala (1995), also defines translation as all techniques and procedures used to translate the meaning from the original language to the intended language. This means that meaning is an essential aspect in translation in order to have an exact equivalence in the target language during translation.

From all the above definitions, we can understand that the meaning plays a major role in the process of translation. However, there are many different opinions from which to observe translation, for instance Fedouh (2009), who sees that translation is not just the conveying of a message from one language to another but also the civilized transmission of a source text from one culture to another. In this case, we comprehend that it is a cultural transfer more than just changing a word by another word. Therefore, from all the previous definitions we understand that translation is clearly influenced by structural contextual, cultural aspects. It is important to have a decent understanding of both SL and TL because it largely depends on both.

## 1.2 Brief History of Translation

The history of translation dates back to a time when oral communication was the norm. Early translators were hunters who communicated with foreigners to gain important details about places and to satisfy their curiosity. As societies and cultures began trading with each other, the need for translators and interpreters increased. The Greeks, Romans, and Syrians are some of the earliest civilizations that contributed to the history of translation. In the Arab world, the arrival of Islam in the 7th century was a turning point as it affected all aspects of people's lives, including the need for translation. Zaid Ibn Thabet was the translator of the Prophet and later, as a result of the Islamic Kingdom's growth, Arabic became the standard language of an extensive civilization that included a variety of linguistic and cultural communities. (Mehawesh, 2014)

During the Middle Ages, the concept of a professional interpreter was introduced, and John Wycliffe completed the first English translation of the bible. In the early Renaissance, there were opposing views on how to translate sacred texts. Some translators believed in word-for-word translations to preserve the divine word, while others preferred to interpret the message so that it could be understood by everyone. In the modern era, the two main elements of translation are transparency and faithfulness, which refer to accurately conveying the original text into a target language while taking into account the original's context and characteristics and how closely the text looks like writing in the intended language while keeping to that language's vocabulary and structure. (Racoma,2018)

## 1.3 Methods of Translation

It includes a variety of approaches and strategies that are used at the linguistic level to convert a text from the original language to the intended language while taking into account the translation task at hand and the communication environment. The method is chosen in advance of the translation process and depends on a number of elements. Schaffer (1998), claimed that the activity of translation is controlled before and after the whole procedure by essential standers which are: primary, procedural, preliminary standers. First, A message's selection for the translation will be based on Preliminary. Primary standers decide which of the basic strategy (foreignization and domestication) will be employed and procedural standers are concerned with the small aspects of the word and phrase construction. According to Delisle (1993), translation methods can be classified into: adaptation, literal, semantic



translation. Han (2012, p. 306) made reference to various translation methods: semantic, literal, word -for –word, idiomatic, free translation.

### 1.3.1 Free Translation

It refers to the process of rewriting a text in a manner that preserves its main ideas. In addition, the form of the source text might or might not have been faithfully translated. As well as, ignoring and giving attention to every detail, it can include modifying or eliminating context while preserving the overall meaning. These changes are typically made by translators to maintain the fluency and simplicity of the material and language. (Hasa,2021) It is also referred to as intensive translation; it is frequently used in informal translations such as those of literature works, promotional items...etc. Additionally, to be able to perform a free translation, interpreters need to have an excellent understanding of both the cultures of the source and the intended Languages.

For example:

1/you should close the door

سرقة البيوت منتشرة هذه الايام

(Learning is here,2021)

2/her decision to leave her job for a new one was ill-thought

لم يكن قرارها بترك وظيفتها والشروع في اخرى حكيم

(Rug of Knowledge,2021)

### 1.3.2 Literal translation

For literal translation, translators convert the grammatical elements of the original text to be nearly equivalent in the intended language. The translation in this particular case ignoring the associations that exist between the terms. (Acculing,2021)

Also, it is employed to keep the fundamental features of the cultures of the original language, translators utilize it in order to maintain the exact meaning, structure, style, and content of the original culture without modification. (Rug of Knowledge,2021) For example:

1/ just look on the bright side.

فقط انظر للجانب المشرق

2/ he looks blue.

يبدو ازرق

## 1.4 Translation problems

Translation as a subject of study or as a branch of science can be viewed as an exciting job. However, it is not easy to find an equivalent of expression in the same language, so how about trying to find it across different languages and cultures?

There are a lot of different problems of translation that may face translators while they are doing their job, all translators whether beginners or professionals are concerned with translation problems, or at least challenges. According to Ghazala (1995, p.17) there are problems that can face the translators occur when he finds them difficult to translate from the source text into the target text without reviewing his vocabulary whether he is monolingual or bilingual, or without forcing a lot of effort to find, employ, and create from his cultural and linguistic knowledge as well as his life experiences. The majority of time, translators deal with translation issues that can have a variety of true causes including; semantic, stylistic, and cultural issues.

### 1.4.1 Semantic problems

(Akan et al,2019) assumes that learners or interpreters have additional difficulties in this area because words are essential for translating main concepts. These difficulties arise whenever a term, expression or idea cannot be grasped simply and immediately; it is misinterpreted, or it does not appear in commonly used lexical items or dictionaries. The following are some important additional linguistic or semantic issues that learners and interpreters usually face:

#### 1.4.1.1 Equivalence

It is a crucial notion in the translation of all languages, the concept of equivalence is presented as an essential component of human connection; it must be highlighted that this concept belongs to the verb's common sense when we translate it. Because of this, people frequently expect us to put our ideas and emotions into action. There are forms of equivalence that can be described as follows: let's look at this example:

They are like two peas in a pod.

1-Formal equivalence: draws awareness to the message 's shape and content.

هما متشبهان تشابه حبتين في فرن بزلأء

**2-Functional equivalence:** happens whenever careful consideration is made to the purpose of the SL phrase without regard for its content or form, it has made by the SL reader 's brain:

هما فولة وانقسمت

**3-Ideational equivalence:** occurs when the interacting languages understand the external environment in a manner that is similar from a linguistic perspective, leading to “optimal similarity” involves the formal as well as functional equivalences exist. (Mustansiriyah University, 2020)

هما متشابهان تشابه البيضة بالبيضة

#### **1.4.1.2 Connotations**

It is when a term has an extra meaning to its semantic meaning, for example; the Arabic term افعى ( i.e: snack) besides to its famous meaning it also can signify as “untrustworthy person” . Terms that gain their meaning in the society that they are connected with since in all cultures, individuals relate specific meanings with specific words until they turn into a reflection that represent the meanings attached to them. (Akan et all, 2019)

#### **1.4.1.3 naturalization**

According to Akan et al. (2019), it is render an ambiguous term or statement comprehensible (such as one that is religious, cultural...).For example ,the Arabic term الشرف even if it means “honor” without more clarification, it will not be evident to English speakers what it means consequently , a paraphrase generally lasts more than the original words. It is refers to a translation technique in which typical TL usage is transformed to SL usage primarily: vocabulary, collocational and morphological levels are involved in this procedure. For example the English phrase “Fast color” is translated as لون ثابت the English collocation “strong tea” is translated into شاي ثقيل.(translation with reference to English And Arabic, 2019)

And in such situation, since literal translation can result incorrect statements in the target language (TL) in situations when naturalization is necessary ,so the use of naturalization is an essential part of translation .Additionally, literal interpretation, parallelism, and phrasing verbs ...make it difficult to translate a word or expression .

