Re-thinking Quran Translation: Towards a Religious Communicative Theory

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Abstract

There has recently been an increasing concern over the translation of the Quran. Most Quran translations, based on Western theories of translation, have failed to render the appropriate meanings of the Quranic text and caused a lot of damage to its stylistic structure and miraculous components. Translating the Quran into any other language poses various problems. Exegetes themselves may encounter many difficulties while interpreting its verses within the same language. Rendering the meanings of the Quranic text into other languages that are structurally, semantically and culturally different from Arabic makes the task of translation more daunting and challenging. The objective of this research study is to suggest a new Quran translation theory whose major aim is to consider the specificities of Quran translation and focus more on the "religious meaning" and the "pragmatic context" of the Quranic text and the features that are unique to its language. Research findings show that the RCT (Religious Communicative Theory) comes to compensate for the huge loss in Quran translation. It aims also at providing the translator with the useful guidelines to optimize the quality of Quran translation and to open a successful communication channel with the target readership.

Keywords: Quran, Quran translation, axiom, epistemological dogmas, Quran translational miraculous, Arabic linguistic, sharii'a sciences, Arabic culture, maxim, strategy, foreignization, conveyance, domestication, procedures.

Introduction

Over the last decade, translation theories have focused more on the translation of various text-types. For instance, in literary translation, many theories, including Schleiermacher (1813), Newmark (1981), Berman (1984), Venuti (1995), and Meschonnic (1999 and 2001), have been established to

overcome the linguistic and cultural discrepancies, first, between the source text (*henceforth ST*) and target text (*henceforth TT*), and second, between the source culture (*henceforth SC*) and target culture (*henceforth TC*). The majority of these theories aim either to maintain the boundaries and the strangeness of the ST into TT or to minimize them.

Conversely, sacred text translation, as another text-type, remains a controversial issue. The status of translation sacredness raises many questions along the translation process. Among these questions, can religious texts be translated? If yes, how can these texts be translated? With what safeguards should religious texts be translated? What is sacrality? How do the translator's ideology, religion, background, identity, and culture shape translating sacred texts? Which theory can be applied in translating such texts? Should the translator be acquainted with any epistemological dogmas that can assist him/her in translating such texts?

Translating the Quran into any other language poses various problems. Exegetes themselves may encounter many difficulties while interpreting its verses within the same language let alone into other languages that are structurally, semantically, and culturally different from each other such as Arabic and English. It is self-evident that rendering such text-type into any language requires a special theory that takes its peculiarities into consideration. For instance, any suggested theory for Quran translation should start from the "axiom" of the "Quran miraculous" (*henceforth* QM) which has always presented a real translation challenge in all languages. It should also aspire to make the Quranic language, which is cultural bound, easier for the target reader (*henceforth* TR) to achieve successful communication. For these reasons, the objective of this study is to examine the extent to which this theory can preserve the sacredness of the ST and, at the same time, the right of the TR to have access to the religious information. Our aim is also to examine "foreignization" and "domestication" as strategies in Quran translation. The ultimate objective is to present a theory in which all the Quran translators can find the adequate approach to solve the question of the QM.

To achieve this purpose, we have selected some ST verses that are cultural and religious bound to see how the translator's ideology, consciousness, culture, religion and language affect his/her strategic decisions. Our analysis will not be limited to criticizing the selected translation, but it will shed light on the weak choices and the inappropriate strategic decisions, and suggest a "religious communicative translation theory" that intends to preserve the sacredness of the ST and the right of the TR to have access to the appropriate information.

1- Literature Overview

Many theories and assumptions have explored the issue of religious translation. For instance, Naudé assumes that "the translation of religious texts is an activity not substantially different from the translation of other texts belonging to a culture remote from the target readers in time and space" (2010: 286). Hence, religious texts can be treated as "normal" texts belonging to another culture in which the linguistic and cultural discrepancies can be handled in a way or another. Then, he adds, "this implies that the translators of religious texts should have translation competence; in short, they have to be trained translators" (2010: 286). This illustrates that translating religious texts is an attainable issue for any translator who has acquired training and has a translation competence. Accordingly, we can deduce form Naudé's point of view that a translator who translates the Talmud could translate the Bible, and of course, the Quran, exactly like a translator who acquires a training in a specialized text.

From a translational perspective, Naudé's point of view seems vague and too broad. It is salient in translation theory that a translator has to be knowledgeable in the field from which he is translating. In the sense that, if he is translating from philosophy he has to be a philosopher since the meta-language of philosophy contains philosophical terms that no one can grasp their meanings properly and translate them accurately from one language into another without being a philosopher. Based on this fact, it seems that Naudé's opinion, in which he considers the religious text as a "normal" text, is a myopic way of thinking towards the nature of the sacred text at all levels; including the meta-language, terminology, culture, and the revealed religious meaning. These facts, allow us to assert that the sacred text is neither a "cultural" text nor a "normal" text. It is, however, a "special text" revealed from the "supreme power" to human beings to guide them and to enlighten their path. The following paragraphs will demonstrate that Quran translation, as a religious text, needs a knowledgeable translator in Quranic studies besides the mastery of both the TL and the TC.

1-1 Foreignization Strategy

Venuti argues that foreignization "can alter the ways translations are read as well as produced because it assumes a concept of human subjectivity that is very different from the humanist assumptions underlying domestication" (1995: 24). Subjectivity, here, consists of cultural and social determinations that are diverse and even conflicting. They mediate any language use and vary with every cultural formation and every historical moment. In this sense, we

can conclude that foreignization strategy believes in human subjectivity rather than universality. It refuses "transparency" and "fluency" given that the "TL fluency suppresses the "otherness" of the ST" (Venuti, 1995, 49), and it tends to bring into the light the foreign values and the identity of the ST instead of concealing them through employing loanwords, calque, and other means.

In his book, "*The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*", Venuti (1995) invites translation studies scholars to consider the violence that dominant cultures exert on marginal, non-standard values through translation. Since, he found that Schleiermacher's article "*On the different methods of translating*" (1813) is a brave call to shake the long-standing instrumental model of translation, encouraging word for word translation into a more eclectic model where the context is the unit of translation or what is now considered the "hermeneutic model". For Schleiermacher, there are only two methods for translating, "either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him or leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the author towards him". (Venuti, 2008:15). Venuti coined the term "foreignization" as a strategy to represent the first method that refuses the dominant values often represented by the American-English cultural values. The second method is called domestication, which is an ethnocentric strategy that aims for "fluency", "accuracy", and "transparency".

Venuti introduced other suggested definitions of foreignization, as Newman and Goethe did. Newman defined the foreign by "his resistance to academic literary values and by his aim to encompass rather than exclude popular forms affiliated with various social groups" (as cited in Venuti, 2008: 120). While, for Goethe, "there are two maxims in translation, one requires that the author of the foreign nation be brought across to us in such a way we can look at him as ours; the other requires that we should go across to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities".(as cited in Venuti, 2008:87). In our perspective, Goethe's second maxim echoes foreignization and responds to the requirement of sacred text translation. In other words, the TR needs to embrace the peculiarities of Quran translation and adapt him/herself to the "Quran pragmatic context" and the specificity of its language.

1-2- Domestication Strategy

Unlike foreignization, domestication, according to Venuti, is a translation strategy that entails "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home" (1995:20). In

this strategy, the translator becomes invisible, his/her objective is to melt the SL linguistic, stylistic, and cultural peculiarities in the TL. Moreover, according to Shuttleworth & Cowie, domestication is a "translation strategy in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for the TL readers" (1997, 44/45), so that the TR can read the translation as an original text and not as a translation.

