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Lexical Ambiguity in the Holy Quran and Its Rendition into English

By

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Abstract:

Throughout history, the translation of religious texts has played a significant role in disseminating the divine message. Ambiguity is a paramount and confusing issue that recurrently arises when translating the Holy Quran. Therefore, translators must be able to understand the original source text (ST henceforth) and translate it faithfully, accurately, and integrally into the target language (TL henceforth). The interpretation of the meaning of Quranic words that evoke uncertainty can be accomplished through resorting to the authentic exegeses. This study focuses on lexical ambiguity arising from homonymic and Homographic forms in the Holy Quran and its English translation. The two reputable translations of the Holy Quran (by Arberry and Hammad) are used and compared here in order to evaluate their level of accuracy according to Nida's formal equivalence approach. A descriptive comparative approach is applied with the help of three exegeses (Al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, and Al Sharawy) and two monolingual dictionaries (Al-Mogam Al-Wageez and Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary "Third Edition"). The translations of Arberry and Hammad demonstrate the applicability of Nida's source-text approach, such that both translators remained faithful to the ST and rendered the words evoking ambiguity accurately into English. Furthermore, the results demonstrate Nida's approach of formal equivalence as a means of achieving fidelity to the ST and translating the meanings of ambiguous words in the Holy Quran in accordance with the authentic exegesis of the Quran.

Key words: *Lexical ambiguity, Translation of the Holy Quran, Nida's Approach of Translation Equivalence, Arberry and Hammad's Translation.*

1.0. Introduction:

The Holy Quran has been revered by Muslims for centuries, and its translation into other languages is a complex mission that requires careful consideration of linguistic, cultural, and theological factors. One of the key challenges in translating the Quran is dealing with lexical ambiguity, in which words may have multiple meanings or interpretations. This challenge can be addressed through Nida's formal equivalence approach, which prioritizes fidelity to the source. As part of this objective, translators should consider the authentic exegeses of the Holy Quran in order to obtain the correct meaning and interpretation of words in the source text which are ambiguous. Therefore, this study examines how lexical ambiguity in the Holy Quran is translated in light of Nida's approach to formal equivalence, with the aim of achieving fidelity to the original text and communicating the intended meaning of the original text to the intended readers. A deeper understanding of the Holy Quran and its translation into other languages, particularly English, can be gained through examining specific instances of lexical ambiguity and demonstrating how Nida's approach has been effective for achieving fidelity to the source text and accurately rendering its meanings.

1.1. Statement of the problem:

Owing to the significance of religious texts, the proper transference and translation of the Holy Quran into English is crucial. The translations of the Holy Quran must be accurate and faithful to the ST for it to achieve its optimal aim. To achieve its optimal purpose, the Holy Quran translations must be accurate and faithful to the ST. Due to the linguistic complexity and ambiguity of certain terms in the

Holy Quranic text, translation can be challenging. Translators have to disambiguate ambiguous terms by making their meanings clear and accessible to TT readers so that they can understand their meanings.

1.2. Significance of the Study

This study investigates the effectiveness of applying Nida's approach of formal translation when rendering certain Quranic words that evoke lexical ambiguity. Few studies have been conducted to examine whether Nida's approach of formal equivalence can be applied when rendering specific terms evoking ambiguity in Holy Quran as far as the researcher knows. This study may have significant implications for the field of translation. To assess the accuracy of the target translation, two reputable translations of the Holy Quran are used and compared. In this study, we hope to shed some light on the meanings of the selected Quranic words that suggest ambiguity to readers of English.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the current study is to:

1- Identify the most common types of lexical ambiguity in the Holy Quran.

2- Reveal how Nida's approach to formal equivalence can be applied to translate the ambiguous lexical items in the Holy Quran while maintaining fidelity to the source.

3- Recognize the extent to which these two translators have adhered to Nida's approach and the authentic exegeses, and the effect of this on the accuracy of the translations.

1.4. Questions of the study:

1.   What are the most common types of lexical ambiguities in the Holy Quran?

2.   How can Nida's approach of formal equivalence be applied to the Holy Quran to translate ambiguous lexical items while maintaining fidelity to the original?

3.   To what extent have these two translators adhered to Nida's formal equivalence approach and the authentic exegeses, and the effect of this on the accuracy of the target translation?

1.5. Data of the Study:

A- Two English translations of the Holy Quran are used, namely:

1-   Hammad (2008). The Gracious Quran: A modern phrased interpretation in English

2-   Arberry (2005) The Holy Quran: An English translation of the meanings

B- Three exegeses:

1- Tafsir Ibn Kathir (the English version), 2- Al- Tabari : تفسير الطبرى جامع البيان عن تأويل القرآن, 3- Al Sharawy خواطر الشيخ محمد هتولي الشعراوى

C- Two monolingual dictionaries:

1- The Arabic-Arabic dictionary: (El Mogam El Wageez) was utilized in order to search for the different meanings of the words in Arabic. This monolingual dictionary was adopted to help the researcher know about the several precise meanings in the source language.

2- The English- English dictionary: (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary: Third Edition). The translator depended on this monolingual dictionary to have the exact meaning of the words in the target language.

