

**Lost in Interpretation: The Role of Background  
Knowledge Context in Interpreting the Quarnic  
Discourse (Surat Al-Mujadilah as a Model)**

فقد المعنى في الترجمة التفسيرية: دور معرفة  
خلفية السياق في تفسير الخطاب القرآني (سورة المجادلة أنموذجًا)

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for the Master's Degree in English Language and Literature**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

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**Jan. 2023**

## Authorization

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents' souls.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my husband (Mohammad Ababneh) who believed in me, supported me, stood by my side and has been a constant source of encouragement during my journey.

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the role of the background knowledge context and using paratextual translation strategies in clarifying the English translations of some verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah by Al-Hilali & Khan, Khattab, Arberry and Shakir. To obtain the goals of the study, the researcher selected nine verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah as sample of the study. The researcher introduced the following questions: 1- What are the paratextual strategies used by the translators to translate the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah? 2- To what extent did the translators include the background knowledge context in translating the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah? 3- Which translations are the most transparent and the closest to the Arabic interpretations of the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?

To answer these questions, the researcher adopted a comparative –analytical-descriptive method. Results showed that not considering the background knowledge context of the verses and the reasons for their revelation in some translations by some translators, by only translating the mere words of the verses literally, resulted in ambiguous translations. Some other translations were clearer than others as some translators used various translation strategies such as paraphrasing, and explication, in addition to the use of Paratextual translation strategies such as: translator introduction and footnotes.

**Keywords: Translation, Background Knowledge context, Surat Al-Mujadilah.**

## فقد المعنى في الترجمة التفسيرية: دور معرفة خلفية السياق في تفسير الخطاب القرآني (سورة المجادلة أنموذجًا)

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### الملخص

هذه الدراسة تستقصي دور معرفة خلفية السياق واستخدام استراتيجيات الترجمة الشبه نصية في توضيح الترجمات الإنجليزية لكل من: الهلالي وخان، خطاب، أربري وشاكر لبعض الآيات من سورة المجادلة. اختارت الباحثة تسع آيات من سورة المجادلة كعينة للدراسة لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة. وقد طرحت الباحثة الأسئلة التالية: 1- ما هي استراتيجيات الترجمة الشبه نصية التي استخدمها المترجمون في ترجمة الآيات المختارة من سورة المجادلة؟ 2- إلى أي مدى ضمن المترجمون خلفية سياق الآيات في ترجماتهم للآيات المختارة من سورة المجادلة؟ 3- ما هي الترجمات الأكثر شفافية ووضوحاً والأقرب إلى التفسيرات العربية للآيات المختارة من سورة المجادلة؟

للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة استخدمت الباحثة الأسلوب الوصفي-التحليلي المقارن. أظهرت النتائج أن عدم أخذ معرفة خلفية سياق الآيات وأسباب نزولها بعين الاعتبار في بعض الترجمات من قبل بعض المترجمين من خلال قيامهم بترجمة كلمات الآيات ترجمة حرفية نتج عنه ترجمات غامضة. إلا أن بعض المترجمين الآخرين كانت ترجماتهم أكثر وضوحاً بسبب استخدامهم للعديد من استراتيجيات الترجمة ومنها إعادة الصياغة والتوسع، بالإضافة إلى استخدام استراتيجيات الترجمة الشبه نصية مثل: مقدمة المترجم والهوامش (الحواشي).

الكلمات المفتاحية: سورة المجادلة، الترجمة، معرفة خلفية السياق.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Background of the Study

### 1.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study. It shows an overview of the challenges in translating the Holy Quran, the Paratextual translation strategies, the importance of the background knowledge context in translating the Quranic discourse meaningfully and Surat Al-Mujadilah and the reasons behind its revelation. It also introduces the statement of the problem, objectives, and questions of the study, in addition to its significance, its limitations and limit.

### 1.1. Background of the Study

The Quran message is universal as it is directed to all mankind. It is no secret to anyone that the desperate attempts to translate the Holy Quran into various international languages come from the desire to understand its meanings and its religious, moral, historical and cultural values.

Translation into another language is not a simple mission; especially when it comes to the translation of the Quranic discourse, which is very challenging. As it is the word of God Almighty, Muslims revere the Qur'an considering it as their Prophet Mohammad's miracle. Translation of the Quranic texts demands that translators be very cautious and precise, which makes it a very difficult type of translation.