#### 1.4.1.4 Partial semantic loss and complete semantic loss

According to Martono (1995), there are in fact two main types of semantic loss; complete and partial loss:

- 1 - Complete loss: is the loss that completely alters the meaning or provides an opposite one, i.e. the target text (TT) cannot be used instead of the source text (ST).
- 2 - Partial loss: refers to the loss where just a part of the source text's meaning is delivered, i.e., certain parts of the original text are left untranslated.

#### 1.4.2 Stylistic problems

As style is so essential in translation, translators should be familiar with both SL and TL styles, in other words, may cause issues for translators due to the differences in SL and TL styles and structures. Style is given more consideration, especially when it comes to conveying the original meaning ; it is an important factor that interacts closely with meaning. Any feature of language and therefore any part of meaning can derive from style . In other words, a writer can adopt a formal or informal (slang) language or everyday language. He does this in order to convey a specific meaning because such styles are incompatible and cannot be applied in the same context. As Ghazala indicates that such styles are significant, highly essential to understanding and sometimes have a significant impact on meaning. (Ghazala,1995,p.22)

Thus, style and meaning are strongly linked, one cannot ignore the role of language style. A change in style indicates a shift in meaning therefore, if the original style of the text is not conserved, this stylistic modification may cause a terrible text to be presented as a good text and vice versa according to Martin Joos (1975), there are five categories of speech style:

- |                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1/Frozen:          | be stead / اجلس                 |
| 2/Formal:          | have a seat/ تفضل بالجلوس       |
| 3/Informal:        | sit down, please/ اجلس لو سمحت  |
| 4/Colloquial:      | feel at home/ ارتاح             |
| 5/Vulgar or slang: | sit bloody down / اقعد في مكانك |



The forms of these three brief statements are parallel, which is:

when my sister feels Sick, My father was worried about her, and my mother felt sad about her. (Khadija &MEDJOUR, 2021)

Due to language differences and different linguistic structures, translating these forms of parallelism may not always be simple. It is translatable when it is usually simple to identify an equivalent. Yet, there are times when a stylistic purpose can have a direct impact on meaning, it would be very problematic for translators, translation professionals take care of it properly because of this. (Ghazala,1995, p. 23)

### 1.4.2.3 Irony

Irony is described as the using of words to express meaning that is in contrast to their actual meaning. For example: if it were a cold, rainy day, it's irony to say; what a beautiful day! (Stanley ,2022) There are three types of irony:

**1-Verbal irony:** it is when a statement has the exact opposite connotation intended, it serves as a rhetorical strategy to show the differences in meaning.For example: a teacher said to a student, “you could take a prize for your intelligence”. This means that; she doesn't mean that he's really smart, but actually she means he's stupid.

**2- Dramatic irony:** it is a literary technique used when the audience or reader is aware of crucial information, but the characters are not , for example: in the movie Scream, after escaping from the killer, the heroine entered an unknown house, which she thought was empty, but the audience knows that the killer is present in the house as a result, the tension is raised.

**3- Situational irony:** the intended results do not occur as expected.For example: a teacher of French has terrible grammar, he should be an expert in grammar , it would be a quite ironic if he could not actually use a proper grammar .(kittelstad,2022).

### 1.4.3 Cultural problems

culture is a way of life for a group of people; it consists of the customs, traditions, values, and behaviors that they adopt without much effort and that are shared from one generation to the next via imitation and communication. According to Nida, translation is the act of recreating the original language text into another language in terms of meaning and style also. The ability to translating “the nearest natural equivalent” into the target language depends on cultural differences. There are certain translation barriers that prevent individuals from understanding one another correctly due to the variations in history, regions, and religious beliefs,..etc. So, translation requires knowledge of the individual cultures in addition to language proficiency for the translation. In this view, translation involves more than just translating phrases, clauses, or entire texts from one language into another, it also refers to cultural transfer, and this leads to some issues that may face translators.

Several languages are rich in cultural expressions and phrases, including (culturally specific). Even expert translators are struggling to work with the culturally distinctive expressions in some cases. It is so because a society’s cultural environment which embodies its perspectives, ideas, attitudes, and ideals is too broad and hence, it has certain significant elements that serve in gathering the knowledge required to determine the meaning; facilitating the translator’s quick and accurate translation. So any word, term, statement is considered to be culturally distinctive when it refers to tangible things or intangible concepts that may be connected to a moral principle, a way of life, a Particular meal, a political view or an economic concept. As a result, linguistic components must be linked to the cultural environment they come from when translating cultures. For Nida, the translator should always be aware of the differences between the whole range of cultures that the two languages represent (1964,p.90). Which means that language is regarded as a component of culture and the identity of the society. According to Ivir (1981) lexicalization and equipment vary between languages. The interpretations could be entirely different, or there could be very small overlaps. Translators may face many difficulties due to the distinctions between cultures and how life is viewed in various societies: these gaps and overlaps among languages result from these differences. Thus, the work of translating will be too difficult. Although, some cultural conceptions appear to be international, they are not understood in the same manner; every language has a unique understanding based on the beliefs of its speakers, their way of life, and even their location. Telya et al.(1998) claimed that, for instance; the British people define the word “conscience” as awareness of both good and bad, while the Russians define it

as the existence of God in one's spirit, one might observe that the Russians 'understanding of the word "conscience" is similar to how Arab Muslims understand it ; both cultures regard it as a religious belief, for Arab Muslims, good and bad are connected to Islam, the only one true thing is God , and to behave well is to worship God , whereas to do bad is to disobey God .For Muslims; God is always and everywhere present in their consciences.

As a result, the interpreters who fail to take into account these cultural differences will not be capable of identifying the various forms of perception that does occur across individuals, cultures, and languages . As a result, in a case like the example mentioned before, the translator can misinterpret or translate the notion of "conscience" incorrectly, since he could assume that it has a single meaning across all languages and for all individuals from various countries. According to Mona (1992 p.21), because of the many issues that cultures bring, translators must be skilled not only at the language level but also at the cultural context. For instance, we can observe how the phrase "House of Commons" is translated by the Russians; neither the Hebrew nor Arabic languages have an equivalent for the phrase, Russians interpreted it as "chairman" that is certainly not its correct translation since it fails to represent the position of the leader of "house of commons" like an important figure who preserves power and control in Parliament. The difficulties with cultural translation arise from the variations among languages as collections of lexical items and meanings and also among cultures as a means of conveying one 's personality and way of life particularly while the interpreters get a term in SL/C that may describe a notion that is completely unrecognizable in TL/C, whether the notion is simple or complex, translators always have a difficulties with it. (Moumene & El-Koulli. (n.d).

## **Conclusion**

translation is believed to be essential for bringing ideas closer to those who come from various cultural backgrounds, facilitating communication. However, a translator may encounter many issues and challenges when attempting to translate a particular part of speech or writing, especially if it was the word of God; The Quran.



## **Chapter two: Quran translation**

## **Introduction**

This chapter aims to shed light on various English translations of the Quran throughout history. Another concern of this chapter relates to the importance of translating Quran and reasons behind its importance. Yet, this chapter ends with the difficulties of translating the Quran with examples from Quran itself .