The two translations display a high level of objectivity as the two translators try to present, through their translations, the closest version of the original (the Holy Quran in addition to their good reputation and adoption of the traditional order of the Chapters (Surahs). One of the selected translations is western (the one by Arberry) and the second is Eastern and conducted by a Muslim Scholar (the one by Hammad) and their translations are very objective. Furthermore, the three exegeses (Al Tabari, Ibn Kathir, and Al Sharawy) are well known for their outstanding contributions to the interpretation of the meanings of the Holy Quran and are highly recommended when conducting a study related to the translation of the meanings of the Holy Quran as they are depend on the Hadith (Sayings of Prophet Muhammad), narrations from Sahaba (Companions) of the Prophet and opinions of leading Islam Scholars. Al- Tabari exegesis has high regard and importance until the present day, Al Sharawi is considered the most modern exegesis. Al Sharawi's unique, renewed and up-to-date explanation style of the Quranic verses has a good effect on each class within society. By combining the old and the new, the researcher can reach the moderate interpretations of the Holy Quran. (Ibn Kathir) is completely available in English. This helps the research to be more precise by taking "quotations" from it in order to be compared exactly to the four selected translations of the Holy Quran. This English version of Ibn Kathir exegesis is deemed to be optimal to the readers interested in getting the real message of the Holy Quran in English. This exegesis in English makes the Quranic meanings more accessible and understandable to everyone. Not all the available exegeses in English are authoritative like Ibn Kathir's exegesis.

1.6. Procedures of the study:

1.   Selecting Quranic verses that contain lexical items that might cause ambiguities during the process of translation.

2.   Providing the different translations of the selected verses, as well as their lexical items in the two reputable translations of the Holy Quran by (Arberry and Hammad).

3.   Comparing the two reputable translations (including the lexical items) with the three reliable exegeses. This helped to get the truthful interpretations of each verse in relation to the context, i.e. the situation in which the verses were revealed, and the reasons for revealing these verses to Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him).

4.   Discovering the meanings of lexical items in authentic monolingual dictionaries: the Arabic-Arabic dictionary (El Mogam El Wageez) and the English-English dictionary (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary).

5.   Demonstrating Nida's formal equivalence approach in assigning precise meanings to selected verses and lexical items.

6.   Investigating the degree of accuracy of each translation based on the aforementioned authorized exegeses and theory to illustrate the original meanings of the selected lexical items.

7.   No translation has been retranslated, but we have indicated to what extent each translation is accurate in terms of discovering implied meanings by commenting on them. In other words, the researcher reviewed the four reputable translations in order to refine and make them the most accurate.

8.

1.7. Review of Literature on Ambiguity and its studies:

1.7.1. Definition of Ambiguity:

Ambiguity in language means "The possibility of being understood in more than one way." (O`xford word power, 2006: 24). Ambiguity comes into existence when it forms several meanings. There are two types of ambiguous language, lexical ambiguity and structural ambiguity that can influence the meaning of words, phrases or sentences. (Hudson, 2003)

1.7.2. Classification of Ambiguity:

1.7.2.1 Lexical Ambiguities

Hudson (2000: 313) states that lexical ambiguity refers to ambiguity in the form of a morpheme or word. It includes the following types: homophones ambiguity, homographs ambiguity, homonyms ambiguity, and polysemy ambiguity.

1.7.2.1.1. Homophones Ambiguity:

Homophones refer to two words which have the same pronunciation but different spellings and meanings. Some examples are: flour / flower right / write sent / cent sight / site to / too / two.

1.7.2.1.2. Homographs Ambiguity:

Homographs refer to words which are spelled similarly. In other words, homographs are words which have partial similarity of spelling. Some homographs are also homophones like "read" which either [ri:d] the present tense form of "read" or [rɛd] the past tense form of "read". (ibid : 313). Also, the similarity of spelling between "red" and "read", and bar and bare.

1.7.2.1.3. Homonyms Ambiguity:

Yule states that Homonymy is considered a type of lexical ambiguity " when one form (written or spoken) has two or more

unrelated meanings." some examples are: bank (of a river) bank (financial institution) bat (flying creature) bat (used in sport) mole (on skin) mole (small animal) pupil (at school) pupil (in the eye) race (contest of speed) race (ethnic group), (1996,120).

The homonymy results in confusion when determining the right meaning and causes ambiguity in words and sentences. For example: I will meet you by the bank. This sentence is ambiguous because of the two different meanings of the word "bank" as previously mentioned, but ambiguity can be decoded by specifying the context such as: I will meet you by the bank to get some cash.

1.7.2.1.4. Polysemy Ambiguity:

Polysemy refers to the possibility of one word having multiple meanings. We recognize a case of polysemy if the concerned senses are related. It is the case in which one single item has several different meanings. For example:

flight - (passing through air) flight - (power of flying) flight - (air journey) flight - (unit of the Air Force) (Al-Sulaimani, 2010 : 218).

The polysemy ambiguity can be overcome and removed by using further features or specifying the context. For example, the question 'How is your date?' is ambiguous that could have several different interpretations (a food item, point to time, meeting). If we say: How is your date with Kelly? It becomes clear.