#### 1.1.1. The Interpretive Translation of the Holy Quran

According to Ringgren and Sinai (2022), the classical Islamic faith mentioned that angel Gabriel revealed the Quran to the Prophet Mohammad in Mecca starting in 610 CE and finishing in 632 CE.

The Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammad in different occasions and divided into separated verses. Many Muslim exegetes related the Quran revelation with certain events in Prophet Mohammad's life.

The Holy Quran was revealed in Arabic, and translating the Quran into other languages needs to respect and pay a lot of attention to the privacy of the revealing language and its miraculous nature. Salman Al-Faresi produced the first Quran's translation in the seventh century when he translated Surat Al-Fatiha into the Middle Persian.

El-Saba (2017) asserted that the interpretations of The Holy Quran are very important since nearly 80% of the Muslim population are not speakers of Arabic and they depend on the translated versions of the Quran to read and understand their religion. He also assured that due to the fact that the original language of the Quran is Classical Arabic; this causes deficiency in finding the equivalence of the terms in other languages.

### **1.1.2. Challenges of Translating the Holy Quran**

Translators face a great challenge when it comes to translating the Holy Quran, taking into consideration the necessity of the comprehension of its symbolic style and its miraculous words and contexts which reflect the Arabic milieu.

According to El-Saba (2017), translators of the Holy Quran face a number of issues, including:

- 1) When translating Quranic texts translators should consider the context of each verse.
- 2) A lot of Arabic terms have context-dependent meanings which make it difficult to be translated into the other languages .

- 3) Translators also must be aware of (Al-Hadith) which helps clarifying some verses, because both the Quran and the prophetic tradition (Al-Hadith) are related to each other.
- 4) Another challenge facing the Holy Quran translators is “Transliteration” which is using the alphabet of another language in order to render a word’s sounds. This is really problematic in Islam because there are some certain rituals which must be executed using the genuine Arabic text.
- 5) Another difficulty lies in how to deal properly with Quranic terms; as a word could have several meanings based on the context.

Even native speakers of Arabic reported their inability to understand some Quranic verses. This difficulty is related to many factors; of which the most prominent one is ignoring the context in which some of Quranic verses were revealed.

### **1.1.3. The Paratextual Translation Strategies**

As the range of translation studies have expanded widely, researchers have started to use paratexts apart from translated texts, in order to explore and explain translation activities more objectively.

Genette (1997) assured that there is an indefinite limit between the text itself (the interior) and the discourse outside the text (the exterior), calling it (paratext). He has classified paratexts into two categories:

- 1) Inner paratext, very related and as an explication to the text itself, such as preface, contents and covers. It is additional to the original text, helping the reader to comprehend and evaluate the text. It also provides more background knowledge of the text for the readers and expands the textual content.

- 2) Outer paratext, separated from the text such as book reviews and the reader comments, it provides evaluation of the whole translation. Outer Para-text may also include background information about the text context which makes the translation more comprehensible.

#### **1.1.4. The Role of the Background Knowledge Context in Translating the Quranic Discourse Meaningfully**

Context is a very important factor, which plays a significant role in understanding the holy Quran and its interpretation into other languages. In most translations of the Quran into other languages, insufficient consideration has been given to the background context.

Abdel Haleem (2018) defined the term “context” by classifying it into two types:

- 1) A statement that comes before or follows a phrase or a single word and influences its meaning, which is referred to as (Al-siyaq) in Arabic, i.e. linguistic context.
- 2) The situational context: facts or circumstances which bounds any statement in the Quran. This is called (siyaq al-mawqif) in Arabic, i.e. the situation in which a text is produced.

In this study I am referring to the second one, (siyaq al-mawqif). In the case of Quran, it is the reason behind the revelation of the verses, which plays a crucial role in comprehending these verses, and then obtaining a clear and meaningful translation for it.

#### **1.1.5. Surat Al-Mujadilah and the Reasons of Revelation**

Surat Al-Mujadilah is considered as the first of ten Medinite Surahs in which the provisions of the relations of the new Islamic society in the Al-Madinah are mentioned. The surah shows the speed of the divine response to clarifying social issues and managing the relevant legislation. It deals with many legislative provisions such as the provisions of (Al-Zihaar) ‘الظهار’ and the expiation for it, ruling on soliloquy and the etiquette of

gatherings, the inadmissibility of loving the enemies of God. It also talks about the hypocrites and the Jews.