However, in our perspective, domestication should be adopted in accordance with the text types. From a translational standpoint, it is illogical to apply any given strategy to any given text-type without taking into consideration its peculiarities. For instance, in a literary text, domestication does not aim to minimize the strangeness or the foreignness of the original texts, as Venuti admits; it is, however, a kind of repainting the original color of a text with a different color without leaving any trace to make it respond to the expectations of the TL reader. It is important to note that Venuti's definition of domestication as a strategy has to fulfill three requisites which are "fluency", "transparency", and "accuracy". Since, for him, the more the text is "fluent", "transparent", and "accurate" the more the translation does not seem like a translation but, rather, like an original text. However, according to Zahid and Belghita (2019), Venuti's definition of domestication is based on the output features of domestication and not on the input features which determine domestication. In other words, Venuti's definition is based on the external features of domestication as a strategy rather than the internal factors that lead to domestication.

For this reason, Zahid and Belghita (2019) redefine domestication according to three main scales as internal factors that lead to domestication namely, the "linguistic", "cultural" and "cognitive context" scales. The "linguistic" scale is divided into three sub-components; "phono-morphological", "syntactic", and "semantic" levels. The "cultural" scale is, also, divided into two main categories which are either "culture as a subject of language" or "culture within language", and the last fundamental scale is the "cognitive context". That is, domestication cannot be achieved without giving enough importance to the "cognitive context" of the TR via three major sub-components that are "accessibility", "appreciability", and "comprehensibility".

From our perspective, it is from these three main areas that domestication derives "fluency", "transparency", and "accuracy". To put it differently, to adopt domestication as a strategy in the literary text, the translator has to interfere in the ST structure to reformulate a readable target linguistic structure adhering to the TL. Additionally, he has to transform and adapt the cultural source structure to the cultural target language structure so that to make the reader familiar with the translated text. Finally, the translator

must recreate an equivalent "cognitive context", not alien to the TR, to hopefully establish a successful communication act.

1-3-Towards a Religious Communicative Theory
1-3-1 Definition of the Quran

The Quran is the book of Islam. It is often defined as the word of Allah revealed to the prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and transferred from one generation into another through "*ʔattawaatur"* (narration chain). Muslims believe that the Quran is a verbatim representation of Allah's words sent during the prophetic mission and transferred by the angel of revelation "gibriil" (Gibrael).

The Quran is revealed in the language of the Arab peninsula and miraculously challenged its best orators to reproduce alike. But neither their eloquence nor their wisdom could imitate the meaning, the language, and the sound of the smallest verse of the book.

The Quran is sketching human life in its most meticulous details. It describes the ideal ethics in which human beings should behave. Besides, it delimits the legitimacy of economic, relational, social and religious principles. In this respect, the Quran is distinguished by its universality as its message addresses Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

1-3-2 Religious Communicative Theory (RCT)

Over the centuries, many translators attempt to translate the Quran. "The first rendering of the Quran into a Western language was made by the English scholar Robertus Retenensis in the twelfth century" (Abdul-Raof, 2001, 19), thenceforth, many translations came out. However, the amount of distortion done in these translations by Western non-Muslims translators led Muslim writers and translators to react and take up the challenge to reproduce a translated work in a Western language, especially English. In this regard, "the first translation into English by a Muslim appeared in this century was that of Mohammed Abdul-Hakim Khan in 1925" (Abdul-Raof, 2001, 20).

In the previous centuries, it was believed that the Quran is miraculous and untranslatable because its properties, words, structure, style, eloquence, and poeticity cannot be rendered into another language preserving the same ST features. Based on this fact, our approach in Quran translation consists of limiting the QM aspects within the language of revelation, which is Arabic, in the sense that the QM aspects of some verses is not a requisite in the TL. The failure of Arabs who were the leaders of eloquence in imitating the smallest verse in the language of revelation is a concrete proof that illustrates

reproducing the same or similar version into any other language is beyond reach.

The RCT believes that the Quran is the miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to prove his prophethood to his people who believed entirely in Arabic eloquence. Accordingly, the Quran is revealed with a high eloquence and inimitable rhetoric as a proof that it is Allah's words. It is a widely held view that all the prophets have been sent to their people using miracles, whenever necessary, to prove, first, their prophethood, and, second, to convince their people to follow the right path. Jesus miracles, for instance, heal the blind and the lepers by touching them, even more than that he brings forth the dead. Moses, however, some of his miracles give water from stone to his people, strike the sea to make a road, and his rod which turns into a serpent. While Abraham's miracle occurs when he is thrown into a huge fire, but, miraculously, Allah turns it into a coldish and peaceful fire.

It is on the ground of this premise that the RCT comes to orient translators toward translating the QM as a substance not as a form. In other words, the translator has to convey the Quranic religious meaning as a substance and not the Quranic structure as a form. Therefore, the translator's mission is a continuum to the prophet's mission. The only difference between them is time and space.

The RCT that we propose in this study, as a road map to Quran translation, believes neither in Schleiermacher (1813), Berman (1984), and Venuti's (1995) approaches nor in Nida's dynamic equivalence that "aims at complete naturalness of expression" and tries "to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture" (Nida, 1964, 159)**.** In other words, it does not believe only in foreignization in which the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader towards him or only in domestication in which the translator leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the author towards him to create an effect similar that of the ST. This theory believes, however, that all these approaches can be exploited altogether to establish a solid ground for Quran translation. The ST has the right to preserve its sacredness and the TR has the right to access to the information.

As it is self-evident in translation studies, each text has its specificity which necessities a special treatment. It is also widespread in the realm of religious translation that the religious text, as a text-type, presents many challenges in the translation process. On the ground of these facts, it seems that the existing translation theories are invented to deal with "normal" text-types such as legal, literary, scientific, etc. By "normal", we mean each text produced by human begins. Nowadays, a translation theory devoted to religious texts has

become an urgent issue. From this perspective, this study tries to launch a new approach taking into consideration both the "sacredness" of the ST and the "right" of the TR to access to the information. For all these reasons, this study is entitled" Re-thinking Quran Translation: Towards a Religious Communicative Theory" to show that the religious text is a sensitive one which requires a special theory taking into consideration its sensitivity and specificity. The spirit of the RCT is derived from Goethe's approach (1813/1977) in which he said: There are two maxims in translation: one requires that the author of a foreign nation be brought across to us in such a way that we can look on him as ours; the other requires that we should go across to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities" (as cited in Venuti, 1995, 104). Goethe's approach can serve as a solid ground to start from to build a theory which merges between foreignization and domestication as it is explained in the religious communicative theory for Quran translation.

The following sections will explore the components of the RCT which include one "axiom", four dogmas, two "maxims", three strategies, and an open list of procedures.

According to Honderich, "an axiom is one of a select set of propositions, presumed true by a system of logic or a theory, from which all other propositions which the system or theory endorses as true are deducible" (1995: 72). The "axiom" of the QM, on which the RCT is built on, is considered by the Arabic Islamic civilization as an evident premise that has been proved throughout long centuries. The QM has many facets. Each one is related to a specific field.

The QM consists of four "epistemological dogmas" which constitute the main entries to deconstruct the QM and to overcome the untranslatability of the Quran to achieve a visible and tangible TT. By "epistemological dogma", we mean a common belief shared by a group of people. The word belief, here, is not confined to any metaphysical considerations, it is, however, a rational and scientific belief that has been accumulated and proved in the Quran studies and the Arabic linguistics heritage. McTaggart states that "we are invited to believe a dogma because the belief in it, though not universal, is very general" (1906: 46).

The RCT also comprises two "maxims", namely the religious maxim (*henceforth* RM) and the communicative maxim (*henceforth* CM). The term "maxim", here, is borrowed from the field of law. Refereeing to Bouvier's Law Dictionary, a "maxim" is "an established principle or proposition. A principle of law universally admitted, as being just and consonant with reason" (1856: 905). It is from this insight, that we have borrowed the term "maxim" as a concept to illustrate that religion and communication can serve as a solid

ground to orient the strategic decision in Quran translation. In other words, these two "maxims" can be considered as general principles which a translator can refer to in his/her decision making. The RM occurs where one tries to be as a messenger as one possibly can, and gives as much religious meaning as should be. The CM, however, occurs where one tries to be a communicator and communicate the message according to the nature of the religious meaning and the type of the verse.