1.7.2.2. Syntactic ambiguity:

Syntactic ambiguity is also called: grammatical, structural or syntactic ambiguity. It is the case in which the same order of words has two or more meanings due to different analysis of phrase structure. (An introduction to language, 2007). As a result of different structures, it is called structural ambiguity. Structural or syntactic

ambiguity occurs because sentences lack formal signs to elucidate their sentence structure (p.251). Structural ambiguity occurs if there are no certain references to a specific pronoun in a sentence. For example, "The girl talked to her friend yesterday. She said she would visit her on the next Sunday". Here, the pronoun "she" has no clear reference. It is not obvious whether it refers to the girl or her friend. Another example is: "The old men and women on the plane". Also, it is not clear whether the adjective "old" describes "men" or "women". This sentence is ambiguous as it has more than one analysis: "The old men + women" and "the old men and old women".

Furthermore, ambiguity exists due to the use of prepositions which lead to syntactic ambiguity and this is the most common one. For example, "Sherlock saw the man with binoculars". Here, the preposition "with" causes ambiguity; it is not obvious whether Sherlock saw a man and he uses binoculars to see or Sherlock saw the man and the man was using the binoculars.

1.7.2.3. Semantic ambiguity

In their studies, Mohammed (2022) and El Nemr (2021) showed that the semantic ambiguity represents the principal reason for the semantic problems of translating the Holy Quran showing that it results from: metonymy, metaphor, and ellipsis. On the same ground, Ali et al. (2012) illustrated that the Holy Quran is characterized by using the literal and figurative styles. These figures of speech pose complicated problems with the translation of the Holy Quran into English and challenge translators who struggle to express the true meaning of the Quranic verses.

1.8. Previous studies on ambiguity:

Ibrahim (2023) conducted a study to show how polysemic words which are ambigious were conveyed to English by four reputable translators i.e. Al Hilali & Khan, Pickthall, Sarwar, and Ali. An in-depth analysis of different verses containing the Quranic term "Al-Haq" was employed. The study seeks to analyze the Arabic word Al-Haq in different contexts. It was concluded that literal translation caused a loss of meaning and as a result of that, the ambiguity was kept.

Hassan's study (2023) investigated the translation strategies employed in rendering samples of dead metaphors in three translations of the Holy Quran using an eclectic approach. The three translations (by Al-Hilali & Khan, Abdel Haleem, and Muhammad Asad) were analyzed. The results proved that translators ignored the figurative aspect of the dead metaphors in the Holy Quran except for few exceptions. This led to a loss of the meaning. This study recommended foreignization and domestication to be applied when rendering the dead metaphor in the Holy Quran.

Mohamed (2012) conducted a study on ambiguity in the Holy Quran of the types: lexical and grammatical. On the lexical level, the Quran has words such as "zaqqūm, ghislīn, and ʾabb whose meanings are ambiguous. Also, the word "amr" is ambiguous. The direct meaning of the word ʾamr is "order". In addition, the Quran "uses it in other meanings such as "matter" in Q.2:210, "case" in Q.2:275, "decision" in Q.3:128, "affair" in Q.3:147, "authority" in 4: 59, and "deed" in Q.5: 95". Furthermore, on the grammatical level, it applied many linguistic techniques that caused ambiguity.

Ibrahim (2023), Mohammed (2022), El Nemr (2021) and AlQinai (2012) indicated that homonymy and polysemy of the source text represent the main hindrances to accurate translations of the Holy Quran. The provided the example of the word "ضرب" /daraba/ which has multiple meanings in the Holy Quran. In certain contexts, it means "exemplified; gave an example", while in other positions it means "casted sleep". Furthermore, it can convey the meaning of "put".

Kassem (2020) revealed that contronyms in the Holy Quran evoke losses in meaning and that their rendition is not accurate. That is due contradictory meanings that a lexical item entails whether in the same context or in different contexts.

Ali (2018) examined the problems of translating homonyms in the Holy Quran. Homonyms are words that have same form but differ in their meanings as in the following example: "فكسونا العظام لحما". The word "فكسونا" can cause some lexical ambiguity as it has two meanings in Arabic. The first one is "to clothe", whereas the second one, "to cover and hide something". The translator must render this word in its different contexts.

Furthermore, Qassas (2021) stated that the individual talent of the translator as an interpreter has been held in check. The notion of accepting translation which is based mainly on the already existing interpretations makes translation a mechanical process and thus denying translators' the right to perform their hermeneutic role. When traditional Mufassirs interpreted the Qurʾan, they understood it from their perspective. However, translators read it today and understand it from their horizon because reading is a historical event par excellence.

Abu-ghararah"s study (2019) examined lexical ambiguity in the translation of Surah Al-An"am (the Cattle) through the analysis of six different by: Pickthall (1930), Ali (1942), Asad (1980), Khattib

(1986), Malik (1997) and Al-Hilali& Khan (1417). The findings of the study revealed that translators encountered lexical ambiguity when translating some verses in the Holy Quran. Thus, translators adopted different approaches to select synonyms to render the Quranic words evoking ambiguity.