According to Khattab (2016) the story behind the revelation of this surah is that a woman called (Khawlah Bint Tha'labah) had a dispute with her husband called (Aws Ibn As-Samit), who said to her that she was for him as his mother's back (zahr). This phrase is known as divorce (zihar). Khawlah complained to Prophet Mohammad and told him her story and he replied to her that according to the tradition she is considered divorced. She disputed that her children would suffer. Then she began to plead to Allah. Finally, this surah was revealed as a reply to her pleas.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

The untranslatability of Quran draws on thinking that Quran is a unique text that we cannot rewrite or paraphrase freely as we do with poetry and any type of prose to communicate meaning. This thought makes language and religion scholars consider English, German, Urdu, or any other form of Quran as interpretations rather than translations of Quran. If we think in the same vein, we can talk about the English interpretations of the Quran in relation to the Arabic ones produced by Arabic interpreters (Mufaseroun) to investigate the ambiguity of the English interpretations of Quran. Insufficient attention has been given to context in many Quran translations into English and other languages, beside English and Arabic commentaries on the Quran, which resulted in cryptic and ambiguous translation. Moreover, the encryption and the mystery of many Quranic verse translations stem from many translators being inconsiderate of the importance of contextualizing the Interlingual translation of Quran by not using crucial Para-textual translation strategies like footnotes and thematic introductions. Ignoring the context to produce thematic translation leads to ambiguous and cryptic target discourse

that is noted when compared with the intra-lingual translations of Quran produced by native speakers of Arabic interpreters (mufassirūn).

Jacobson (1959) divides the transactions of translations into three types as follows:

- 1) Intra lingual translation which means interpreting some verbal signs using other signs from the same language.
- 2) Inter lingual translation which means interpreting some verbal signs using means from other languages.
- 3) Inter semiotic translation which means interpreting verbal signs using signs of nonverbal sign systems.

I draw my argument on Roman Jakobson division of interpretation into inter-lingual and intra-lingual translation.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Knowing the background context of the verses is very significant to get right comprehension and better understanding of the Quranic texts and even translating and interpreting it into other languages meaningfully.

The objective of this study is to investigate the ambiguity of the translation versions of some verses in Surat Al-Mujadilah as a result of not considering the background knowledge context of these verses by the English translators.

Therefore, I chose certain translations of some verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah to observe how the background context affects producing a transparent and fluent interpretation for these verses whose context plays a great deal in revealing their intended meaning.



#### **1.4. Questions of the Study**

This study tried to answer the questions below:

- 1) What are the paratextual strategies used by the translators to translate the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?
- 2) To what extent did the translators include the background knowledge context in translating the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?
- 3) Which translations are the most transparent and the closest to the Arabic interpretations of the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

Despite the fact that there are a lot of translation studies which discuss the Quran translation and interpretation, it is uncommon to find certain translation studies which focus on relating the background knowledge context of the verse with its interpretation.

This study is useful for the translators of religious texts and helps them produce meaningful and clear translations of the Quran when giving attention to the background context of the verses while translating. It also benefits translators, interpreters and researchers who are interested in finding solutions to the different translation problems which translators of Quran encounter when they render Quranic verses from Arabic into other languages and the effect of not considering them on non-Arab- Muslims.

#### **1.6. Limit of the Study**

The study was conducted in Amman, Jordan during the first semester of the academic year of 2022-2023.

## 1.7. Limitations of the Study

The study findings are limited to the translations of the selected verses which were from Surat Al-Mujadilah only. They are limited to the English translations done by Mustafa Khattab, Arthur Arberry, Muhammad Shakir, and the collaborative effort made by Muhammad Al-Hilali and Mohammad Khan, and the Arabic interpretations of these verses produced by Ibn Kathir and As-Sa'di.

## 1.8. Definitions of Terms

**Translation:** Theoretically, it is “rendering the meaning of the text into another language in the way that the author intended the text” (Newmark, 1988, p.5).

Operationally, it refers to techniques and procedures of the five translators, whose work is being considered as part of the scope of this study, used in translating the nine selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah.

**Interpretation:** Theoretically, “it is defined in the Oxford Word power Dictionary as the action of explaining the meaning of something” (Oxford University Press, 2010, p.425)

Operationally, it refers to Arabic explanations of the nine selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah, produced by the two Arabic interpreters (Al-Mufaseroun), whose work is being considered as part of the scope of this study.

**Background:** Theoretically, “it is defined in the Oxford Word Power Dictionary as the facts or events that are connected with a situation” (Oxford University Press, 2010, p.50)

Operationally, it refers to the former knowledge the translators have about the verses before translating it.