### **2.1 History of Qur'an translation**

#### **2.1.1 Orientalist English Translation Works on the Qur'an**

The history of English translations of the Quran dates back to the early 17th century, when the first known translation was made by Alexander Ross in 1649 under the title "The Al Coran of Mahomet". The translation was based on the French translation by André du Ryer, which was itself based on the Arabic text. It was not widely accepted. However, it wasn't until the 18th century that more significant efforts were made, often by Christian missionaries seeking to understand and convert Muslims. One of the most influential translations was made by George Sale in 1734 "The Koran commonly called the Alcoran of mohamed " based on the infamous Maracci version. It was a clear and precise translation, and for this reason it achieved great popularity throughout the eighteenth century, and it was fair to Islam, despite its Christian religiosity. Followed by Rodwell J.M " The Koran " in 1861. and E,H Palmers "The Qur 'ân" in 1880, Three other translations from Europe into English were added to the field in the first half of the 19th century; Richard Bell "The Qur'ân" (1937) ,Arthur Johns Arberry "The Koran interpreted " (1939) and N. J. Dawud " The Koran "(1955). However, Arberry's translation approach partially acknowledges the Qur'an's historical dimension as the Word of Allah. Thomas Cleary, Alan Jones, A.J. Droge, and Sam Gerrans all translated the Qur'an in the 20th century, in the years 2004, 2007, 2013, and 2015 AC, respectively. It is essential to note that Orientalist translations have generally relied on their predecessors and adhered to their translation methods as well as the commentary of the Quran.

#### **2.1.2 Major Muslim English Translation Works on the Qur'an**

Muslims first entered the world of English translation in the 20th century. Both the East and the West released a number of works. Some translations developed in response to those done by Europeans, particularly Orientalists, before them. The first English translation of the Qur'an was published in two volumes in 1911 AC by 'Abu al-Fadl (d. 1956), and the

three-volume translation of the Qur'an by Hairat Dehlavi appeared in 1916 AC. These translations were created in reaction to Orientalist writers' writings. To critically assess Orientalist methodologies, Ghulam Sarwar (d. 1873) produced a nearly identical piece in 1920 A.C.

Consequently, several more versions of the Qur'an were published while maintaining the pattern of the English translation. The translation works of people like Marmaduke Pickthall (d. 1936), Badshah Husain, and 'AbdAllah Yusuf 'Ali (d. 1953) were published in 1930, 1931, and 1934–37 AC. In the following three decades, a number of further

Muslim translations were published, but few of them merit special mention. Hashim Amir Ali released "The Noble Qur'an" in (1977) AC as a response to Muslim experimentation with the Qur'an, and in 1974 AC as *The Message of the Qur'an Presented in Perspective*. In the person of Muhammad Asad published his English translation of the Qur'an in 1980 AC under the title "The Message of the Quran", a fresh light was brought into the field of Qur'anic translation.

Among the most recent notable English translations of the Qur'an is *The Gracious Qur'an: A Modern Phrased Interpretation in English* (2008) by Ahmad Zaki Hammad. "The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary" (2015) by Say'id Husain Nasr and Mustafa Khattab "The Clear Quran: A Thematic English Translation" (2016)

Overall, the history of translating the Quran into English reflects the ongoing efforts of scholars and translators to make the message of Islam accessible to English-speaking audiences, and to provide a deeper understanding of the Quran's teachings and messages for readers around the world. (Journal, 2018).

## **2.2 The importance of translating the Qur'an**

The importance of translating the Holy Quran into English has become greater because of growing non – Arab Muslim communities in English speaking countries as well as greater academic interest in Islam (Kidwai, 1987). The Quran is the holy book of Islam and is written in Arabic. However, not all Muslims are fluent in Arabic, which makes it difficult for them to fully understand and benefit from the teachings of the Quran. This is where translation comes into play. Translating the Quran into other languages is considered extremely important and necessary. Millions of believers have benefited from understanding the translated meanings of

the Quran, which has increased their faith and conviction. Additionally, many non-Muslims have embraced Islam through these translations, entering into the religion of Allah in great numbers. It is worth noting that some people have gone astray, been misled, or turned away from the path of Allah due to poor translations of the noble book. Here are several significant benefits of translating the Quran into other languages:

- It allows us to fulfill our duty of conveying the Quran and understanding its meanings accurately. Translation combines the Arabic text of the Quran, its eloquence, and the interpreted meanings in foreign languages.
- It reveals the beauty and virtues of the Quran to non-Arabic-speaking Muslims, facilitating their comprehension and increasing their faith. Consequently, they can follow the guidance of the Quran and derive spiritual nourishment from it.
- It enlightens non-Muslims about the true teachings and noble principles of Islam, removing the barriers erected by governments and advisors who are hostile to Islam. This paves the way for the acceptance of Islam by people from non-Muslim communities. This is especially crucial in the present era, where anti-Islamic governments, their advisors, and media outlets employ deceptive tactics to distort the image of Islam among the general public.
- It helps dispel doubts and suspicions fabricated by the enemies of Islam and disseminated to mislead many non-Arabic-speaking Muslims. These doubts can be found in alleged translations of the Quran, scientific books, objective studies for students, professors, and intellectuals, encyclopedias, journals, magazines, cultural competitions, various media outlets, social media platforms, films, and TV series.
- However, it is important to note that the translations are not considered as the Quran itself, but are rather interpretations of the original text. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that translations are accurate and do not deviate from the original meaning of the Quran. Bin Mohammed Al-Sayyid (2021).

### **2.3 difficulties of translating the Qur'an**

Translating the Quran into English is not an easy task, as it involves numerous linguistic, cultural, and theological challenges. Here are some examples of the difficulties of translating the Quran into English, along with specific examples from the Qur'an.

### **2.3.1 Linguistic difficulties**

There are numerous linguistic issues arise while translating the Holy Quran from Arabic into other languages, Because no two languages have exactly the same meaning to the equivalent symbols or in the arrangement in phrases and sentences of these symbols, When translating the meaning of the Qur'an the problems with lexicals, syntactics ,Semantics and stylistics occur. (Ali et al., 2012)

### **2.3.2 Syntactic difficulties**

The word syntactic is related to the grammatical arrangements of words in a sentence (Advanced English Dictionary). There are numerous grammatical issues arise when translating the Holy Qur'an to English, due to the differences between Arabic and English .These problems increase or decrease depending on how closely the **(SL)** and **(TL)** are related.The more related they are, the less syntactic difficulties there are in translating from one into the other, like in the case of German and English who belong to the same family language ( indo-European) ,whereas Arabic and English which belong to different language families (Hebrew) and ( Indo-European) more syntactic problems are likely to be met.(Sadiq, 2008).

### 2.3.2.1 Tense

Tense is an obvious syntactic problem that translators usually encounter in translating the Holy Quran and the differences between the two languages leads to inaccurate translation, Tense means the 'grammatical realization of location in time' and how location in time can be expressed in language (Sadiq, 2010). In translating the Holy Quran, tense and verb form should be guided by the overall context and by stylistic considerations. The past tense in Arabic poses many problems in translation. Because it can be used to describe past, present, and future acts. it is used to indicate more than one time this makes it challenging for translators to comprehend the intended meaning and effectively represent it in target language for example, on translating the Qur'anic verse:

"وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا" النساء: 113

.And great is the Grace of Allah unto thee". (Yusuf Ali)"

" God's' bounty to thee is ever great"(John Arberry).

The difficulty in translating the tense ( **كان** Kâna) which is the past form of the verb( **يكون** yakûn )(to be). lies in the fact that it can be used in the past, present and future tenses depending on the context. In this case the verb is referring to the past, specifically the grace that was bestowed upon prophet muhamed (peace be upon him) during his life time. it does not refer to the end of the great favor that Allah confers upon men. Rather, it states a general fact; that is, the favor that Allah gives to men is always great. So, the past form ( **كان** kana) expresses a general fact, not something that occurred in the past.

When translating Arabic texts into English the past tense causes many problems, paying attention to semantic function rather than its form is the solution to this problem, because function is the factor that can decide which tense in English can carry out a similar function. (Sadiq, 2008).