Sharifabad (2012) illustrated that relying on useful exegeses and interpretations of the Holy Qur'ān, before starting the process of translation of the Holy Qur'ān would undoubtedly produce more accurate translations of the Sacred Books. The study concluded that polysemy represented the remarkable form of ambiguity in the Holy Quran giving the example of the word "وزن"/ "wazn".

1.9. Theoretical Framework of Nida's Approach of Formal Equivalence (1964):

Nida (1964) introduced 'two basic orientations' or 'types of equivalence' namely; formal equivalence; and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence focuses attention on the source text and its message, in both form and content. Simply, it is concerned with reproducing the message in the receptor language in a way that matches as closely as possible the different elements in the source language. Formal equivalence is mainly oriented towards the source text meaning and structure in order to achieve accuracy and correctness. Most typical of this kind of translation are 'gloss translations', with a close approximation to ST structure, often with scholarly footnotes.

Dynamic equivalence: dynamic, later 'functional', equivalence is based on what Nida calls 'the principle of equivalent effect', where 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original

receptors and the message'. The message must be reproduced to the receptor's linguistic needs and cultural expectation and it aims at completing the naturalness of expression'. Nida defines the aim of dynamic equivalence as seeking 'the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message' (166,). This receptor-oriented approach considers adjustments of grammar, of lexicon and of cultural references to be crucial to achieving naturalness. This study applies only Nida's approach for formal equivalence which is oriented around the source text.

1.9.1. Discussion of the importance of Nida's work

The key role played by Nida is to develop the path towards text-oriented translation through his proposal of the concepts of formal equivalence (source- text orientation) and dynamic equivalence (a receptor-based orientation). The concept of formal equivalence is fundamentally and excessively concerned with the word level. It is very interesting to find out that Eugene Nida built his theory of translation mainly from his own works i.e. translation of Bible which helped him train himself as an expert and professional translator. Nida suggested that Formal Equivalence focuses on the message itself both in form and content. Formal equivalence tries to remain as close to the original text as possible, without adding the translator` s ideas and thoughts into the translation. Thus, the more literal the translation is, the less danger there is of corrupting the original message. This is therefore much more of a word - for - word view of translation. In simple words, a translated text should match the source text as closely as possible both at semantic level and as well as at linguistic level. Formal equivalence is based on the idea of improving readability by rephrasing constructions that preserve faithfulness to the original text rather than creating a complete paraphrase as in case of dynamic

equivalence. Thus, it retains faithfulness to the original text taking into consideration finding target correspondents that convey the meaning of the original wording

Yari's study on the adjustments in the Holy Quran, based on Nida and Taber's model, revealed that there were changes at lexical and semantic levels. Examining the English translation of Surah Alzariyat, they also discovered structural modifications. One thing that they concluded is appealing that the translators remained faithful to the sensitivity of the Quranic verses and did not fall a prey to reduction in case of the translation of abstract words.

Khanlari compared two different English translations of Surah Al-Baqarah by two different translators to examine the application of Nida's theory. They found out the Fooladvand's translation was more understandable because it preserved the structure of the source text and it added interpretation and explanations to certain ambiguous terms in brackets (Monday, 2001).

1.10. The Discussion and Analysis of the Study Samples:

Table 1

The selected Quranic verses including the underlined items which evoke lexical ambiguity of the types of Homophones and homographs

The types of Lexical Ambiguity	The Quranic Verse
Homonyms: Words which have the same pronunciation and spelling but they are not identical in meaning. words have meanings with no relationship one to another **Polysemy** One word used in different ways.	(1) وَٱعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ ٱلْيَقِينُ 99(الحجر) (2) لترون الجحيم ثم لترونها عين **اليقين** (التكاثر، 7 (3)هَلْ فِى ذَٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِى **حِجْرٍ 5** (4)ولقد كذب اصحاب **الحِجر** المرسلين الحجر 80 (5)وقالوا هذه انعام وحرث **حِجر** الانعام 138 (6)وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيْلُ **نَسْلَخُ** مِنْهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم مُّظْلِمُونَ 37 (7)وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ٱلَّذِى ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا **فَٱنسَلَخَ** مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَاوِينَ ١٧٥ (8)أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ **قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ** ٦٠ (9)ومن قوم موسى أمة يهدون بالحق وبه **يعدلون** (الاعراف، 159
Homographs Words with similar spelling and they convey different meaning.	(10)ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَمْ **يَلْبِسُوٓا۟** إِيمَٰنَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلْأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ٨٢) (11)**ولِباس** التقوى ذلك خيرا الاعراف 266 (4) (12) ﴿**ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ** عَلَى ٱلنِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ﴾ (النساء: 34) (13)﴿يَا أَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا **قَوَّامِينَ** لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ﴾ (المائدة: 8) (14) ﴿ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ **ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ** ﴾ (المائدة: 42) (15) ﴿وَأَمَّا **ٱلْقَاسِطُونَ** فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا﴾ (الجن: 15)

The following is the analysis of the selected lexical items in the Quranic verses:

►**Example number (1)**

(1) ﴿وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ﴾   (الحجر، 99)

(2) ﴿لَترون الجحيم ثم لترونها عين اليقين﴾   (التكاثر، 7)

Arberry: (1) "And serve thy lord until **the certain** comes to you"
(2)"That you shall, most surely, see Hellfire. Again, you shall, most surely, see it with the eye of **certainty**".