Besides, the RCT consists of three main strategies which are "foreignization", "conveyance" (ʔattabliigh), and "domestication". The concept of strategy, here, refers to "a series of competencies, a set of steps or processes that favor the acquisition, storage, and/or utilization of information." (Jääskeläinen,1999, 71). She adds that strategies are "heuristic and flexible in nature, and their adoption implies a decision influenced by amendments in the translator's objectives" (Jääskeläinen,1999, 71). The aim of the adopted strategies in the RCT is to preserve the religious meaning of the ST and to open a communicative channel between the ST and the TR.

The last component of the RCT is the procedures applied in translating the Quranic verses. Our postulate is not to limit the number of procedures as listed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/2000) and Newmark (1988) or to bind the RCT to the translation techniques as mentioned in translation theory. Our postulate, however, is to keep the procedures list open to invent some other procedures relevant to the Quran translation. It is too early to foresee the final list of the procedures serving in concretizing the objectives of the RCT. We consider translation procedures as "methods applied by translators when they formulate an equivalence for the purpose of transferring elements of meaning from the ST to the TT" (Siregar, 2016, 52).

The following paragraphs will shed light, in more detail, on the components of the RCT starting from its main concepts to the smallest unit procedures.

A- Quran Miraculous Axiom (henceforth QMA)

As it is believed by Muslims, the Quran is the word of Allah revealed to his prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It is an immortal linguistic miracle that is inimitable and beyond human faculty to produce the smallest verse. The Arabs who, were at the peak of their linguistic homogeneity and competence, failed to produce something similar to the smallest verse. Therefore, if the Quran is insurmountable for natives, one should question the ability of translators being non-natives and non bi-cultural in rendering this heavy discourse? The Quranic meaning is immortal and "each time one returns to the Arabic text, he finds

new meanings and fresh ways of interpreting it" (Abdul-Raof, 2001, 39). Its style is rhetorically elevated. Its structure follows a special syntactic structure and sometimes exhibits a type of untranslatability. Its word order has both a semantic and rhetorical role to play in every Quranic verse. Its semantic uniqueness which remains beyond translators' rhetoric faculty. Likewise, the rendering of cultural bound terms or as Hussein Abdul-Raof (2001) referred to as "Quranic cultural voids" is very complicated and cannot be found in any other language, Moreover, the Quran contains many scientific facts that were detailed centuries before man had any knowledge about them. It includes many fulfilled prophecies that were proven true, as well as historic facts.

B- The Four Epistemological Dogmas of the QMA

The purpose of the RCT is to preserve the sacredness of the ST. It admits the inability to provide a same or similar version of the ST. As it is indicated, the RCT has two main objectives: first, to communicate the religious message of the Quran, and, second, to establish an intelligible translation in collaboration with the target readership. In order to deconstruct the QM and to overcome the challenge of Quran untranslatability, the translator has to believe in the following four dogmas which are: Quran translational miraculous, Arabic linguistics heritage, sharii'a sciences, and Arabic culture.

These four dogmas constitute the framework on which all the RCT components are built on. They form an epistemological background from which the translator can derive his/her knowledge to tackle the Quranic translation process and take his/her strategic decisions.

The following paragraphs will explore each epistemological dogma to demonstrate its vitality and importance in Quran translation.

b-1– Quran Translational Miraculous Dogma (henceforth QTMD)

The QTMD refers to the inability of reproducing the SL Quranic text neither within the same language nor into any other language. The QTMD resides in its language, style, rhetoric and structure. It is out of reach for translators to produce a same or similar equivalent version. In the sense that no Quran translation can present itself as a substitution of the original text, and this is what makes the difference between translating a "normal" text and a religious text. Abdul-Raof makes this point clear when he states that "what is important is that the target language reader should be kept informed that what he/she is reading is simply a crude approximation of the Quran. The target reader needs to be aware of the fact that the translation of the Quran he/she is

reading is merely an aid which enables him/her to read and understand the Quran but not a substitution" (2001: 2). In this respect, it is worthy to mention that in the case of translating a normal text, the TT can substitute the ST. However, in the case of religious translation, the TT can never substitute the ST. The question of substitution can be considered, herein, as an aspect of the QTMD and the main scale in terms of the distinction between the two text-types. Muslim translators are conscious of the QTMD. Thus, in their attempt to reproduce its meanings, they resort to different strategies, including the use of footnotes, commentaries, and addition as a "paratext" to substitute the huge loss of religious meaning.

b- 2- The Linguistic Dogma (henceforth LD)

The Arabs at the time of revelation were the leaders of eloquence and oratory. The Quran was the prophet's miracle. He has challenged his people "at a time when they were acknowledged masters of the art of oratory and rhetoric, poetry and prose, rhymed prose and soothsaying... They all confessed their inability, voluntarily acknowledging the truth of what he had brought, and bore witness to their own insufficiency" (Abdul-Raof, 2001, 37-38). The Arabs at the time of revelation were challenged to imitate the shortest verse but the challenge was beyond reach.

Muslim and non-Muslim translators are aware that "Quranic expressions and structures are Quran-bound and cannot be reproduced in an equivalent manner to the original in terms of structure, mystical effect on the reader, and intentionality of the source text" (Abdul-Raof, 2001, 1). This LD will help the translator to admit that he is translating the word of Allah with the word of man.

It is so important to distinguish, here, between two levels of Arabic. Arabic as a language of communication which is spoken by the majority of cultivated people, and Arabic for mastering linguistic sciences such as grammar, rhetoric, philology, and lexicology. These sciences are vital for understanding the Arabic language. The more the translator is knowledgeable in these linguistic sciences the more he/she minimizes the loss in the translated text. From this perspective, the LD is different from being bi-lingual as a requirement of the translator. Being bi-lingual is not enough in Quran translation since the Quranic language is a special register of Arabic language that can be understood only through the LD.

b-3- Sharii'a Dogma (henceforth SD)

The SD endows the translation with the credibility it often fails to hold. Quran translation should be rendered in the TL in the light of "sharii'a sciences" (religious sciences) such as "*Uṣuulu ʔal-fiqh"* (Principles of Islamic jurisprudence), "*ʔsbaabu al-nnuzuul*" (Circumstances of Revelation), "*ʔann*aasikh wa ʔalmansuukh" (Abrogating and Abrogated), and "ʔattafsiir" (exegesis), etc. It is noticed that Quran translations are suffering from the absence of the SD. This remark has been observed in all the translations made by translators including Muslim translators. To include this third dogma, it is of paramount importance for translators to be conscious about its importance in Quran translation. The absence of this dogma is considered as a huge lacuna in Quran translation. Therefore, Quran translation requires primarily a profound exegetical knowledge, otherwise the meanings would be mistranslated.

The SD covers three main domains that constitute the whole Quranic verses which are "alʕaqiida" (belief), "alʕibaadaat" (Islamic observances), and "almuʕaamalaat" (interpersonal relations). These types cannot be understood in the language of revelation without referring to "sharii'a" sciences. This is why the presence of such sciences, in translation process, is not less important than understanding the Quran in the Arabic language itself.

According to Zahid (2012), the translation process, in general, can be divided into three stages: The first one is "analysis" in which the surface structure, i.e. the message as given in language is analyzed in terms of (a) the grammatical relationship and (b) the meaning of the words and combinations of words. This stage refers to deconstruction (the act of understanding) in which the translator recourses to every single information surrounding the ST to help him/her to deconstruct the meaning into "action units". The second one is "transfer" in which the analyzed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from L1 to L2. The third stage, however, is "restructuring" (the act of translating) in which the transferred material is restructured in order to make the final message acceptable in the receptor language. It is the stage in which the translator gathers all the "action units" of the first stage to perform them into a new surface structure.

d- The Cultural Dogma (henceforth CD)

In Translation studies, most researchers try to conceptualize the relationship between culture and translation competence. The prevailing assumption in the translation field agrees on a mediating role of the translator who has to render a particular text functions and cultural cues in the SL to a new form in the receiving culture. Therefore, scholars in the field consider the

act of translation as an intercultural maneuver that requires knowledge of both source and target cultures. Nida asserts that a text is a product of "total beliefs and practices of a society" (1994:157). Therefore, the issues of translation equivalence and the translatability/untranslatability remain challenging terrains to explore. Some theorists have attempted to resolve the issue by analyzing its counter-arguments and hold a central question: What impedes the translation act between cultures? For Venuti (1995) and Even Zohr (1979), the marginalization of certain cultures and the hegemony of others required a deep contemplation. Both theorists agreed that translation is manipulated by an ethnocentric stream that often celebrates powerful cultures and languages. Today, translation studies shift research towards a more scaled view of world cultures. Schleiermacher (1813) and Venuti (1995) were among the pioneers towards a foreignizing practice of translation. For Venuti, "the aim is rather to develop a theory and practice of translation that resists dominant values in the receiving culture so as to signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text" (2008:18).