### 2.3.2.2 Word order

Arabic has a more flexible word order than English, which can make it difficult to translate Arabic sentences into English. In English the sentence structure is more or less fixed – the subject comes first, then the verb, and finally the object (SVO). But Arabic is more flexible it has two structures:

a. nominal :subject +(verb)+object/complement

b. Verbal : verb +subject + object /complement

regarding this. For example, in surah

"وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السَّجْنُ فُتَيَانِ" يوسف : 36

Now with him there came into prison two young men )**yusuf ALI**(

And two young men went to prison with him (**pikhtal** )

**dakhala**. The focus here is on the action of **دَخَلَ** is a verbal sentence, beginning with the verb **dakhala** at the very **دَخَلَ** Prophet Joseph's (Yûsuf's) being imprisoned expressed by the verb beginning of the sentence. It is not directed towards the servants who were imprisoned with **دَخَلَ** him Alî's translation, trying to follow the SL word order, seems to focus on the verb **fatayâni** . In attempting that, Alî produces an awkward **دَاخَلَا فُتَيَانِ** **dakhala** more than the subject less communicative sentence. On the contrary, Pickthall, trying to conform to the TL word **dakhala**, produces an **دَخَلَ fatayâni** rather than the verb **فُتَيَانِ** order by focusing on the subject easier nominative sentence in English(Sadiq, 2008)

### 2.3.3 Lexical difficulties

The lexical difficulties translators face when translating Quran refer to the challenges that arise from the complex and unique vocabulary used in the original Arabic text. Quranic vocabulary comprises rare, archaic, and idiomatic words, which are often used in a distinct manner, making it challenging for translators to find appropriate equivalents in other languages. The lexical difficulties in Quran translation can arise from:

### 2.3.3.1 Lack of equivalence

The difficulty in rendering particular lexical terms was the main issue the Quran's translator ran across. One of the lexical problems with translating the Holy Qur'an is the absence of a counterpart for several Islamic terms, There is no precise English equivalent for these terms make it challenging to accurately translate them into other languages. Which can result in variation in translations leading to differences in meaning for exemple the Arabic word (**taqwa** تقوى) is often translated as "fear of God" or "piety", but it also connotes awareness, mindfulness, and consciousness. These terms only give approximate meaning They do not accurately represent the complete semantic and liturgical scope of the terminology found in the Quran. Therefore, different translations may render this term differently based on their interpretation of the context.(Elimam, 2009).

### 2.3.4 Semantic diffiulties

The term semantics refers to the science of meaning in language (Harford&Heasky,1983). It relates to the study of meaning in which language is used to interpret human expression. In Particular it is the study of how meaning is structured in sentences, phrases, and words. in our study we are dealing with semantics only at word level.

Semantic difficulties in Quran translation refer to the challenges faced by translators when conveying the precise meaning and nuance of the Arabic text into another language. These difficulties arise due to the complexity of Arabic language, its unique structure, and the cultural and historical context in which the Quran was revealed. The following examples show some semantic difficulties that may arise in translating the Qur'an at a word level.

One example of such a difficulty is the translation of the word (**ghayb** غَيْب)In Arabic, ghayb means unseen or hidden and it refers to the realm of the unseen and unknown. In Quranic context, it is used to refer to the knowledge that only Allah possesses, such as knowledge of the future and the unseen. However, in English, there is no exact equivalent to this term, so translators use different words such as "mystery" or "unknown" which do not convey the full meaning of the original term.

"ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَفَلَمْ نَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ نَكِيفٌ لِمَا كُنْتَ تَعْمَلُ" (Al-An'am: 12)

آل عمران:44



This is part of the tidings of the things **unseen**, which We reveal unto thee (O Messenger!) by inspiration: Thou wast not with them when they cast lots with arrows, as to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary: Nor wast thou with them when they disputed (the point). (Yusuf Ali).

The term "al-ghaib" (the unseen) in question in its original meaning means that the information being conveyed is from the realm of the unseen, which is revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by inspiration. It refers to events that the Prophet was not present for but is being informed of by divine revelation. It signifies the information about the past events involving the casting of lots to determine who would be responsible for the care of Mary and the subsequent dispute among the individuals. Regarding the translation by Yusuf Ali, it's important to note that translations of the Quran are not identical to the original Arabic text, as it is challenging to convey the complete richness and nuances of the Arabic language in other languages.

Another example is the translation of the word ( **فِتْنَةٌ** **Fitna** ), which means trial or temptation. In the Quran, it is used to describe the trials and challenges that believers face and the need for patience in such situations. However, in English, the word "trial" does not fully capture the meaning of the term as it can also mean a legal trial. Therefore, translators use different words such as "temptation", "chaos" or "sedition" which may not fully express the nuances of the Arabic term for example:

"وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقَفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجْتُمُوهُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِن قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكٰفِرِينَ " البقرة: 191

And slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have Turned you out; **for tumult and oppression** are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; suppress faith. slay them Such is the reward of those who suppress faith. (Yusuf Ali)

In this particular verse, Yusuf Ali translates (**fitnah**) as "tumult" or "oppression." This interpretation suggests that tumult and oppression are considered worse than killing, indicating that Muslims are permitted to fight against those who persecute or oppress them but in its original meaning it means disbelief and polytheism.

Overall, semantic difficulties in Quranic translation highlight the importance of understanding the Arabic language and its cultural context to convey the rich meanings of the original Quranic text. (Ali et al., 2012)

### 2.3.5 Stylistic difficulties

Translation is closely connected with stylistics because stylistics aims to explain how a text means rather than just what it means. Eugene Nida, a prominent translation theorist, defines style as "the manner in which the message of the original text is conveyed in the receptor language so as to evoke in the receptor the same or similar response as that obtained in the original." Style is a component of meaning that can present issues for translators and have a significant impact on the meaning. Taking the style of a text into account in translation studies involves "paying attention to what is unique to the text and its choices, being aware of patterns in the text, and paying close attention to the essential nature and function of the text" (Boase-Beier, 2006). Style plays an important role in translation especially in literary and religious texts that aim at conveying a message and, at the same time, producing an effect on their receptors through the use of a special style. The Quran is a highly stylized work of literature, and translating it into another language poses several stylistic difficulties. Some of the main issues that translators face in translating the Quran include:

#### 2.3.5.1 Repetition

Ibn al-Manzoor said: The word takraar (translated here as repetition) is derived from the word al-karr, which means going back to a thing. *Lisaan al-‘Arab* (5/135)

In sharee’ah terminology, takraar means repeating a word or phrase more than once for various reasons, such as emphasis, exaggeration, reinforcement and so on. Repetition is more eloquent than merely emphasizing and it is reflective of good style. (*Al-Itqaan fi ‘Uloom al-Qur’aan* (3/280), Mu’sasat al-Nada’ edition). The Quran uses repetition extensively, with certain words or phrases being repeated multiple times to emphasize their importance. Translating this repetition into another language without becoming tedious or losing its impact can be challenging.

"كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا" الفجر: 21

Nay! When the earth is pounded to powder (yusuf Ali )

The repetition of the word "dakkan" serves to emphasize the magnitude of the action. The word (دَكَّنَ **dakkan**) itself denotes a pounding or crushing to the extent of reducing something to fine powder (Ibn Kathir). The repetition of

(دَكَّنَ **dakkan**) creates a vivid image of the earth being pounded with such force and thoroughness that it turns into powder, conveying a sense of overwhelming destruction. Ali's translation didn't capture the essence of the repetition and did not fully reflect the intensity and emphasis conveyed by the original Arabic text.