Hammad: (1) "And worship your lord thus-until the certainty of **death** comes to you".

 (2)   "That you shall, most surely, see Hellfire. Again, you shall, most surely, see it with the eye of **certainty**".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

Al- Tabari exegesis stated that the meaning of the underlined word "اليقين /Al yaqeen" in the Holy verse no.(1) is "death". Likewise, Ibn Kathir interpreted word verse as "death". Also, Al Sharawy demonstrated that this word means "death. Furthermore, there was a consensus among the three exegeses that the underlined word in the Holy verse no.(2) means "certainty" and "faith" which has no doubt or suspicion.

The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

Each Quranic word must be interpreted carefully to deliver an accurate and faithful translation. By paying attention to the rendition of the underlined word "اليقين /Al yaqeen" in verse no.1, it was noticed that Arberry provided literal translation for the source text term so it does not convey its precise meaning. On the contrary, Hammad managed to render the word accurately by focusing on the getting the correct meaning of the ST word thus rendering it accurately and

faithfully. When examining the translation of the same word "اليقين /Al yaqeen" in verse no.(2), it is obvious that both Arberry and Hammad succeeded in rendering its lexical equivalent in English maintaining its meaning.

►**Example number (2)**

(3) ﴿هَلْ فِي ذَٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِي حِجْرٍ﴾ (الفجر : 5)

(4) ﴿وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْحِجْرِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ﴾ (الحجر ، 80)

(5) ﴿وَقَالُواْ هَٰذِهِۦ أَنْعَٰمٌ وَحَرْثٌ حِجْرٌ﴾ (الانعام، 138)

Arberry:

(3) "Is there in that an oath for a **mindful man**".

(4) "The Dwellers in **El Hijr** –cried lies to the Envoys"

(5) "They say: These are cattle and tillage **sacrosanct**; none shall eat them".

Hammad:

(3) "Is there in this an oath of sufficient proof for **whoever has a mind**".

(4) "Avery truly, the Dwellers of the Stone Valley, **the people of Thamud**, denied the divine mandate of God's messengers".

(5) "Moreover they have said: such cattle and tillage are religiously designated offerings that are **restricted**.

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

The three authentic exegeses; Al- Tabari, Ibn Kathir and Al Sharawy stated that the underlined word "ذى حجر"/zy Hijr/ in the Holy verse no. (3) is interpreted as "the one who has mind" or "mindful" . Moreover, there was an agreement among the three exegeses that the interpretation of the underlined phrase "اصحاب الحجر"/As-hab El Hijr/ in the Holy verse no. (4) is "people of Thamud". Furthermore, the ST

term "حجر"/Hijr/ in verse no. (5) was interpreted by the exegeses as "forbidden", "prohibited" or "banned".

The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

On one hand, both Arbery and Hammad translated the ST term "ذى حجر" in verse no. (3) accurately in English as " a mindful man" and "whoever has mind", respectively. On the other hand, it is notable that Arberry rendered the ST word "الحجر"in verse no. (4) by means of transliteration "El Hijr", thus the meaning is not accessible to the target reader. Conversely, Hammad focused on the source text giving a paramount importance to getting the correct meaning of the ST term. So he managed to render it accurately in English as "People of Thamud".

Furthermore, Arberry translated the ST term "حجر"/ Hijr/ in the Holy verse no. (5) as "sacrosanct" which is defined in Cambridge Dictionary as "sacred" or "Holy". His rendition is not relevant to the meaning of the ST which is previously mentioned according to the exegeses. On the contrary, Hammad rendered this term as "restricted", which is acceptable and relevant to the actual interpretation illustrated by the three authentic exegeses. That's to say that Hammad achieved the optimal rendition by making his rendition source- oriented.

►**Example number (3)**

(6) ﴿وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم مُّظْلِمُونَ﴾ " (يس، 37)

(7) ﴿وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ﴾

(الأعراف، 175)

Arberry:

(6) "And a sign for them is the night; we **strip** it of the day and lo, they are in darkness".

(7) "And recite to them. As well, the tiding of him to whom we gave our signs, but he cast them off might be upright with them. But he **stripped** himself of them".

Hammad:

(6)" Another manifest sign of God's all creative might is the night. We **strip** from it the day light". Then, behold, they are in utter darkness".

(7) "Recite to them. As well, the account of one to whom we gave our illuminating signs, so that he might be upright with them. But he **stripped** himself of them".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

The three exegeses Al- Tabari, Ibn Kathir andAl Sharawy demonstrated that the interpretation of the underlined ST term "انسلخ"/insalakha/ in verse no. (6) is "to take away" or "remove". Furthermore, it means to "abandon", "leave", or cast away" something in verse no (7).

The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

By paying attention to the rendition of the ST word in verse no (5), it was noticed that both Arberry and Hammad focused on the ST interpretation and thus managed to render it accurately as "Stip". Furthermore, they both provided the most accurate rendition for the ST term in verse no. (6). They transferred it in accordance with the actual interpretation of the three authentic exegeses. So, Nida's approach worked well and had an effect on the quality of translation.