Concerning the cultural aspects in the Quran, scholars admit that the Quranic culture cannot be understood within the language of revelation outside the Arabic culture. This epistemological dogma will help certainly the translator to grasp the meaning of a certain number of verses in which Arabic culture is vital in the understanding process. Taking into account this cultural specificity, it seems that culture in the Quran can be classified into two categories: **culture within language and culture as a subject of language**.

Culture within Language

In this type of culture, the cultural phenomenon is melted with the language to make culture and language two facets of the same coin. In this case, it is certainly harder for the translator to extract what is cultural from what is linguistic. Culture, in this perspective, is the way of thinking and writing, using cultural devices like imagery, simile, metaphors and so forth. In this context, culture becomes the inside world of the language from which the writer/author sees the outside world. The translation process, in this case, is based on the translator's pre-conceptions of the language and culture.

The following example illustrates how the CD can guide the translator in his/her decision-making in Quran translation. In al-aʕraaf, verse 40, when Allah describes the behavior of arrogant people who rejected to believe in the revelation of the Quran. He makes their entrance to paradise impossible and beyond reach by stating that it will never happen unless the "camel" passes through the "eye of the needle" as mentioned in the following verse:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾ (الأعراف، 40)

/hattaa yalija ʔaljamalu fii sammi ʔalkhiyaaṭi/

Arberry: Those that cry lies to Our signs and wax proud against them the gates of heaven shall not be opened to them, nor shall they enter Paradise until the camel passes through the eye of the needle. Even so We recompense the sinners;(The Heights, 40)

Culturally speaking, the "camel" is used to illustrate a huge creature as an opposite to the "eye of the needle" which refers to a thin thing. The "camel" as a symbol, in this verse, is derived from the Arabic culture. The original reader can easily understand the cultural meaning behind this image. The metaphorical meaning should be translated in a way that can reduce this cultural specificity into the common meaning that can be shared with the TR, such as (until a big creature like horse can be passed through the eye of the needle), as a cultural equivalent to "until the camel passes in the eye of the needle". By reducing this cultural specificity into a shared meaning between the ST and the TT will, absolutely, help the TR to grasp the meaning of the verse far from any cultural shock. This example, in our point of view, illustrates, in a transparent way, culture within language.

Culture as a Subject of Language

In this category, culture can be extracted from language. Language, in this type, is no more than a medium describing events, habits, customs and so forth. Language, in such a context, is not melted with culture to the extent that they form both two facets of one coin. In this case, the TL is no more than a medium describing what the SL has already described. It is like two reporters reporting folklore but in two different languages, or like two painters painting the same scene using different colors. Culture, here, represents the outside world of the text, and the original writer/author strives to bring the outside world to the reader through the language channel. In this regard, the translator must be visible in the translated text and complete the mission by preserving the outside world scene in order to share it with the TR. In doing so, the translator transfers what he sees and observes with his eyes and, not what his mind can see or deduce.

The following example shows how the CD can enlighten the translator path to render culture as a subject of language. The following sample in Surah at-takwiir, 8- 9 illustrates this case:

﴿ وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ﴾ (التكوير،9-8)

/wa idha ʔalmawʔuudatu suʔilat bi ayyi dhanbin qutilat/

Arberry: when the buried infant shall be asked (Overthrowing, 8-9)

In this Quranic verse, all the translators have translated the word /almawʔuudatu/ with "the buried infant" with some minor changes which do not affect the register of the translation. /almawʔuudatu/ is a typical example to illustrate culture as a subject of language. In the Arabic culture, in pre-Islamic time, people bury the newly born female due to their ignorance, fear of poverty or captivation in war /sabiiyyatun/. Thus, at that time, when a woman in the time of giving birth, labour drives her to dig a puncture so that if the newborn is a "male" she brings him back with her, but, if she is a "female", this puncture turns into her grave in which she will be buried forever. This is the whole cultural story behind the pre-Islamic word /almawʔuudatu/. It seems that the TR while reading the English translation as a "buried infant" would be shocked since it appears strange and inhuman. The English translation appears as a shot extracted from a scene. The CD will unveil all the deleted shots which complete the whole scene. A translation by transliteration will, certainly, brings back the TR to the ST to ask many questions about /almawʔuudatu/ to form a general overview and to grasp this strange Arabic cultural behavior. It is with this intricate translating process that the translator will overcome all the cultural challenges in Quran translation.

C- Religious and Communicative Maxims

The RCT is composed of two main maxims: religion and communication. These two maxims represent the main pillars on which all the requirements of the translation process rest.

C- 1-The Religious Maxim (RM)

The RM of the RCT covers three major categories. A deep scrutiny of the verses that constitute the Quran unveils that the Quranic verses can be classified into "alʕaqiida" (belief), "alʕibaadaat" (Islamic observances), and "almuʕaamalaat" (interpersonal relations). It is worth pointing out that these three categories are not of the same nature. Moreover, it should be stated that translating "alʕaqiida" and "alʕibaadaat" verses remains a precarious and on the knife-edge in the sense that any translation mistake can convey the wrong revealed message that may harm the religious meaning and affect the Islamic faith. Based on the above discussion, it is necessary for the translator to be

aware of these categories and to opt for the adequate strategy using the relevant procedures.

C-2- The Communicative Maxim (CM)

Newmark states that communicative translation strategy "attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership."(1988:47). In his definition, Newmark asserts that the translator should convey the exact meaning of the ST in an acceptable and a comprehensible ways. He adds that the translator has "to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original" (1988: 41).The CM, from this angle, intersects with the "dynamic equivalence" which gives more importance to the TR. The translated text has then to create the same effect on the TR similar to the effect created by the ST on the original reader. The RCT aims to define the CM in the light of the specificity of the sacred text translation. The acceptability and comprehensibility suggested by Newmark are so difficult to achieve in Quran translation. The cultural component in Quranic language is not a human experience whose events have been taking place in a society full of tradition and habits that can be shared either by using foreignization or domestication. It is, however, a culture which is melted with religious purposes. This makes sometimes its translation incomprehensible and unacceptable.

Both the RCT and Newmark's approach are target-oriented but in different directions. Newmark's strategy aspires to produce a comprehensible and culturally acceptable translation. In other words, to bring the author towards the reader. The CM of the RCT, however, values the sacredness of the ST at the expense of the TR but aspires, at the same time, to provide the target readership with an intelligible message. In short, to bring the reader towards the ST whenever necessarily; namely in "alʕaqiida" and "alʕibaadaat" verses.

D- Strategies

As for strategies, we consider Krings's definition in which he considers strategy as "potentially conscious plans for solving translation problems in the framework of a concrete translation task" (1986: 286). In the same respect, Venuti claims that "strategy" involves "the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it. Both of these tasks are determined by various factors: cultural, economic, and political" (2001: 240). It is in the same approach that we consider strategy in the RCT as a conscious method founded on a theoretical axiom and maxims related to the

sacred text translation. Following Newmark distinction between translation procedures and methods in which he considers translation methods "relate to whole texts" while translation procedures "are used for sentences and the smaller units of language" (1988: 81), in the RCT, we suggest three main strategies in Quran translation which are foreignization strategy (*henceforth* FS), conveyance (ʔattabliigh) strategy (*henceforth* CS), and domestication strategy (*henceforth* DS).