### 2.3.5.2 Metaphors

Another challenge that translators face in translating the Holy Quran is the metaphor. Which is considered a figure of speech in which an expression is used to refer to something that it does not literally denote in order to suggest a similarity (Advanced English dictionary). We can say that a metaphor is defined in more or less as applying one thing in the name of another. Translating metaphors from any language, including the Quran, requires a balance between faithfulness to the original text and the need to convey the intended meaning and imagery to readers in the target language. It is an ongoing challenge that translators face for example the verse:

"وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا"      مريم: 4

"And the hair of my head doth glisten with grey" (Yusuf Ali)

In the above example, the borrowed from is **fire** and the borrowed for is **aging** and the ground is likening the grayness of hair to the fire flame (Hani Elimam, 2016). In the original Arabic context, the phrase is a metaphorical expression used by the speaker to convey a sense of weakness and need. The word "شَيْبًا" (shayban) literally means "grey," referring to the color of the hair. However, in this metaphorical context, it signifies aging, fragility, and the loss of strength. (al-saadi) The phrase is a poetic way of expressing the speaker's state of weakness and vulnerability. The translation provided by Yusuf Ali, "And the hair of my head doth glisten with grey," can be considered a more literal translation of the Arabic phrase (شَيْبًا الرَّأْسُ (وَاشْتَعَلَ) (wa-ishta'ala al-ra'su shayban). However, it may not capture the full depth of the metaphor and its intended meaning; it doesn't fully capture the metaphorical essence and the underlying connotations of weakness and need in the original phrase.

### 2.3.6 Cultural difficulties

Another more elaborate type of problems that is always there in translation concerns cultural problems. Culture influences the translation of some cultural expressions and this is highly problematic, many people think that translation is only a linguistic process, not paying attention to the fact that culture is so related to language that both can never be separated in general and in translation in particular. Susan Bassnett, who believes that language is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy. In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril. (2000: 14). This is an evidence that language is part of culture and any translator must take culture into account.

Translation problems generally occur due to the difference between the SL and to cultural problems also occur as a result of the differences between the SC (Source Culture) and the TC(target culture), not all cultures are the same the more difference the more difficulties in translation

Cultural differences are always one of the main causes of translation problems, particularly both languages. Belong to a totally different background, makes the cultural translation one of the most complicated and difficult kind of translation due to the cultural expression which are highly influencing. Another important problematic should be pointed which is the case of certain expressions that can be similar in different cultures but viewed from different perspectives by people belonging to those cultures, besides to the culture bound expressions that are exclusive to certain communication and do not exist in others, here, the translators find themselves facing the problem of the lack of equivalent. For example, the verse

"وَوَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَى

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ" البقرة-57

And we gave you the shade of clouds and sent down to you Manna and quails,saying”Eat of the good things we have provided for you “:(But they rebelled) . to us they did no harm , but they harmed their own souls(yusuf ali)

The term "غمام" does reflect bounty and goodness in Arabic for the Arabs live in the desert where everything is hot and clouds refer to what may avoid this hot weather. Allah counts his is translated in all the Quranic versions "غمام" "bounties over the children of Israel. The word as « clouds » which may be understood by the English reader as a punishment from God and , not a bounty according To Ali translation the word "غمام" is put in opposite context he used literal translation that may confuse the reader.

Another example is the The term (الغَنُّ والسَّلْوَى) cannot be accurately translated or borrowed directly from Arabic, as it carries a deeper meaning beyond its literal translation. It serves as a nickname or a descriptive attribute rather than a specific food name. When it comes to food from different cultures, a literal translation fails to capture the unique ingredients and cooking methods involved. Therefore, any attempt to preserve the original term for the sake of clarity may actually mislead the reader and distort their understanding of the concept being discussed. (Bousalam&mahiou 2015)

Overall, the cultural difficulties involved in translating the Quran into English require a deep understanding of Islamic history and culture, as well as a sensitivity to the cultural differences between the Arabic-speaking world and English-speaking societies. Translators must find ways to convey the cultural context and values of the Quran to English-speaking readers in a way that is clear, respectful, and faithful to the original text.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, translating the Quran into English is a complex and challenging task that requires a deep understanding of Arabic language, Islamic culture, and history. Translators face several difficulties, including linguistic, syntactic, lexical, semantic, stylistic, and cultural challenges. These challenges can affect the accuracy, clarity, and overall meaning of the translated text, making it difficult for English-speaking readers to fully comprehend the Quran's message.

To overcome these difficulties, translators need to be aware of the Quran's cultural and historical context, Islamic terminology, religious beliefs, cultural references, gender and social norms, and other factors that can affect the meaning of the text. They must convey the

meaning of the Quran in a way that is clear, faithful to the original text, and culturally sensitive to the needs and expectations of English-speaking readers.

Despite the challenges involved in translating the Quran into English, many translators have succeeded in producing high-quality translations that have helped to bridge the gap between Arabic-speaking and English-speaking cultures. These translations have enabled English-speaking readers to access the teachings and wisdom of the Quran, and have contributed to a deeper understanding of Islam and its place in the world.

**Chapter Three: Semantic Loss in the  
Translation of Surat Al- Waqia in Two English  
Translations**

### 3.1 Introduction

this chapter presents the practical part of the dissertation, which involves examining and investigating the concept of semantic loss in the Holy Quran. This chapter focuses on exploring the types and causes of Semantic loss by analyzing and comparing the translated versions of **Surah Al-Waqia** by both Muslim and non-Muslim translators Following Baker's typology of non-equivalence at the word level, The study's focus is to explore the loss of meaning in the Surah's verses by comparing them to the original text.

### 3.2 Corpus

**Surah Al-Waqia** is the **56th** chapter of the Quran, consisting of **96** verses. It is one of the most important and commonly recited surahs, as it is believed to provide numerous benefits and blessings to those who recite it regularly. The surah is classified as a Meccan surah, which means it was revealed before the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina.

**Surah Al-Waqia** emphasizes the power and glory of Allah and the importance of belief in the Day of Judgment. It shows that mankind will be divided into three groups .then it tells the description and condition of each group ,the rewards and punishment they would face .The surah encourages people to reflect on their actions and to strive towards righteousness in order to attain a place among the foremost.

**Surah Al-Waqia** is also believed to have numerous spiritual and worldly benefits. It is commonly recited during times of financial hardship, as it is believed to provide sustenance and increase wealth. It is also believed to provide protection from poverty and debt, as well as protection from calamities and misfortunes.

The corpus will show the content of this dissertation by conducting a comprehensive comparative analysis of **Surah Al-Waqia** This will involve examining and comparing the translated versions of the Surah from two different translators.



### 3.3 Identification of the selected translations

This overview includes the translators' background, the translation work, and the exegeses book.

#### 3.3.1 Abdullah Yusuf Ali

##### 3.3.2 Background

**Abdullah Yusuf Ali** (1872-1953) was a prominent Indian Islamic scholar, translator, and commentator on **the Quran**. He was born in Bombay (now Mumbai) and received a traditional Islamic education in India, where he learned Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. He later went to England to study law at Cambridge University and became a barrister.

However, Ali's real passion was Islamic scholarship, and he devoted much of his life to studying and translating the Quran. His translation of the Quran into English, known as "**The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary**," is considered one of the most widely read and respected translations in the English-speaking world.