►**Example number (4)**

(8) ﴿أَإِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ اللَّهِ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ﴾ (النمل، 60)

(9) ﴿وَمِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ﴾ (الاعراف، 159)

Arberry**:**

(8)   "Is there god with God? Nay, but they are a people who **assign to Him equals"**.

(9)   "Of the people of Moses, there is a nation who guides by the truth, and by it **act with justice"**.

Hammad:

(8) "Then is there another god to be worshipped along with God? Rather those who say this are a people who **veer** from the straight path".

(9) "Now among the people of Moses, there is a community that guides people the revealed truth, and with it they **do justice**".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

The underlined term "يعدلون"/y3adelon/ in the Holy verse no. (8) is interpreted as "to deviate from the path", "swerve" or "go astray" according to the three authentic exegeses. Moreover, the three exegeses Al- Tabari , Ibn Kathir and Al Sharawy demonstrated that the underlined word "يعدلون"/y3adelon/ in the Holy verse no. (9) is interpreted as: " to be just", or "to judge justly", "to apply justice", "abide by justice" .

 The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

When examining the target translation of the ST term "يعدلون"/y3adelon/ in the Holy verse no. (8), it was found that Arberry rendered it as "to assign to him equals". According to Cambridge

dictionary, the word "assign" means "to attribute", "to allot a task", or "sort", so it does not convey the meaning of the ST. In opposition, Hammad translated the same term in the same verse no. (8) as "veer" which means " to swerve" or "to change direction" according to Cambridge dictionary. Thus, Hammad, unlike Arberry, applied Nida's approach by paying a great attention to the ST to get its correct interpretation.

Additionally, it is obvious that the ST term in the Holy verse no. (9) was examined carefully by both translators. Thus, Arbery and Hammad rendered an accurate faithful translation for the term as "act with justice" and "do justice", respectively. The translators adhered to Nida' approach by investigating the ST deeply and giving it the primary priority.

►**Example number (5)**

(10) " ﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُواْ إِيمَٰنَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُوْلَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ﴾ "

(الانعام، 82)

(11) ﴿**وَيَلْبَسُونَ** من سندس واستبرق متقابلين﴾" (الدخان، 53)

Arberry:

(10)   "Those who believe and have not **confounded** their belief with evildoing".

(11)   "**Robed** in silk and brocade, set face to face".

Hammad:

(10)" Those who believe in the one God- and those who do not **mingle** their faith with wrongdoing".

(11) "They shall **dress** in garments of sarcenet and rich brocade facing one another".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

Three selected exegeses interpreted the ST term "يلبسوا"/ yulbiso/ in verse no. (10) as: "to mix", "to mingle". Also, they interpreted the ST term "يلبسون"/ yulbison/ in verse no. (11) as: "to put clothes on", "to wear", "to dress" or "to clothe".

The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence

It is remarkable that both Arberry and Hammad devoted their efforts to reach the correct meaning of the underlined terms in the Holy verses no. (10) and (11). Thus, they managed to render them successfully in English. Arberry translated the ST term "يلبسوا/ yulbiso" in verse no. (10) as "confound" while Hammad rendered it as "mingle". Both translations are correct.

Furthermore, Arberry and Hammad provided accurate renditions for ST term "يلبسون" / yulbison/ in verse no. (11) as: "robed" "dress" , respectively. The translators made their renditions of the S terms in verses no. (10) and (11) to be optimally accurate by making their translation source text-oriented.

►**Example number (6)**

(12) ﴿الرِّجَالُ <u>قَوَّامُونَ</u> عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ﴾ (النساء : **34**)

(13) ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا <u>قَوَّامِينَ</u> بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ ﴾ (النساء : **135**)

Arberry:

(12) "Men are **<u>managers of the affairs of women</u>**, for God has preferred in bounty one of them over another".

(13) "O believers, be **<u>securer of justice</u>**, witnesses for God".

Hammad:

(12) "Men are **<u>maintainers of the affairs of women</u>**, for God has preferred in bounty one of them over another".

(13) "O you who believe. Be most **upright in** upholding **justice**, bearing true witness for the sake of God alone".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

Al- Tabari and Al Sharawy exegeses elucidated that the underlined word "قَوَّامُونَ"/ kawamoon/ in the Holy verse no. (12), means that men take care of women's affairs since they are superior with what God has granted them. Similarly, Ibn Kathir interpreted this word as men are the patrons of women as they support them and protect their affairs.

For the three exegeses, the underlined word "قَوَّامِينَ"/ kawameen/ in the phrase "قوامين بالقسط"/ kawameen bi el-qest/ in the Holy verse no. (13) means "to act with justice", "judge justly" and "be just if judging".

The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

The two underlined words in verses no. (12) and (13) are similarly spelled but they convey totally different meanings as mentioned previously. Arberry rendered the ST term "قَوَّامُونَ"/ kawamoon/ in verse no. (12) as "managers of the affairs of women" and Hammad rendered the same term as "maintainers of the affairs of women". In addition, Arberry translated the ST term "قَوَّامِينَ"/ kawameen/ in verse no. (13) as "securer of justice" and likewise Hammad translated the same term "upright in justice". As noticed, the translators dealt successfully with the contextual and intentional meanings of the ST text terms thus they achieved an adherence to Nida's approach of translation which is centered on the ST terms.