We notice that in Quran translation, there is a great number of verses that have been foreignized using different procedures such as literal translation, calque, and cultural borrowing. This strategy has led to a strange and incomprehensible translated text. Conversely, in other cases, we notice that there are some other verses that have been domesticated using different procedures such as functional equivalent, approximate translation, and cultural equivalent. This strategy has led also to a misleading and far-fetched translated text. Accordingly, the question that should be raised, in this respect, is that it is not the use of foreignization and domestication as strategies which is responsible for the unsuccessful translation, but it is, however, the absence of both the RM and the CM as two maxims providing the translator with the necessary background to choose the right strategy in the right place.

It seems that the two aforementioned strategies are not enough to deal with all the different types of Quranic verses. This has urged us to introduce the CS as a third strategy which we consider as a cornerstone in Quran translation. The aim of this strategy is to tone down the QTMD to present the Quranic meaning in a communicative way. The CS, in fact, comes to solve the question of the untranslatability of the Quran. It helps the translator to overcome the challenge of the QTMD in Quran translation. Our purpose behind this procedure, as we have mentioned earlier in this study, is that the QM aspects are associated with the time of revelation, and they are addressed to Arabs who were the leaders of eloquence and oratory. To illustrate this issue, we referred to Zahid (2018) in his article entitled "*Loss and Loss in the Translation of the Quran: 'O earth swallow up' as a case study*" in which he had demonstrated that surah "huud". 44 is the highest miraculous eloquent verse as confessed by all exegetes scholars. This study reveals that this verse contains different layers of meanings and, consequently, can be neither foreignized nor domesticated. It is only the CS that can tone down the eloquence of the verse and convey its meaning in a communicative way to the target readership

The RCT comes to compensate for the huge loss in Quran translation. It aims at providing the translator with the useful guidelines to guide him to ameliorate the quality of Quran translation and to establish a successful

communication act with the target readership. In other words, the translator has to avoid the ambition to maximize sameness between the ST and the TT in favor of minimizing the huge loss that can affect the ST.

The three main strategies adopted in the RCT help the translator to achieve three main objectives. Foreignization is the adequate strategy to bring the TR towards the ST namely in the verses of "alʕaqiida" and "alʕibaadaat". Domestication, however, is the fruitful strategy to bring the ST towards the TR in all what is shared between the SC and the TC namely in "almuʕaamalaat" verses. It is worthy to mention that these two strategies are situated in the two extremes of the strategy's scale. Foreignization is used on the left side of the scale to preserve the sacredness of the ST; whereas domestication is situated on the right side of the scale to make the translated text comprehensible and acceptable by the target readership. The CS, however, occupies the mid-position of the scale to tone down the QTMD and to produce a tangible and an acceptable TT .

The following figure summarizes the strategies adopted in the RCT
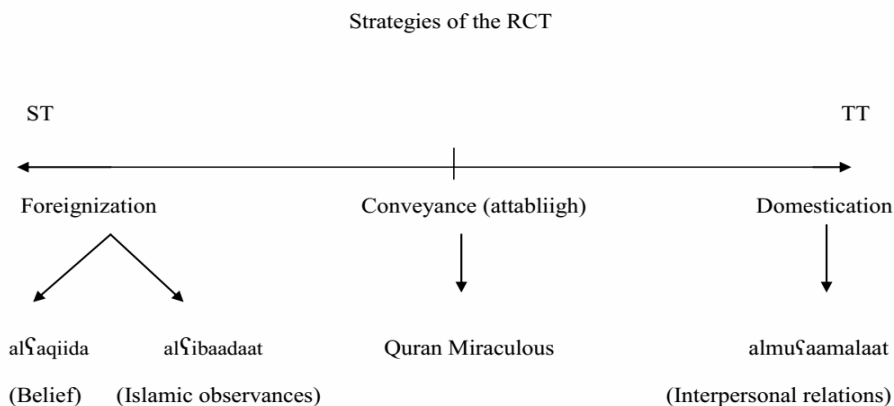
Figure 1: Strategies of the RCT

E- Procedures

Procedures are the techniques used in translation. According to Dorothy, translation procedures are some "tools used by a translator when transferring meaning from a source text to a target text. They are used to analyze sentences as well as smaller units of language text, that is, they do not go beyond sentence-level" (2016: 47-48). In the RCT, it is too early to limit the relevant procedures of each strategy. We prefer at this stage to examine, first, the adequacy of the main components of the RCT for Quran translation.

Procedures, in our perspective, need a more practical study to postulate an eventual correlation between strategies and procedures. From the limited corpus that we have worked on, we noticed that we can opt in Quran translation for the following procedures: transliteration, literal translation, calque, borrowing, cultural equivalence, approximate translation, and religious equivalence.

The aim of this theory is to generate an open debate on Quran translation that will tease the Quran translator to delve into Arabic language, sharii'a sciences, and Arabic culture, preserve the sacredness of the ST, provide the TR with the right information, and finally, to establish a successful communication process with the target readership. The following diagram illustrates the steps of the RCT:
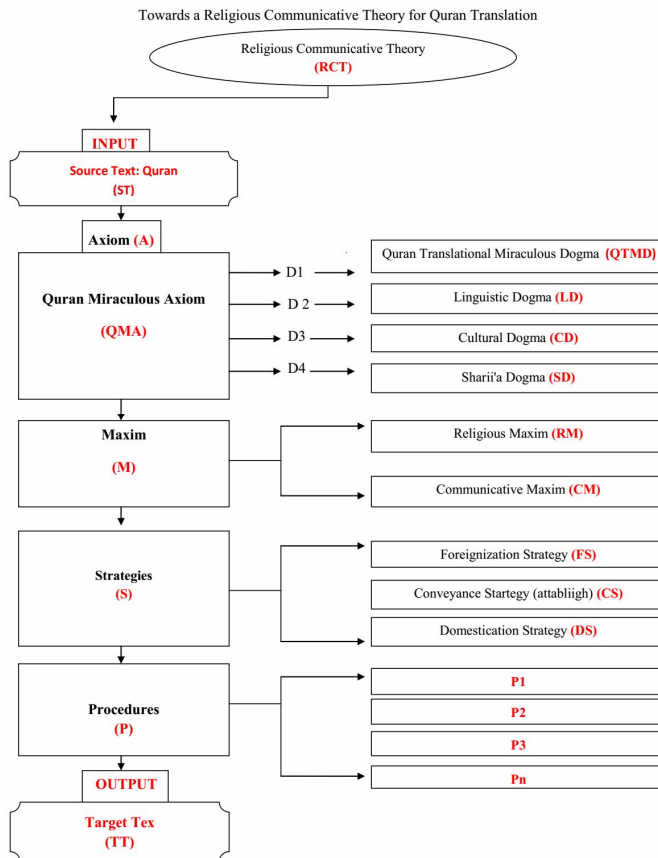
Figure 2: Principles of Religious Communicative Theory

Data and Methodology
Analysis Methodology

In this research, we have selected three Quranic verses. Each one represents one of the main strategies adopted in the RCT, namely the FS for "alʕaqiida" (belief) and "alʕibaadaat" (Islamic observances) verses, the CS for the QM, and DS for "almuʕaamalaat" (interpersonal relations) verses. Our aim is to investigate the extent to which the RCT, as an alternative theory for Quran translation, can assist translators to overcome the QM and to create a balance between the two maxims namely the RM and CM. Our aim also is to investigate the extent to which these three suggested strategies are successful in Quran translation. The selected verses are the following:

- al-baquara (The Cow), 43
- al-hujurat (The Inner), 12
- huud (Hud), 44

As for the English Quran translations, we have chosen, based on different backgrounds, Sale (1734), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Arberry (1955). Before starting the translation analysis of the selected data, there is a crucial point that needs to be settled down. First, the translator has to grasp the four dogmas as cited in the RCT. In other words, he has first to be aware that what he is translating is not a simple translation exercise that can be overcome by checking the lexical meanings in ordinary dictionaries. This awareness of the utility of the QM orients him to go back to grasp the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Arabic civilization and to base his/her interpretation on shrii'a sciences. The Quran exegesis is vital to shed light on the meaning of the verse. Our analysis is based on the following Quranic exegetes: Al-ṭṭabarii (d. 310 H/ 923 AD), Az-Zamakhcharii (d. 538 H/ 1143 AD), Al-Qurṭubii (d. 671 H/ 1273 AD), and Ibnu Kathiir (d. 774 H/ 1373 AD). The following stage aims to assess the Quran translations from the religious and communicative maxims perspective. One may question the utility of any translation which fails to keep the religious meaning of the ST, and, at the same time, the establishment of a successful communication process channel with the target readership.