**Context:** Theoretically, “ it is defined in the Oxford Word Power Dictionary as 1- the words that come before or after a word , phrase, sentence, etc. and that help you to understand its meaning, 2- the situation in which something happens or that caused something to happen” (Oxford University Press, 2010, p.172)

Operationally, it refers to the reasons of revelation of the nine selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah.

**Surat Al-Mujadilah:** Theoretically, “A Medinian Surah in the Holy Quran which takes its title from the story of the pleading woman Khawlah Bint Tha’labah (verses 1–4)”. (As-Sa’di, 2002, p. 995).

Operationally, it refers to nine selected verses and how they were translated in English and interpreted in Arabic.

**Strategy:** Theoretically, it is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary as "a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose."(Hornby, 2004, p, 1284).

Operationally, it refers to the main and paratextual techniques and procedures used in translating the nine selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah by the five translators.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0. Introduction**

This chapter surveys the theoretical and empirical studies related to the applied strategies by the translators to translate religious texts in general and the Quran in particular, and the challenges they encounter. In addition, it addresses the role of the paratextual strategies and the background context in translating the Quran.

#### **2.1. Review of Theoretical Literature**

The studies below show problems and challenges translators encounter while translating religious texts. Furthermore, they discuss the paratextual translation strategies and how they are used to clarify translation. They also points out to the significance of contextualizing in translating religious texts and the crucial role which the background knowledge context plays in the translation process.

##### **2.1.1. Theoretical Literature Related to the Religious Texts and the Holy Quran Translations**

Many scholars have studied the problems and the challenges which translators experience in translating religious texts especially the Holy Quran. For example, Catford (1965) asserted that translating the Quran is a complex mission; he assured that faithfulness in translating is very significant to produce a correct translation.

A lot of linguists and scholars assure that there is a strong connection between culture and language. Each community has its own language, culture and religion. Language through the translation can transmit religion, traditions and cultures to other societies. The translators then should consider using the best translation strategies which assure full

understanding of religious text, especially when they contain culture specific terms to avoid any distortion of the original content.

Newmark (1988) introduced some translation strategies to help translators better translate religious and cultural text.

- 1- When there is no equivalent meaning in the target language for a source language word, then the translator would try to paraphrase this word, which is a descriptive equivalent translation.
- 2- Paraphrasing is a long explanation of words. It is longer than the descriptive equivalent translation. And it is usually for religious terms.
- 3- Transference is transferring a word from the source language as it is into the target language.
- 4- Synonymy which used by the translator through applying the closest equivalent from the target text when there is no accurate equivalent of a source language word.
- 5- Notes, glosses, and additions, when there are no equivalents of religious terms. Some religious and cultural terms need more explanation, and this can be achieved by applying the following:
  - a) Adding footnotes or endnotes.
  - b) Adding glossary at the bookend.
  - c) Adding explanation between parentheses or to the text itself.

El-Khatib (2011) states that the unique features and style of the Holy Quran are what make it so difficult to be translated. The Quranic texts sometimes open to many interpretation and the Quran translators must do their best the translator tries to convey the most suitable meaning they transfer. Also, he thinks that to produce a clear and

comprehensible translation for the Quranic text, the translator should have excellent knowledge of Arabic and the target language, in addition to a great awareness of the Islamic Law.

As-Safi (2011), asserts that English and Arabic come from different origins which cause further losses in translation processes between the two languages. Therefore, translation is restricted to many borders especially cultural ones which lead to inevitable losses especially when dealing with Quran. Also, He assured that when the translator uses an old language alongside a contemporary one that could lead to discrepancy. The translations of some translators who resort to use faithful translation are weak and incomprehensible, as a result of not adding commentaries or explanations when they are unable to find equivalent terms.

Elewa (2014) confirmed the importance of being accurate, precise and at the same time natural when translating the source text into the target text. He assured that translators should attempt to understand the source text deeply and try to transfer it accurately and precisely into the target language, without addition or deletion in meaning.

Agliz (2015) points out that the main issue that a translator faces in translating religious texts is finding the equivalence at the scale of the grammar and word. In order to get an accurate and transparent translation, translators must take into their account equivalence at the word level first and then the sentence level and then the text level.

Regarding the translation and interpretation of sacred text, Al-Abdullatif (2018) thinks that trying to interpret or translate a sacred text far from its sacred context may lead to a great loss in its meaning. He investigated the untranslatability of the Quran, attempting to prove that it is a case of equivalence.