►**Example number (7)**

(14) ﴿ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾ (المائدة: 42)

(15) ﴿وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا﴾ (الجن: 15)

Arberry:

(14) "If thou judgest, judge between them justly, God loves **the just**".

(15) "But as for **those who have deviated**, they have become firewood for Ge-henna".

Hammad:

(14) " If you judge between them, then judge between them with justice. In deed God loves **those who are just**".

(15)" But for **the iniquitous**, they shall be firewood for Hell".

The interpretations of the three selected exegeses are as follows:

There is a consensus among the three exegeses Al- Tabari, Ibn Kathir, and Al Sharawy that the interpretation of the source text term " المقسطين"/Al Moqsteen/ in verse no. (14) is: "the just, the equitable, those who are just, those who apply justice". Furthermore, they agreed to the meaning of the source text term "القاسطون"/Al qasetoon/ in verse no. (15). They confirmed that it means "the unjust, those who are not just, those who deviated from the right path, those who do not apply justice, those who trespass or move away from the right path.

 The translators' adherence to the Nida's approach of translation Equivalence:

The two underlined words in verses no. (14) and (15) are homographs. Although they have similar spelling, they have different meanings as it was indicated by the authentic exegeses. Arberry rendered the ST term "المقسطين"/ Al Moqsteen/ in verse no. (14) as "the just" and Hammad rendered the same term as "those who are just". Both   renditions are accurate and text-oriented. Furthermore, Arberry translated the ST term "القاسطون"/Al qasetoon/ in verse no. (15) as "those who have deviated " and Hammad translated the same

term as "the iniquitous". The lexical meaning of the target term "deviate" is: "to go off course or path" and the meaning of "iniquitous" is the "unjust" according to Cambridge dictionary. As noticed, the translators dealt successfully with the contextual and intentional meanings of the ST text terms so they managed to provide accurate target translations.

Based on the analysis of the two target translations of this study, it could be recognized that the two translators rendered the words evoking ambiguity accurately through applying Nida's approach of formal equivalence which is centered on the ST terms. The degrees of adherence to the Nida's approach were very high and they managed to render almost all the (15) examples accurately. Furthermore, their target translations match the interpretations of the authentic exegeses.

1.11. The Results of the Study:

The results of the analysis of the data (the selected verses of the two translations adopted in this study) are as follows:

Concerning Arberry's translation, he rendered the term evoking ambiguity in verse no. (1) literally so there was a loss of meaning and the target term did not convey the meaning the ST term. He managed to translate verse no.(2) keeping both form and meaning. Also he succeeded in rendering the term evoking ambiguity in verse no.(3) accurately but he rendered the same word in verse no. (4) by means of transliteration keeping its ambiguity in the target language and it was rendered precisely in verse no. (5). Here, Arberry preserved the same forms and meanings of the source language (verses 3 &5) reproducing target translations accessible to the target readers. Similarly, he succeeded in translating the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (6) and (7) maintaining both the form and meaning. Moreover, Arberry rendered the meanings of the terms evoking

ambiguity in verses no. (8) and (9) accurately but he used different forms. Here, his translation was faithful and precise and he did not sacrifice the meaning at the expense of the form. Furthermore, the rendition of the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (10) and (11) is confusing because they have similar spelling. Though their translation is challenging, Arberry managed to translate them in an accurate way keeping both the form and meaning. So, he was very faithful to the source text. Again, Arberry succeeded in translating the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (12) and (13) maintaining meaning but using different forms to achieve faithfulness and accuracy when translating the source text message in the target language .

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that Arberry's translation of the terms evoking ambiguity was accurate and faithful to the source text in thirteen verses out of fifteen verses. He provided only two inaccurate renditions; the first was translated literally (in verse no.1) and the second one was transliterated (in verse no. 4).

Concerning Hammad translation, he rendered the term evoking ambiguity in verse no. (1) and (2) accurately maintaining both the form and meaning. He managed to translate verse no.(2) keeping both form and meaning. Also he succeeded in rendering the meaning term evoking ambiguity in verse no.(3) and (4) accurately but he used different forms and he rendered the same word in verse no. (5) using a target lexical equivalent in terms of form and meaning. Likewise, he succeeded in translating the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (6) and (7) maintaining both the form and meaning. Moreover, Hamad rendered the meanings of the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (8) and (9) accurately maintaining the both

form and meaning. Here, his translation was faithful and precise and he used lexical terms which convey meaning of the source text terms. Likewise, the rendition of the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (10) and (11) is confusing because they have similar spelling. Though their translation is challenging, Hammad managed to translate them in an accurate way keeping both the form and meaning. So, he was very faithful to the source text. Furthermore, Hammad succeeded in translating the terms evoking ambiguity in verses no. (12) and (13) maintaining meaning but using different forms to achieve his faithfulness and accuracy when translating the source text message in the target language .