##### 3.3.3 Translation Work

**Abdullah Yusuf Ali** is best known for his translation of **the Quran** into English. His translation work is considered one of the most widely used and recognized translations of the Quran in English. The translation was first published in 1934, and it has undergone several revisions and updates since then.

Yusuf Ali's translation is known for its elegance and accuracy, and it is often praised for its use of language that is clear and easy to understand.

He also included extensive footnotes in his translation, providing explanations and interpretations of the Quranic text. (Abdullah Yusuf Ali - National Portrait Gallery, 2021)

#### 3.3.4 Arthur John Arberry

##### 3.3.5 Background

**Arthur John Arberry** (1905-1969) was a renowned British scholar of Persian, Arabic, and Islamic studies. He was born in Portsmouth, England, and studied Oriental languages at Pembroke College, Cambridge. After completing his studies, he taught Arabic, Persian, and Islamic studies at various universities, including Cambridge.

**Arberry** was a prolific writer and translator, having translated numerous works from Persian and Arabic into English.

**Arberry's** translation of **the Quran** was published in 1955 and is known for its literary style and poetic language, which attempted to capture the beauty and elegance of the Arabic original.

### 3.3.6 Translation Work

**Arberry's** translation of **the Quran**, titled "**The Koran Interpreted**" was first published in 1955 and is considered one of the most influential translations of the Quran in English. Unlike many earlier translations, Arberry's translation aimed to capture the poetic and rhetorical qualities of the original Arabic, and he used a more literal translation style to achieve this. His translation was also notable for its inclusion of commentary and explanatory notes that drew on traditional Islamic sources.. (Arberry, a. J. (Arthur John), 1905-1969 - Social Networks and Archival Context, n.d.).

### 3.3.7 Ibn Kathir's *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAẓīm*

Ibn Kathir (1300-1373), who was born in Syria and spent most of his life in Damascus, was renowned Islamic scholar and historian. His book *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, commonly known as *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, is a classical Islamic exegesis of the Quran. Ibn Kathir began writing his *Tafsir* in 1369 CE and completed it just before his death in 1373 CE.

The *Tafsir* is known for its adherence to the methodology of the Salaf, the pious predecessors of the Islamic community, who were known for their strict adherence to the Quran and the authentic narrations of the **Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)**. Ibn Kathir's *Tafsir* also draws upon the works of earlier Islamic scholars, such as Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Qatadah, among others.

The *Tafsir* is organized by Surah (chapter) and verse, and Ibn Kathir provides a detailed explanation of each verse, often drawing upon the Quran itself or the authentic narrations of the **Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)** to provide further context and meaning. The *Tafsir* is also known for its use of linguistic and grammatical analysis, as well as its discussion of the historical and cultural context in which the Quran was revealed.(BIOGRAPHY OF IBN KATHEER | IslamBasics.com, n.d.)

### 3.4 Semantic Loss at Word Level in Quran Translation

This study is based on the translations of **Arthur John Arberry** and **Abdullah Yusuf Ali**. It is necessary for this study to point out the following verses that establish serious loss through Following Baker's typology of non-equivalence at the word level according to Baker. In a bottom-up translation method, equivalence at the word level is the first factor the translator must take into account, in order to identify a direct counterpart in the target language, the translator actually examines words as individual units when examining the source language. Baker provides a definition of the term "word" since it is important to keep in mind that a single word can occasionally have many meanings across languages and may even be viewed as a more sophisticated unit or morpheme. This indicates that when translating a single word, the translator needs pay attention to some aspects like number, gender, and tense. (Baker, M. 2004)

**The following are some common types of non-equivalence at word level**

**Table 1: Showing Metonymy problems in Quran translation**

Sample	Verse number	The original verse in Arabic	Yusuf Ali translation	Arthur Arberry translation
1	1	إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ	When the <b>Event inevitable cometh to pass</b>	When <b>the terror descends</b>

The metonymy problem raises in both English translations as they deviate from the literal meaning of the original arabic text. However, they offer different interpretation of the intended meaning. For example In Table1 verse1 (sample 1) Yusuf Ali's translation, "When the Event inevitability cometh to pass," can be seen as a more literal translation. The words are translated

fairly closely to their original Arabic counterparts, the translator failed to find an equivalent terms that conveys the intended meaning to ( وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ) ( he translated it as "**cometh to pass**" which is inefficient translation means "to occur "or" happen" according to it's original SL (advanced English dictionary). also the word (الْوَاقِعَةُ) which carries a multiple connotations including "Event","incidence"and"calamity" (Al-Waseet Dictionary ,( was translated as "**the event inevitable,**" the two words are not equivalent to the original, the verse refers to the occurrence of the day of judgment and **Al-waqiAAa** (the occurrence ) is one of the names of the day of Resurrection , because that day is real and will surely come ( Ibn Kathir exegeses), the word "**inevitable**" suggests a sense of inevitability or fate and the word "**Event**" refers to something that happens at a given place and time (advanced English dictionary) , it does not convey the emotional impact of the original one ( judgment day ) and how people must prepare themselves for that day. in addition we notice structure shift because of the different rule of both languages in the word order, like in " وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ " translated to "**the Event inevitable cometh To pass**" in this state the original Arabic word " وَقَعَتِ " is a past verb that refers to a future event translated as "**cometh to pass**" and " الْوَاقِعَةُ " is a noun ( subject ) which translated to "**the Event inevitable**". In Arabic grammar verb can be in the beginning of a sentence. As well one ST translated into three words and this is not proper to ST it shows an over translation.

Also The translation of such verse convey a complete loss of meaning and non\_native speaker of Arabic will not observe the exact meaning of the ST from this translation. While in John arberry translation, "**When the terror descends,**" can be considered a paraphrase of the original phrase, he translated the word " الْوَاقِعَةُ " to "**terror**" in its authentic meaning means an overwhelming feeling of fear and anxiety (advanced English dictionary) it implies that the Event will be a frightening or terrifying experience. This may not be a real interpretation of the day of judgment as different cultures and religious traditions may have different understandings of the event and this may not accurately conveys the full meaning of the original Arabic text In addition the phrase "**When the terror descends**" implies a shift in tense, the word "**descends**" is in present tense which suggests a current or ongoing action rather than a future event. This resulted a complete loss of meaning also the expressive and connotative meanings are lost in the translations.

**Table 2: Showing culturally bound terms in Quran translation**

Sample	Verse number	The original verse in Arabic	Yusuf Ali translation	Arthur Arberry translation
2	22	وَحُورٌ عَيْنٌ	And ( there will be) <b>companions with beautiful ,big , and lustrous eyes</b>	And <b>wide_eyed houris</b>

"Culturally bound terms" are words or phrases that are unique to a particular culture or language, and which may not have an exact equivalent in another culture or language. Translating culturally bound terms is considered a prominent problem in the process of translation, finding a cultural term which does not exist in the target culture is hard to be achieved and may result a loss of meaning for example In verse 22 (sample 2 ).The term "وَحُورٌ عَيْنٌ" is term considered a cultural bound term, as it is not translatable into English without losing it's original meaning and cultural significance. For example, Yusuf ali translated the verse "وَحُورٌ عَيْنٌ" [hoorun AAeen] as "And (**there will be**) **Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes,**" in it's authentic meaning it refers To the wide eyed beautiful houris that Will be in paradise for the believers ( ibn kathir ). The use of the word "**companions**" is not exactly equivalent to the notion of the word "**Houris**" which is cultural concept that mentioned in the holy Quran only. and the translation does not provide the same cultural richness as the original term. his translation created a loss of the specific and important cultural context of the word "**houris**" in Islamic belief and resulted a partial loss of meaning.