### **2.1.2. Theatrical Literature Related to the Paratextual Translation Strategies**

Macksey (1997) defined the paratext as textual and visual elements which support the core text and surround it. It is an additional material to the content which supports it, explains it, or adds background information about it. It may also describe the translators or scholars' opinions and reviews. He also assured that paratexts are significant for many fields of translation studies such as: literary translation, self-translation and audiovisual translation. Paratexts examples are titles, subtitles, forewords, afterwords, pseudonyms and dedications.

Abdul-Raof (2001) recommended using explanatory translation. He pointed out that the purpose from using this methodology is to translate ambiguous texts through using marginal notes or commentaries through exegetical materials; to clarify the complex meanings.

The theory of Paratextuality has caught the attention of the translation scholars; they considered paratexts as elements that connect the translated texts with their readers which influence their reception majorly.

The term paratext was at first related to books only, because, titles, covers, opening information, dedications, colophons and endpapers are already included in books. Batchelor (2018) assured that these elements encourage the readers to step from the outside of the book into its inside world. She examined the connection between the Paratext and the translation studies. She also analyzed the academic works of Genette in her book (Translation and Para-texts), explaining how these works had a wide effect on the development of transtextuality.

### **2.1.3. Theoretical Literature Related to the Role of the Background Knowledge Context in Translation**

Researchers referred to the major role the background knowledge context plays in translation in general and especially translating the Holy Quran, and some of them emphasized the significance of contextualizing in translating religious discourse.

Cutting (2002) believes that the meaning of a specific sentence depends on the assumption of the speaker and hearer of that sentence. He classified contexts into three types:

- 1) Situational context is what the speaker knows about where the interaction between the speaker and the hearer happened.
- 2) Background knowledge context is what the speaker and the hearer know about each other and the cultural and interpersonal circumstances.
- 3) Co-textual context is the context of text which deals with the reference of the text.

Kim (2006) asserted that the main reason behind producing an inaccurate translation is the insufficient background knowledge. He also agreed on the fact that holding enough previous knowledge assists translators comprehend and then analyze sentences accurately. Recommending that translator must build relevant background knowledge in order to start the process of translation and then finish it successfully.

Hassan (2011) highlighted the significance of contextualizing in interpreting and translating religious texts, he asserted on the role that background knowledge context plays in translating Quranic discourse, saying that when scholars of balagha said “Lekul Maqam Maqal” (“for every situation there is a suitable expression”) they were expressing rhetorical principles which can be applied when studying many languages.



Sirriyya (2015) confirms that translators should have full comprehension of the meaning beyond the religious texts they are trying to translate. In case of translating the Holy Quran, that can be achieved by having enough knowledge of the Islamic culture. This knowledge is very important in order to be faithful in the transmission of the meaning of the original religious text. She mentions some strategies that could be helpful in translating religious texts such as:

- 1- using contextual translation where the translator provides different synonym for one term in different places through considering the context instead of any separated words or terms,
- 2- explanation through footnotes, which can be used when the term needs more explanations and commentaries,
- 3- applying cultural translation by employing a common expression in the target language that is equivalent to the source language one,
- 4- deletion, where the translator deletes some terms that has no equivalent in the target language to make it easier for the recipients to understand the translation, and
- 5- Using partial transliteration to cover the target language referential gaps which occur as a result of the big contrast between the Arabic culture with its Islamic religion and the English culture with its Christian religion.

Speaking of the significance of the background knowledge context in getting clear and accurate translation of the religious texts, a study by Abdel Haleem (2017) discussed the major role which the context plays in understanding, translating and interpreting the Holy Quran into other languages. He pointed out that insufficient attention has been paid to the context in most English translations of the Quran, in addition to both Arabic and

English commentaries on the Quran, and other languages, which led to ambiguous and mysterious translations.

## **2.2. Review of Empirical Studies**

Many researchers and scholars conducted empirical studies in order to investigate the problems translators encounter during the translation process of the Quranic discourse and other religious texts, beside the procedures and strategies they used to solve these problems.

Al-Sulaimaan (2005) investigated the strategies used by the translators to deliver some homonymous and polysemous lexical verbs in the Holy Quran into English. Through this study he discussed problems they face while attempting to translate these verbs. Therefore, he selected six Quranic verses and analyzed the data such as: SL text, TL text, stages of translational coincidence with the religious interpretation (high, medium and low), meaning and type of method.