The aim of this approach is to draw attention to the religious and communicative lacunae in the selected translated verses. This can never be achieved without taking the four epistemological dogmas and the two maxims (RM and CM) into considerations. The third stage consists of selecting the adequate strategy according to the category to which the verse belongs. It is preposterous to consider all the Quranic verses of the same texture since it is "maqaaṣid al-sharii'a" (the objective of sharii'a) which decides on the adequate

strategy to preserve the Quranic meaning in a communicative way. The RCT has limited these strategies to FS, CS, DS. The fourth step, and the last one, is to find out the relevant procedures to concretize the aim of the selected strategy. As we have mentioned in the first part of this study, it is too hard to predict the relevant procedures for each strategy, it is the analysis of the wide range of verses that can unveil this issue.

Data Analysis
Sample 1: Islamic observances "alʕibaadaat" verse

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾ (البقرة، 43)

/waʔaqiimuu ʔaṣṣalaata waʔaatuu ʔazzakaata/

Sale (translation **1**): Observe the stated times of prayer, and pay your legal alms, and bow down yourselves with those who bow down (al-baquara, 43).

Yusuf Ali (translation **2**): And be steadfast in prayer; practise regular charity; and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship) (al-baquara, 43).

Arberry (translation **3**): And perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and bow with those that bow (al-baquara, 43).

In this verse there are two fundamental pillars that every Muslim has to practice. That is, in addition to the belief in Allah, His Messenger, and the judgment day; "ʔaṣṣalaat" and "ʔazzakaat" are two essential pillars of Islam. Al-ṭṭabarii (d. 310 H/ 923 AD) says that "the word "ʔaṣṣalaat" for Arabs denotes to "duʕaaʔ'" (invocation), however, in the mandatory "ʔaṣṣalaat", the worshipper asks Allah for repentance and the different necessities. While "ʔazzakaat" is a mandatory almsgiving and it is essentially meant for the growth of wealth" (1994, V1, 93). Ibn Kathiir (d. 774 H/ 1373 AD) states that, in this verse, "Allah commands the people of the Book to perform the prayer behind the Prophet, and to pay "ʔazzakaat", then he adds "ʔazzakaat" is "an obligatory duty for all Muslims" (2000: 245-246). In fact, in the Islamic religion, "ʔaṣṣalaat" is the second fundamental doctrine that develops in a human being the appropriate feeling in relation to Allah and puts the individual in direct contact with Him. While, "ʔazzakaat" is the third cardinal doctrine that is an obligatory duty that consists of spending a portion of one's wealth for the benefit of the poor and needy. It is totally different from "ṣadaqatun" which is voluntary charity.

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A quick look at the English translations, allows us to notice that the term "Ɂaṣṣalaat" is translated similarly in all translations with "prayer", while the term "Ɂazzakaat" is translated differently from one translator to another. For instance, In translation one, the term "Ɂazzakaat" is translated as "legal alms", while in translation two, it is rendered as "regular charity". For translation three, '"Ɂazzakaat' has been rendered as "alms".

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the word "prayer" has many meanings. It can denote "1- words which you say to God giving thanks or asking for help. 2- a fixed form of words that you can say when you speak to God. 3- the act or habit of praying. 4- a religious meeting that takes place regularly in which people say prayers, and 5- a thing that you hope for very much" (2000: 1032). However, the word "alms" refers to "money, clothes, and food that are given to poor people" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2000, 34). The word "charity" which is used in translation two denotes "1- an organization for helping people in need, 2- the aim of giving money, food, help... to people who are in need, 3- kindness and sympathy towards other people, especially when you are judging them" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2000, 209).

These denotative meanings are unable to denote neither the Islamic "Ɂaṣṣalaat" nor "Ɂazzakaat". As we have stated earlier, all the above translations have missed the SD, LD, and the RM which are indispensable in the RCT for Quran translation. The absence of the aforementioned components has caused the English translations a huge loss of the religious meaning of "Ɂaṣṣalaat" and "Ɂazzakaat". In Islam, "Ɂaṣṣalaat" is done five times a day and it is often being preceded by "wuduuɁ" (Ablution). A comparison between both the linguistic structures of the SL and the TL reveals that there are no full or partial equivalents. The Islamic term "Ɂaṣṣalaat" denotes both the action of ablution (performance of purification) followed by the act of "Ɂaṣṣalaat" which requires many preconditions. All the provided equivalents in the English translations cannot convey the Islamic religious meaning of the term "Ɂaṣṣalaat". Similarly, for the term "Ɂazzakaat" in which all the given equivalents do not convey the intended meaning as it is explained in the Islamic religion. The aim of "Ɂazzakaat" is to purify one's income and wealth.

It seems from the above discussion that, in this case, we are facing what is called in translation studies "zero translation". As it is defined by Hatim and Munday (2004), "zero translation" is "a case where the TT contains no EQUIVALENT of a ST item. Often represented by the symbol Ø" (353). In this respect, the absence of the TL equivalent is limited to the absence of the religious meaning of "Ɂaṣṣalaat". It is true that the TL may contain a word denoting "Ɂaṣṣalaat" such as "prayer" in English and "priére" in French, but

according to the RCT, "prayer" and "priére" are no more than formal equivalents expressing both the form of "ʔaṣṣalaat" as a signifier and the meaning of "ʔaṣṣalaat" (worship) as a signified. The missing element, in this case, is the religious meaning of "ʔaṣṣalaat" which is totally different from "prayer" (priére). It is also a widely held view that all the three words ("ʔaṣṣalaat", prayer and priére) refer to an act of worshiping but in different ways. This leads us to suggest another term for this kind of missing equivalent in Quran translation which we name "Religious Equivalence" (*henceforth* RE). The RE in the RCT does not focus on the form and the content of the word as in the case of "formal equivalence" or on the reaction of the TR as in the case of "dynamic equivalence", it focuses, however, on the context of "zero translation" in which there is no religious alternative or religious equivalent in the TL. The RE is not interested in the linguistic equivalence between the ST and the TT, it is, however, preoccupied by the religious meaning of the word in the ST. The RE in the RCT is no more than a procedure to overcome the QM in Quran translation.

To overcome this translation challenge, the RCT suggests FS to preserve the religious meaning of the terms and words that have no RE. The FS is a deviant approach to put pressure on the target readership who according to Goethe (1813/1977) should go across to what is foreign and adapt himself to its conditions, its use of language, and its peculiarities. Also and according to Schleiermacher's approach (1813), the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader towards him.

As an attempt, we suggest the following translation based on the FS to preserve the RE and to bring the TR to go across the foreignness of the translated text:

"And perfom"ʔaṣṣalaat" and give "ʔazzakaat".

Footnote: "ʔaṣṣalaat" and "ʔazzakaat" are two essential pillars in Islam. "ʔaṣṣalaat" cannot be accepted without being preceded by the action of "wuduuʔ" (ablution) and the act of "ʔaṣṣalaat" requires preconditions such as "al-qibla" (direction to Makkah), "niyya" (intention), and "takbiiratu lihraam" (the opening Takbir); saying: "Allahu akbar" (Allah is great). While "ʔazzakaat" is an obligatory almsgiving which is based on income and the value of all one's possessions and which has to be calculated to an amount known as "nisba" (percentage). "ʔazzakaat" must be given to poor and needy people.