On the other hand, John arberry translation "**wide\_eyed houris**" retaining the term used in the original Arabic text, and therefore preserving it's cultural meaning but it possess a cultural bound term problem for some readers who are unfamiliar with the term and it's

Islamic connotations. In addition Both translations omit the word "**houris** " and instead use descriptions of their physical features.

**Table 3: Showing that Arabic and English make different distinctions in meaning**

Sampl e	Verse number	The original verse in Arabic	Abdullah Yusuf Ali translation	Arther Arberry translation
3	7	وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً	And you shall be sorted out into three <b>classes</b>	And you shall be <b>three bands</b>

when translating between Arabic and English, certain words or phrases may not have direct one-to-one equivalents. As a result, the translator needs to make choices and decisions to convey the intended meaning in the target language For example In verse 7 (samplpe 3), yusuf ali rendred the word ( ) "أزواجاً" (**azwajan**) as " **classes**" which is not accurat it suggests a classification process according to the Cambridge Online Advanced Learner's Dictionary, means "people who share rank," but the ST word does not imply that it means that people will be grouped, but with different ranks (Alt-Tabari online exegies). In other words people will not share the same rank as the translation suggest but consequently This loss of meaning in translating the verse is partial because the general meaning is partially conveyed.

While according to John arberry translation he rendred the term أزواجاً "as "**bands** " which means in its original text a bind or tie together "(advanced online english dictionary) this translation shows a clear disregard for the meaning of the original and this resulted a complete loss of meaning .

**Table 4: Showing Non-lexicalized Arabic terms in Quran Translation**

Sample	Verse number	The original verse in Arabic	Abdullah yusuf ali translation	Arthur Arberry translation
4	5	وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًا	And the mountains shall be <b>crumbled to atoms</b> ,	And the mountains <b>crumbled</b>
5	34	وَأُفْرِشُ مَرْفُوعَةً	And <b>on Thrones (of Dignity)</b> , raised high	

There are certain words in Arabic may not have a direct equivalent in English, so translators may use different approaches and divergent translations depending on their background and intention. The problem of non-lexicalized terms is a common challenge in translation, where words that carry complex and culturally-specific meanings may not have an exact counterpart in the target language. This can lead to various challenges in translation. for example in verse 5 (simple 4) Yusuf Ali translates the verse as, "**And mountains shall be crumbled to atoms.**" This translation uses the phrase "**crumbled to atoms**" to convey the idea that the mountains will broken into tiny pieces that could be compared to atoms. By using the term "**atoms**". In its original meaning it means The mountains crumbled to pieces, and became like dried flour while it was wet ( AL Tabari). Yusuf Ali also makes the translation more confusing for readers who may understand the concept as atomic structure.this translation conveys a partial loss to the meaning of the verse.

On the other hand, John Arberry's translation simply states, "**And the mountains crumbled.**" This translation is more literal and direct, describing the action of mountains crumbling without going into further detail. It suggests that the mountains will crumble, but it

does not explicitly mention the extent or outcome of the crumbling this led to complete loss of meaning.

In this verse<sup>34</sup>(sample 5), Yusuf translated the Arabic word "فُرُشٍ" to "**thrones**" which does not convey the sense of the Arabic word as it stated by Ibn al khatir which implies the meaning of comfortable and soft sleeping surface on which the companions of Jannah will sleep(beds). Whereas he used the word "**thrones**" which is a type of chair that is usually associated with royalty or power(advanced English dictionary).Thrones are used by kings ,queens , emperors, or other rulers as a symbol of their authority and power and it does not convey the exact meaning of the Arabic word. However, Arberry translated the word "فُرُشٍ" to "**couches**" which means a piece of furniture having arms and a back that can fit two or more people at once; a sofa (advanced English dictionary) which may not fully capture the exact meaning of the Arabic word "فُرُشٍ". Although, it may still be closer to the intended sense of the verse than the word "thrones" used by Yusuf

As a result, both translations convey the same general idea of elevated couches or thrones, but the choice of words is different. This highlights the challenge of translating non-lexicalized words and the importance of understanding the context and cultural significance of the original text.



**Table 5: showing semantically complex words in Quran translation**

Sample	Verse number	The original verse in Arabic	Abdullah Yusuf Ali translation	Arthur arberry translation
6	25	لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيهَا	Not frivolity will they hear therein, <b>nor any taint of ill,</b>	Therein they shall hear no idle talk <b>No cause of sin</b>
7	37	عُرَابًا أُنْرَابًا	<b>Beloved (by nature),</b> Equal in age,	<b>chastely amorous</b>
8	13	ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ	<b>A number of people from those of old</b>	<b>)a throng of the ancients .and how few of the later fork)</b>

The challenges of reproducing specific lexical terms is the main issue that face Quran translators, this is due to the lack of equivalent for several Islamic words which have specific cultural and religious connotations that are difficult to translate into another language. So, translators are often forced to find ways to express these concepts in a way that is understandable to the readers in their target language by using words or phrases like the example here verse 25 (sample 6), Yusuf translated the word "تَأْتِيهَا" to "taint of ill" which does not fully capture the specific connotation and meaning of the original Arabic word "تَأْتِيهَا". The word "تَأْتِيهَا" is derived from the root word "أتيم", which means "to commit a sin" or

“to do something wrong”, the word تَأْتِيْمًا can therefore be understood to mean “**sinful speech**” or “**foul words**” as it stated by Ibn Al-kathir. However, the phrase “**taint of ill**” refers to negative impact of engaging in harmful behavior, it suggests that such behavior can taint or corrupt a person’s character or reputation and can have negative consequences for both the individual and society as a whole.

However, Arberry translate the word “تَأْتِيْمًا” to “**cause of sin**”, which means actions, behaviors , or speech that can lead a person to commit a sin or engage in sinful behavior and as it is clear, it does not convey the correct meaning of the word, and this leads to complete loss of meaning. As a result, both translations of Yusuf and John do not express the meaning of the word in the Quran and this is due to some Arabic words which are semantically complex; they cannot be translated into single words

In verse 37(sample 7), the word” عُرْبًا “translated by Yusuf to **beloved (by nature)** which can be interpreted to mean that something or someone is loved naturally without any external influence or force. In the context of Yusuf’s translation of the term “عُرْبًا” to “**Beloved (by nature)**” and the word beloved means that the companions in paradise will naturally love and care of one another . The use of the term “by nature” implies that the strong and deep love and bond between the companions will be innate and natural as a result of their shared faith and righteousness , it suggests that the companions will be perfectly matched and suited to one another in terms of their characteristics and qualities.

However, John translated it to “**chastely amorous** “ , which means the companions in paradise will experience a loving and affectionate relationship that is based on mutual respect and purity , and that is free from any impurities or inappropriate desires. Therefore the word “chastely” emphasizes the purity and absence of any physical or sexual desires (advanced English dictionary) , while the word “amorous” suggests that the companions will have a deep and passionate love for each other . As a result, both translations demonstrates a complete loss of meaning since the actual meaning of the term is the ladies who pursue their partners with kind words and humorous behaviors , as it stated by Ibn Al-kathir. Furthermore, the term is culturally specific, so it can only be understood by those who are familiar with classical Arabic and the Quranic text which includes native speakers of Arabic. However, it is possible for non-native speakers of Arabic who have studied classical Arabic or the Quranic text to understand the meaning of the word.