El-Khatib (2006) examined translating the Holy Quran Islamic terminologies. The purposes of this study are: suggesting a particular and clear methodology which translators can use while translating the Quranic texts and putting appropriate methods for translating the Islamic terms in the Holy Quran. So, He selected some particular terms which are mentioned repeatedly in different verses of the Holy Quran such as Zakat, Allah, Hajj, etc. He used two translation strategies: domestication and foreignization. El-Khatib found that foreignization is convenient in translating religious terms. This strategy can be achieved by applying (transliteration) in addition to commentaries in the text itself or as footnotes.

Al-Jabri (2008) studied the incomprehensibility of the translation of some Quran verses for English native speakers. He also examined the disability to transfer selected verses of the Quran meanings and the reasons behind that. For his study, Al-Jabri chose three translations: Yusuf Ali's, Al-Hilali's and Arthur Arberry's and studied them using a questionnaire as a study tool. Attempting to know how far the translations were understandable, he shared the questionnaire with well-educated English native speakers. He found that the extent of clarity of the translations was less than 5%. The reasons which caused this ambiguity were: applying literal translations for some terms and expressions, using old-fashioned words, cultural differences, transliteration which does not transfer accurate meaning to target readers, and the absence of punctuation marks.

Mahadi (2012) tried to classify ambiguities types in the Holy Quran and then to criticize the ambiguous translation of some verses. Ambiguous translations of verses can be categorized as phonological, conjugational structural and lexicosemantic. He selected four English translations of the regarding verses which include three types of ambiguities. He examined the intransparency and ambiguity in each verse. The researcher found that some translators used literal translation, while others tried the explication strategy to clarify the meanings of the ambiguities.

Mahadi explained that the Holy Quran translators should be aware of some of the Holy Quran useful interpretations and exegeses before stepping into the translation process; which assist them to obtain the accurate meanings and give them great deal of background ideas that included in the Holy Quran.

Ashaer (2013) investigated the ranges where the translators were incapable to catch the accurate meaning of the verse as a result of pragmatic and semantic terms included in the verse. He studied three translations of the Holy Quran related to the pragmatic and

semantic problems in Surat" Yusuf". He examined specific exegeses of the Holy Quran beside some Arabic grammar and rhetoric books. The study propose that translators in order to solve the issues which carry a word to have different possible meanings must pay attention for some devices such as: foregrounding and backgrounder, word order, gender, etc.

Abdelaal and Rashid (2015) studied Abdellah Yusuf Ali's translation of Surat *Al-Waqiaa* and examined the semantic loss in it. Also, they investigated the causes behind these losses based on Baker's typology. They used the descriptive content analysis. They found that these semantic losses resulted from the semantic complexity of vocabularies in addition to the mistranslations.

Nassif (2018) asserted that in order to find precise equivalent meaning of the words and terms in the target language and comprehend the intended meaning accurately, the translator of the Holy Quran should be aware of the lexical, syntactic and morphological features of the Quran verses. Therefore, translators must rely on English and Arabic dictionaries in order to obtain the accurate words meanings. They should also return to Quran commentaries to get the most suitable Quranic verses interpretation. Translators encounter many challenges trying to communicate the core meaning of the Quranic verses because of the rhetorical features of the Holy Quran.

Al-Mubarak (2019) examined the restrictions and the issues in the strategies applied by some students who were trying to interpret some Islamic religious texts' lexical collocations from Arabic to English. The students used 25 different translation techniques. He created a test with some lexical collocation to investigate the inaccuracy and errors made by the students during the interpretation process. The researcher finally

proposed some advices and suggestions for the students in order to develop their abilities in translating Islamic collocations from Arabic language into English.

This study differs from other studies, that it examines the role of considering the background context of the verses in obtaining a clear and correct translation. It also discusses the importance of using paratextual translation strategies by translators when translating the Quran, which plays a major role in clarifying the meanings of the verses to the target reader.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology adopted in the study. It examines the sample of the study according to four selected English translations and two Arabic interpretations.

#### **3.1. Sample of the Study**

The study sample includes nine selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah which are:

Verse 1, Verse 2, Verse 3, Verse 4, Verse 8, Verse 9, Verse 11, Verse 12 and Verse 13.

I chose the nine verses to be the sample of the study because Surat Al-Mujadilah and particularly these verses depend heavily on knowing the background of their context in order to reach transparent and meaningful translations for it.