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that Hamad's translation of the terms evoking ambiguity was accurate and faithful to the source text in the whole verses (the fifteen verses). He provided precise and faithful renditions in fifteen positions. Hammad managed to provide the same form and meaning of the source text terms evoking ambiguity in eleven verses out of fifteen. He provided different forms of the source text terms evoking ambiguity in only four positions (in verses no. 3,4, 12, and 13).

Concerning the application of Nida's approach formal equivalence on the translation of Holy Quran after the analysis of the data of the study, it can be noted that ambiguity is one of the major hindrances faced by the translators of the Holy Quran. Successful translators can follow the basic principles of Nida's formal equivalence to achieve fidelity to the source text. The results of the study proved that the Nida's formal equivalence was effective in translating the Holy Quran into English by providing the most accurate lexical items. To conclude, Nida's formal equivalence is proved to be instrumental in identifying the confusing meanings of the

Quranic verses that may evoke ambiguity to translators. This effect of Nida's formal equivalence on successful translations of the lexical Quranic items can be attributed to the following reasons:

1- Nida's formal equivalence help disambiguate the multiple meanings of a word. In other words, Nida's formal equivalence enables translators to get the precise meanings of the Quranic words through.

1-   It focuses on the thought processes of the source text; it means the act of translating is oriented towards the language and culture of the source text.

2-   By applying the Nida's approach formal equivalence to the translation of the Holy Quran, it keeps the meaning of the ST terms and guarantees transferring it to the target language.

3-   It achieves fidelity to the source text and produces accurate translation as it interprets the Quranic meanings in their original contexts.

4-   Since translating the Quranic verses depend on the original context, Nida's approach of formal equivalence is exploited effectively to keep the meanings of the Holy Quran.

5-   The notion of faithfulness when translating the Holy Quran can be recast as a notion of optimal rendition within Nida's framework of formal translation. Nida's approach of formal translation was applied in order to transfer the intended interpretation of the Holy Quran.

6- Nida's approach facilitated the transfer of the meanings and disambiguated them with the help of checking the authentic exegeses.

Concerning the Quranic verses that evoke ambiguity to translators when rendered into English

The translation of Arberry has the following features:

Arberry's translation was source text- oriented; he was very keen to understand all the messages of Holy Quran. So, his translation is excellent because he maintains the balance between fidelity and fluency in his translation of the Holy Quran. He devoted attention to the content of the original text.

Hamad's translation is reflective and goes beyond the literal meaning. The choice of his translated words seems to be the result of an interaction between the lexical factors and pragmatic considerations related to the interpretation of the meanings of the Holy Quran by the authentic exegeses. He perfectly understands the senses of the original (the Holy Quarn). The translation keeps faithful to the original message. His emphasis is on the reproduction of the Quranic message and the form of the utterance.

The translator's linguistic knowledge of the source language and the target language affects the quality of translation. He has produced as much as possible the same effect on the target-language readers (readers of the English translated version of the Holy Quran) as was produced on the readers of the original.

In terms of the study results and discussion, the researcher can conclude that Nida's approach of formal equivalence produces a positive effect on translating the lexical items that evoke ambiguity to translators who struggle to convey the proper meanings of the Quranic verses. This approach helps attain the precise meaning of the source text. Additionally, it makes a successful impact on getting the interpretive context of the selected Quranic verses. The success of translating the Holy Quran depends on the translator's ability to render the source text in a way consistent with the contextual situations of the source language. This success can be achieved by correspondence with trustworthy exegeses (Tafsir Ibn Kathir "the English version",

Al- Tabari, Al- Sharawy) for understanding the underlying message of a word in a given context and making the most accurate interpretations. Consulting reliable exegeses help identify the appropriate lexical and contextual relatedness in order to remain faithful to the meanings of the original text. These genuine interpretive tools are the best way to understand the correct interpretations of the Holy Quran. Also, utilizing the monolingual dictionaries, the Arabic-Arabic dictionary (El Mogam El Wageez) and the English- English dictionary (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 3rd Edition), helps the translator attain the exact meanings of the words in both of the source and the target languages.

1.12. Conclusion:

The researcher carefully selected fifteen lexical items or Quranic words that evoked lexical ambiguity to the translators of the Holy Quran. The fifteen lexical items are: (اليقين- يعدلون- يلبسوا- لباس- قاسطون- مقسطين- نسلخ- حجر-قوامين- قوامون). These lexical items are collected from the following two reputable translations: Arberry (2006) and Hammad (2011). The two provided accurate translations of the Quranic lexical items as humanly as possible. The translators give the interpretations that fulfill the optimal expectations by providing keen translations that are based on the inferential circumstances and contextual situations. They manage to get the meanings related to the selected verses. The translators deliver the message and intended meaning of the word, not the literal meaning. They succeed in getting the meaning of the source language as efficiently and closely as possible, i.e. they achieve the translator's main task which is the discovery of the exact meaning. Indeed, these two translations are consistent with the three exegeses: Al- Tabari, Ibn Kathir and Al

Sharawy. It can be said that the identified translators follow the principles of the Nida's approach of translation equivalence and stick with them while tackling the selected Quranic verses that evoke ambiguity.

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