In verse 13 (sample 8) Yusuf Ali's translation provides a relatively literal rendering of the phrase. He uses the phrase "**a number of people**" to convey the idea of a group or collection of individuals. "**a number**" implies the prosperity possessed by a sum or total or indefinite quantity of units or individuals (Advanced English Dictionary) However, the use of "**those of old**" to translate "الأوليين" introduces a semantic loss. The term "الأوليين" in Arabic refers to the first generations of Muslims (Ibn Kathir). However, Yusuf Ali's translation does not capture this nuance. In addition The denotative and connotative meanings of the verse were not translated, and as a result, the translation completely lost its meaning.

While John Arberry's translation: "**a throng of the ancients**" John Arberry's translation also aims to capture the idea of a group or multitude by using the term "**a throng.**" However, unlike Yusuf Ali, Arberry's translation includes the term "**the ancients**" to convey the meaning of "الأوليين" This choice of words is closer to the original intent, as it suggests a sense of historical importance and reverence for the first generations of Muslims and this resulted in partial loss of meaning.

In terms of the semantic loss, both translations deviate from the original phrase "ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ" to some extent. While Yusuf Ali's translation fails to convey the significance and reverence associated with "الأوليين" Arberry's translation manages to capture some of that meaning by using "**the ancients.**" However, it's important to note that both translations still provide a general understanding of a group or collection of people, which is the primary idea conveyed in the original verse.

It also can be noticed that the verse "ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ" can be classified as a lexical gap because there is no direct equivalent for the word "ثُلَّةٌ" (thullatun) in English. Yusuf Ali and John Arberry have used different expressions to convey the meaning of the phrase, resulting in non equivalence and semantic loss.

## **Conclusion**

Through the course of this chapter, we sought to uphold the notion that there is uncertainty in the Holy Quran's translation that causes semantic loss; the aforementioned debates, analyses, and comparisons of the suggested translated verses of Surah Al-waqiAAa, Our analysis of the verses translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and John Arthur Arberry leads us to the conclusion that the literal translation used by Arberry creates ambiguity in the verses' meaning and renders them unintelligible. Similarly, Ali's translation results in a partial loss and, in some verses, a complete loss.

# **General Conclusion**

## General conclusion

Translating sacred texts like "The Noble Quran," especially Surat Al -Waqi'ah , presents significant challenges for translators due to linguistic, lexical, and cultural barriers. This study focuses on semantic loss at the word level during the translation of Surat Al- Waqia. The complexity of the Arabic language and the specific cultural and religious nuances associated with the Quran contribute to these challenges. Translators often need to consult various resources and conduct extensive research to ensure accurate and faithful translations. The goal of this study is to investigate specific instances of semantic loss in Surat Al- Waqi'ah to understand how translation choices impact the overall meaning and interpretation of the Quranic text.

The loss in translating the Quran is considered more serious compared to other types of texts because these texts represent a living institution. Translators often sacrifice certain aspects of the original text that do not align with the beliefs and practices of the target language's culture. This can result in the loss of language and cultural elements, whether explicit or implicit, partially or entirely. Loss in translation can occur on both the surface and deep structures of the translated text. Surface structure loss refers to the absence of morphological, grammatical, syntactic, stylistic, rhetorical, and semantic elements in the target language. Deep structure loss refers to the inability to convey the implicit characteristics of the source text in the target language.

This research has revealed that semantic loss in English translations of Surah Al-waqia exists. The loss occurs either completely or partially. However partial losses tends to be more common than the complete loss. In addition, translators sometimes select words that are improper in their semantic fields. Such inaccuracy of selected vocabulary leads to a shift in meaning. Many non-equivalent problems were as causes for semantic losses found in the translation of Surah al-WaqiAAa in the translation by Yusuf Ali. This research revealed that semantic loss occurs mainly because of cultural gaps; the Qur'anic language has its own lexicons that are culturally bound. Another cause is the translator's relatively poor knowledge of the sciences of the holy Qur'an . In this light , many approaches of translation such as literal translation and communicative or semantic translation have been used by translators .However, the former(literal translation approach) has been rejected because the holy Qur'an cannot be translated literally, and the latter creates loss of meaning .Thus , in view of the complexities of the message.

Translators face numerous challenges when trying to convey the meaning of the Quran, proving that the Quran is essentially untranslatable in terms of both linguistic and non-linguistic elements. Allah has challenged Arabs to reproduce the Quran in an identical form, highlighting the uniqueness and specific forms of each language. Therefore, some degree of loss is inevitable. This loss hinders translators from achieving complete equivalence at various levels and highlights the independent nature of languages, which differ in terms of perspectives, logic, and the combination of words. Translators acknowledge these differences and are not afraid to encounter various forms of loss during their work.

The language of the Quran prompts translators to question which levels of meaning may be lost and which should be preserved. However, these losses are not seen as truly negative or positive. Translating such a text reveals that written or spoken materials are transferred and reflected in the cultural context of another language for communicative purposes. The rhetorical beauty and richness they possess in the source text are not necessarily fully preserved in the target text, as they can only be fully appreciated within their original linguistic and cultural context conveyed in the Qur'an, it seems reasonable to state that the only acceptable translation is the exegetical translation; one that is based on exegesis books, which will guide a translator in attaining accurate meaning of the TT without full knowledge of the exegesis books, a translator will inevitably fail in translating the Holy Qur'an. In addition, translation of the Holy Qur'an should be carried out by a team of scholars who are experts in the different branches of knowledge related to the Holy Qur'an.

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## Résumé s

Cette étude vise à montrer la perte du sens lors de la traduction de "sorat Al-Waqiah " en basant sur l'analyse de ses traducteurs On a choisi la traduction anglaise des deux ouvrages : le premier intitulé " ,,,," de Jhon arberi, et le second est celui de Abdullah youcef ali dont le titre est "le Coran texte, traduction et commentaire. L'étude veut également déterminer à quel point les deux écrivains ont pu préserver la compatibilité culturelle lors de la traduction en basant sur l'interprétation du Coran comme référence. D'après l'hypothèse émise dans cette étude la traduction anglaise de sorat Waqiah montre une perte de sens partielle voire même complète et c'est dû au non-respect du contexte culturel ,la compatibilité sémantique et les termes et les expressions compliqués Pour effectuer cette étude on a adopté comme méthodologie la comparaison et l'analyse comparative afin de confirmer ou infirmer l'hypothèse.

**Mots-clés :** perte de sens, traduction, Saint Coran, Sourate Al-Waqi'ah

## ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن خسارة المعنى في ترجمة القرآن استناداً لتحليل مترجمي سورة الواقعة. وقد تم اختيار الترجمات الإنجليزية من كتابين: الأول لجون أربيري بعنوان "القرآن المفسر" و الثاني لعبد الله يوسف علي بعنوان "القرآن الكريم : نص وترجمة وتعليق". كما تحاول الدراسة تحديد مدى نجاح يوسف علي و جون أربيري في تحقيق التكافؤ الثقافي في ترجمة سورة الواقعة اعتماداً على عدة تفاسير كمرجع. وبناء على الفرضية الأساسية المعتمدة في هذه الدراسة، فإن الترجمة الإنجليزية للسورة ستُظهر خسارة جزئية و خسارة كاملة للمعاني، ويرجع ذلك أساساً إلى الترجمات الخاطئة وإلى المفردات المعقدة من الناحية الدلالة ناهيك إلى مشكلة الثقافة. وقد تم الاعتماد على منهجية المقارنة والتحليل الوصفي لاختبار هذه الفرضية.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** خسارة المعنى، الترجمة، القرآن الكريم، سورة الواقعة