The selected four translations are listed below:

- 1) Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language by Mohammad – Mohammad Al-Hilali 1983.
- 2) The Clear Quran a Thematic English translation of the Message of the Final Revelation by Mustafa Khattab 2016.
- 3) The Quranic Arabic Corpus/ Shakir's Translation
- 4) The Quranic Arabic Corpus/ Arberry's Translation.

I chose the translations of Khan & Al-Hilali and Khattab because they considered the background knowledge of the verses through their translations and used various paratextual translation strategies in order to clarify their translations, which made their translations meaningful and accurate. On the other hand, I chose the translations of Shakir and Arberry because of their inconsideration of the background context of the verses and

the lack of using paratextual translation strategies in their translations, which affected their translations to be ambiguous and mysterious. These differences between the four translations will prove the argument of the study.

The selected two Arabic interpretations are:

- a) Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim by Ibn Kathir 2000.
- b) Taysir al-Kareem al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalamul-Mannan by Abdulrahman As-Sa'di 2002.

I selected these two interpretations because they are clear, brief and easy to understand by the target readers.

The translators applied various translation strategies; so a comparative method was used to come up with the results.

### **3.1.1. The Noble Quran (Hilali / Khan)**

Mohammad Mohsin Khan was born in Pakistan in 1927. Mohammad Taqi-Ad-Din Al-Hilali was born in Morocco in 1893. Their reputed book *The Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* in the English Language was published in 1983. They also introduced a commentary that consists of some explanations of Ibn Kathir, Sahih Al-Bukhari and At-Tabari.

### **3.1.2. The Clear Quran (Mustafa Khattab)**

Dr. Mustafa Khattab is an Egyptian-Canadian translator of the Quran, who has a very long experience in Arabic-English Islamic translations. He gained an Ijazah in the Hafs style of Quran recitation. He completed his book *The Clear Quran: A Thematic English Translation* in 2015.

### **3.1.3. The Quranic Arabic Corpus Translations (Shakir)**

The Quranic Arabic Corpus is an explained linguistic Quran resource. It gives syntactic and morphological annotations for researchers studying the language of the Quran. It gives a word-by-word Quranic translation from English sources.

Mohammad Habib Shakir is an Egyptian judge, who was born in 1866 in Cairo. He graduated from Al-Azhar University. He translated the Holy Quran into English.

### **3.1.4. The Quranic Arabic Corpus Translations (Arberry)**

Arthur John Arberry a British scholar of Islamic studies and Arabic literature, He was born in 1905. He was the Head of the Classics Department at Cairo University . The Koran Interpreted his English translation of the Quran was first published in 1955.

### **3.1.5. Arabic Interpretation (Intralingual translation) for the Holy Quran (Ibn Kathir /Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim)**

IbnKathir (Abu Al-Fiḍa Al-Damishqi) was born in 1373; He is an influential Arab scholar. He was specialized in jurisprudence (Fiqh) and Quran exegesis (Tafsir) , he wrote (Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azim) his noted commentary on the Quran ; in which he associated particular Quran verses to Prophet Mohammad's Hadith and Sahaba sayings.

### **3.1.6. Arabic Interpretation (Intralingual translation) for the Holy Quran (As-Sa'di/ Taysir al-Karim Al-Rahman)**

Abd Al-Raḥman Ibn Nasir Al-Sa'di was born in 1889, an Islamic Scholar from Saudi Arabia. He wrote about 40 books in Tafsir and Fiqh. His book (Taysir Al-Kareem Al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam Al-Mannan) gives a deep comprehension into the explanation of the Quran and is very easy to read and understand.



### **3.2. Method of the Study**

The study is a comparative research applying a descriptive analytical method because of the complex nature the Holy Quran language. This study analyses specific translations of some verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah from selected books, comparing these translations with Arabic interpretations (Intralingual translation) of Quran produced by (mufassirun) in order to examine the translation problems and how far the translators went in the using of the background knowledge context through their translation process.

I will evidence my argument by comparing some English translations of selected Quran verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah which lack transparency as a result of not considering the background context and not using paratextual translation strategies by the translators with some other English translations which are transparent and clear due to the consideration of the background context of that verses and the use of paratextual translation strategies for further clarification.

### **3.3. Procedures of the Study**

Conducting this study I followed the following procedures:

- 1) I read further about the subject.
- 2) I started to collect several related previous theoretical and empirical studies.
- 3) I set the questions and objectives of the study.
- 4) I selected some verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah.
- 5) I figured out the selected English translations for each selected verse.
- 6) I explained the strategies used in the selected translations.
- 7) I compared the selected translations with the intralingual translations of Quran produced by (Mufaseroun).
- 8) I deduced the conclusions from the findings.