In translation studies, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) divide translation procedures into two categories; direct and oblique translation procedures. In this verse, we have used the RE as an oblique translation procedure. We have

preserved the content of the term "ʔaṣṣalaat" and "ʔazzakaat", and, at the same time, we have used transliteration as a direct translation procedure to preserve the form (sound) of the terms "ʔaṣṣalaat" and "ʔazzakaat". A footnote is added to establish the CM as an indispensable component of the RCT to give the TR the right to access the information, to make him cross the foreignness, and experience the peculiarities of the ST.

Sample2: Quran Miraculous "ʔal-iʕjaaz" verse

﴿وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكِ وَيَا سَمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ (هود، 44)

/waqiila yaa ʔarḍu ʔiblaʕii maaʔaki wa yaasamaaʔu ʔaqliʕii waghiiḍa lmaaʕu/

Sale (translation 1):*And it was said, O earth, swallow up thy waters, and thou, O heaven, withhold thy rain. And immediately the water abated*, and the decree was fulfilled, and the ark rested on the mountain Al Judi; and it was said, away with the ungodly people!(huud, 44)

Yusuf Ali (translation 2):*Then the word went forth: "O earth! swallow up thy water, and O sky! Withhold (thy rain)!" and the water abated*, and the matter was ended. The Ark rested on Mount Judi, and the word went forth: "Away with those who do wrong!"(huud, 44)

Arberry (translation 3): *And it was said, 'Earth, swallow thy waters; and, heaven, abate!' And the waters subsided,* the affair was accomplished, and the Ark settled on El-Judi, and it was said: 'Away with the people of the evildoers!'(huud, 44)

According to Ibnu Kathiir (d. 774 H/ 1373 AD), when the flood ended and the people of the earth were all drowned, except for the people on the ship, Allah commanded the earth to swallow its water, which had sprung from it and gathered upon it. Then, He commanded the sky to cease raining, and the water was made to subside. The next verse says "وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْر".This means that all of those who disbelieved in Allah were removed from the people of the earth. Not a single one of them remained upon it. After that, the ship and those who were in it rested on (Mount) Judi. Mujahid said, "Judi is a mountain in Al-Jazirah where the mountains sought to tower above each other on the day of the drowning. On that day of destruction, all the mountains sought to be higher (to avoid being overcome by the water). However, this mountain (Judi) humbled itself for Allah, and therefore it was not drowned. This is why Nuh's ship anchored upon it." (2000, 957).

According to al-Jurjaani (d. 471 H/1078 AD) in his book "*dalaaʔilu ʔal ʔiʕjaaz*", this verse is considered as the most miraculous and eloquent

throughout the Quran. Moreover, it will absolutely require special treatment and analysis. As it is noticed, there is a harmony between the verse's sounds, words, and structure. The structures "يا سماء أقلعي" and "يا أرض ابلعي"are alliterated with each other, which creates untranslatable aspects of phonetic and rhetoric miraculous. Hence, if the Arabs of "quraych", who were at the peak of their linguistic homogeneity and competence failed to imitate this verse in the Arabic language, how can this achievement be tangible in the TL?

In the English translations, we notice that the miraculous aspects of the verse have been lost in the TL. Consequently, and referring to Zahid (2018), the loss in translating surah *huud* verse, 44 can be classified into the following categories:

- **Phonetical loss**: The translation of the phonetical component of the verse is out of reach: the English translations have failed to preserve the phonetical impact on the TR in using the passive voice: "*qiila* قِيلَ، *ghiiḍa* غِيضَ، *quḍiya* قُضِي", the same remark has been noticed in the two following sentences: "*yaa ʔarḍu blaʕii* يا أرض ابلعي" and "*yaa samaaʔu ʔaqliʕii* يا سماء أقلعي" in which the parallelism, alliteration and assonance have been neglected. The phonetical component is considered by scholars as an unavoidable factor of the QM.

- **Structural Loss**: The QM is related to the structure of the Quran which can never be preserved in any TL. The translator has to grasp the structural meaning of the verse and put all his focus on the meaning rather than the structure since the latter is inimitable and untranslatable.

- **Semantic Loss**: It is noticed also that the English translations suffer from the absence of full equivalents of some Arabic words like "ghiiḍa" which is rendered as "withhold" and "abate". These linguistic equivalents denote "diminishment of water" which is only one part of the Arabic meaning of the word "ghiiḍa" that denotes not only "diminishment" but also to "keep diminishing and draining until it is gone in obedience to Allah's order".

-**Rhetorical Loss**: The conciseness that is the main rhetorical feature in this verse has been lost. This stylistic feature is loaded with several layers of meaning that cannot be rendered using the same linguistic TL equivalents. None of these rhetorical features of the verse have been kept as in the case of (*stawat* استوت) (*ʔarḍ* أرض) (*ʔaqliʕii* أقلعي *blaʕii* ابلعي) as metaphors;(*quḍiya* قضي) as metonymy and the rhetorical meaning of grammatical structure as in (*An-Nidaaʔ* النداء).

Translating the QM into another language is not an easy task for the translator. The RCT provides the Quran translator with the CS that would assist him/her to extract and to put aside all the challenging aspects of the QM, and to focus only on the meaning of the verse with only one condition; that the verse in question must not hold any religious meaning. The CS is the most adequate

strategy to deal with the QM. In other words, translating the QM is not necessary for a successful Quran translation. The translator should convert his/her absolute ambition to achieve a similar translation for the Quran to a humble translation one. He/she has to focus on what can be kept from the source text and what can be conveyed to the target reader; not on what should be kept from the source text and what cannot be conveyed to the target reader.

In short, we can conclude from the above analysis that all translators have adopted the CS as an adequate strategy to deal with the QM to achieve the CM which is a crucial maxim in the RCT. In any case, we cannot talk in Quran translation about loss and gain since, in the translation of the selected verse, there is only loss and loss as it is explained above. The loss of the QM affects only the verse which belongs to "alʕaqiida" and "alʕibaadaat". In the case of *huud*, 44, the verse is narrating the flood that has affected Nuh's people. Consequently, the loss in this verse has no negative impact on the QM. Accordingly, losing all the rhetorical features of the ST will not affect the sacredness of the Quran. Therefore, we call the translator to opt for CS only when there is no religious meaning related to "alʕaqiida", "alʕibaadaat" and "almuʕaamalaat".

Sample 3: Interpersonal relations "almuʕaamalaat" verse

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (الحجرات،12)

/ʔajuħibbu aħadukum ʔan jaʔkula laħma ʔakhiihi maytan fakarihtumuuhu/

Sale (translation **1**): O true believers, carefully avoid entertaining a suspicion of another: For some suspicions are a crime. Inquire not too curiously into other men's failings: Neither let the one of you speak ill of another in his absence. Would any of you desire to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely ye would abhor it. And fear God: For God is easy to be reconciled, and merciful (al-hujurat 12)

Yusuf Ali (translation **2**): O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it...But fear God: For God is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful (al-hujurat 12)

Footnote: No one would like even to think of such an abomination as eating the flesh of his brother. But when the brother is dead, and the flesh is carrion, abomination is added to abomination. In the same way we are asked to refrain from hurting people's feelings when they are present; how much worse is it when we say things, true or false, when they are absent!

Arberry (translation **3**): O believers, eschew much suspicion; some suspicion is a sin. And do not spy, neither backbite one another; would any of you like to eat the flesh of his brother dead? You would abominate it. And fear you God; assuredly God turns, and He is All-compassionate (al-hujurat 12)

The Quranic verse "أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوه" is a metaphorical expression that the Almighty uses to describe a person who backbites another. In other words, to mention the honor of someone is like to eat his flesh. To put him into disgrace leads to backbiting, and exposing secrets is similar to the consumption of his flesh. In this respect, the use of 'dead body' is due to the fact that backbiting is done behind people's back in the same manner that the dead person is unable to defend himself. It is interesting to mention that in this verse there is a specific cultural metaphor that needs a special treatment in the translation process. To grasp the meaning of this metaphor, the translator has to be not only bi-lingual but also bi-cultural; in short, he/she should resort to the cultural, sharii'a, and linguistic epistemological dogmas that will provide him/her with the original context to grasp fully this metaphorical expression.

Az-Zamakhshari (d.538 H/1143 AD) claims that Allah depicts backbiting to the worst and obscene manner which is to eat the flesh of one's dead brother. In the same respect, Qatada, as cited in Az-Zamakhchari (2009), explains this metaphor by stating that: "as you hate eating a cadaver, do so to your brother's flesh when he is alive. In other words, as you hate to eat from a dead corpus, hate to mention your brother in a manner that he dislikes in his absence"(2009, T26, 1040). The expression seems peculiar for the target reader but "Arabs, at the time of revelation, were familiar with this kind of metaphorical expressions" (Al-Qurtubi (d. 671H/ 1273 AD), 2002, V19, 403). In the same vein, Ibn Kathir(d. 774 H/ 1373 AD) mentions that in a "Hadith" collected by "Abu Dawud" that "Abu Hurayrah" said, "It was asked, What is backbiting?' and the prophet (PBUH) said, "it is to mention your brother in a manner that he dislikes". To this end, "Allah compared backbiting to eating the flesh of a dead human. i.e. Just as you hate eating the flesh of a dead person, on account of your nature; so hate backbiting, on account of your religion"(2000: 1749). This comparison between the "vehicle" (eating one's brother flesh) and the "tenor" (backbiting) demonstrates that the "common ground" is to respect people in both their presence and their absence.

Form the above-selected translations, we notice that all three translations have adopted FS using literal translation as a procedure to render the verse " أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ " as " Would any of you desire to eat the flesh of his dead brother?" The FS adopted here appears inadequate for the translation of the verse which makes its meaning sounds incomprehensible and alien to the TL, except in translation two in which Yusuf

Ali adds a footnote clarifying the "common ground" between the "vehicle" and the "tenor" in the Quranic metaphor. In this sample, the FS makes the communicative process confusing and too alien to the target audience. It also makes the TR under a cultural shock, pushing him to think that the Islamic religion is a religion of cannibalism, which is not the case.

It is true that all the translations respect the TL norms but the linguistic and cultural epistemological dogmas are missing in translations one and three. In translation two, however, Yusuf Ali was conscious of the missing epistemological dogmas. To compensate this huge loss that has affected the SL metaphor, he adds a footnote making it explicit that "backbiting" is like "eating the flesh of a dead person". To this end, we can admit that Yusuf Ali succeeds, to some extent, to clarify the SL metaphor and to put the target reader into a linguistic and cultural context that can assist him to grasp the verse's meaning and conceptualize the Quranic metaphorical expression.

In the RCT, culture is divided into two major categories: Culture within language and culture as a subject of language. This verse belongs to "almuʕaamalaat" (Interpersonal relations). It is a typical sample illustrating culture within language. The DS seems to be adequate and useful in translating the metaphorical expression in "al-hujurat 12" . To establish a successful communicative act, the translator has to share this image with the TR without any cultural shock or linguistic alienation. The most efficient procedure to render this image is translation by sense in which the translator has to convey only the intended meaning in a fluent and transparent way. In the light of the RCT, referring to the CM, using translation by sense as a procedure, this verse could be translated as follows:

"Would anyone of you like to be backbitten by his brother? Surely, you would abhor it "

It seems that the suggested translation using translation by sense has brought the ST to the TR and has fulfilled the CM that is considered one of the main objectives of the RCT.

Findings:

- Translating the Quran into any other language poses various problems. Exegetes themselves may encounter many difficulties while interpreting its verses within the same language, let alone into other languages that are structurally, semantically, and culturally different from each other such as Arabic and English.
- Any suggested theory for Quran translation should start from the "axiom" of the "Quran miraculous" which has always presented a real translation challenge in all languages.

- It should also aim to make the Quranic language, which is cultural bound, easier for the TR to achieve successful communication.
- The sacred text is neither a "cultural" text nor a "normal" text. It is, however, a "sacred text" revealed from the "supreme power" to human beings to guide them and to enlighten their path.
- Quran translation, as a religious text, needs a knowledgeable translator in Quranic studies and mastery of both the TL and the TC.
- In Quran translation, the TR needs to embrace the peculiarities of Quran translation and adapt him/herself to the "Quran pragmatic context" and the specificity of its language.
- Quran is miraculous and untranslatable because its properties, words, structure, style, eloquence, and poeticity cannot be rendered into another language while preserving the same ST features.
- Our approach in Quran translation consists of limiting the miraculous aspects of the Quran within the language of revelation, which is Arabic, in the sense that these miraculous aspects are not a requisite in the TL.
- The RCT believes that the Quran is the miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to prove his prophethood to his people who believed entirely in Arabic eloquence.
- The RCT comes to orient translators toward translating the QM as a substance not as a form. In other words, the translator has to convey the Quranic religious meaning and not the Quranic structure as a form.
- The RCT comes to compensate for the huge loss in Quran translation. It aims at providing the translator with the useful guidelines to guide him/her to ameliorate the quality of Quran translation and to establish a successful communication act with the target readership.
- In the RCT, the translator's mission is a continuum to the prophet's mission. The only difference between them is time and space.
- Goethe's approach can serve as a solid ground to start from to build a theory which merges between foreignization and domestication as it is explained in the RCT.
- The RCT composes of one "axiom", four dogmas, two "maxims", three strategies, and an open list of procedures.
- The QMA, on which the RCT is built on, is considered by the Arabic Islamic civilization as an evident premise that has been proved throughout long centuries.
- The RCT consists of four "epistemological dogmas" which constitute the main entries to deconstruct the QM and to overcome the untranslatability of the Quran to achieve a visible and tangible TT. These epistemological dogmas are: Quran translational miraculous, the Arabic linguistic heritage, the Arabic culture, and sharii'a sciences.

- The RCT comprises two "maxims", namely the RM and the CM.
- The RM occurs where one tries to be as a messenger as one possibly can, and gives as much religious meaning as should be. The CM, however, occurs where one tries to be a communicator and communicates the message according to the nature of the religious meaning and the type of the verse.
- The RCT consists of three main strategies which are "foreignization", "conveyance" (ʔattabliigh), and "domestication". The aim of these strategies is to preserve the religious meaning of the ST and to open a communicative channel between the ST and the TR.
- The last component of the RCT is the procedures applied in translating the Quranic verses.
- The RE is not interested in the linguistic equivalence between the ST and the TT, it is, however, preoccupied by the religious meaning of the word in the ST. The RE in the RCT is no more than a procedure to overcome the QM in Quran Translation.

Appendix 1: Transliteration Symbols
Consonants

Arabic Consonants	Transcription symbol	Arabic Consonants	Transcription symbol
أ	/ʔ/	ض	/ ḍ/
ب	/b/	ط	/ ṭ/
ت	/t/	ظ	/ẓ /
ث	/th/	ع	/ ʕ/
ج	/j/	غ	/ gh/
ح	/ħ/	ف	/f/
خ	/kh/	ق	/q/
د	/d/	ك	/k/
ذ	/dh/	ل	/l/
ر	/r/	م	/m/
ز	/z/	ن	/n/
س	/s/	ه	/h/
ش	/ sh/	و	/w/
ص	/ ṣ/	ي	/y/

Vowels

Short Vowels	Long Vowels
a	aa
u	uu
i	ii

List of Abbreviations

ST	Source Text
TT	Target Text
SL	Source Language
TL	Target Language
SC	Source Culture
TC	Target Culture
TR	Target Reader
RCT	Religious Communicative Theory
QMA	Quran Miraculous Axiom
M	Maxim
RM	Religious Maxim
CM	Communicative Maxim
QTMD	Quran Translational Miraculous Dogma
LD	Linguistic Dogma
SD	sharii'a Dogma
CD	Culture Dogma
S	Strategy
FS	Foreignization Strategy
CS	Conveyance Strategy
DS	Domestication Strategy
P	Procedure

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