9) I introduced recommendations for the further studies.

10) I indexed the references according to the American Psychological Association style (APA).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Findings and Discussion

#### 4.0. Introduction

This chapter examines and discusses study results relating them to prior studies. It consists of six sections and is arranged based on nine certain Quranic verses are chosen from Surat Al-Mujadilah. Each section contains the following: The Quranic verse, four English translations of each verse produced by five translators, two Arabic interpretations of these verses produced by (mufasssirun) and a discussion for each verse where the researcher shows the results of the three questions of the study.

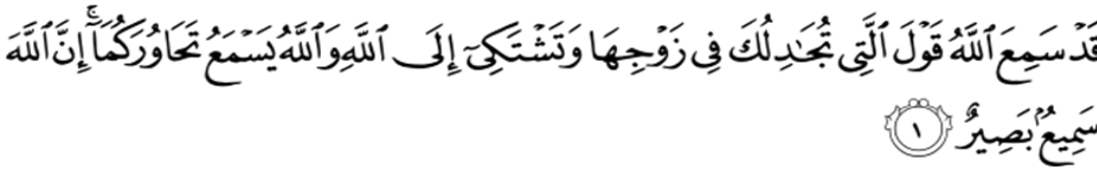
The questions of the study are:

- 1- What are the paratextual strategies used by the translators to translate the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?
- 2- To what extent did the translators include the background knowledge context in translating the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?
- 3- Which translations are the most transparent and the closest to the Arabic interpretations of the selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah?

#### 4.1. Surat Al-Mujadilah

##### 4.1.1 Verse 1

##### 4.1.1.1 Translations of Verse 1:

	
<b>1) Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b>	Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 1 as (Allah has heard (Khawlah Bint Tha'labah) while she was

	<p>complaining to him and disputing with you O Muhammad about her husband (Aws Bin As-Samit) ...)</p> <p>(Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 977)</p>
<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) made an introduction at the top of his translation mentioning the story behind the revelation of verse 1 saying that a woman who was called (Khawlah Bint Tha'abah) who had a dispute with her husband (Aws Bin As-Samit) because he said to her that she was forbidden to him as his mother's back (zahr)....</p> <p>(Khattab, 2016, p. 317)</p> <p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 1 by (Khawlah's case), then translated the verse as (God has heard the dispute of that woman who asked you O prophet about her husband, and complain him to God ...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 317)</p>
<p><b>3) Shakir's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 1 as (Allah is aware about her claims that woman who argues with you about her husband and complains him to Allah ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 1 as (God has heard her words that one who argue with you round her husband, and complains to God ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>

#### **4.1.1.2 Ibn Kathir's Intepretation of Verse 1:**

According to Ibn Kathir (2000) Imam Ahmad conveyed that Aisha mentioned that the reason of revelation of Surat Al-Mujadilah is the case of the woman who came to the Prophet Mohammad and disputed with him; complaining about her husband to Allah's Messenger. The woman claimed that her husband exhausted her youth and spent her wealth, and then when she became incapable to bear children, he said the Zihar on her! , that woman was Khawlah Bint Tha'labah and the husband was Aws Bin As-Samit. Then Allah the Exalted revealed this verse. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, p. 1835)

#### **4.1.1.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verse 1 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

AlHilali and Khan used paratextual translation strategy to explicate the meaning of the generic Arabic noun زوج (lit. husband), the generic relative pronoun التي (lit. who) and the prefixed pronaoun connected to the word زوجها (lit. her). This translation process contributes to specifying the referents as noticed in their content schema of the text.

#### **4.1.1.4 Translators Consideration of Background Context in Translating Verse 1 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

AlHilali and Khan considered the background context of the verse through their translations by mentioning the names of the woman (Khawlah Bint Tha'labah), her husband (Aws Bin As-Samit) about whom she complained and the name of Prophet Mohammad, whom she was addressing, between parentheses, which gave the reader an idea about their identities and the reason behind revealing this verse.

Khatab paid attention to the background context of this verse through adding an introduction before his translation mentioning the whole story of this pleading woman and her argument with her husband.

On the other hand, Shakir and Arberry didn't consider the background context of this verse, or mention the reason behind its revelation, which led to an ambiguous translation.

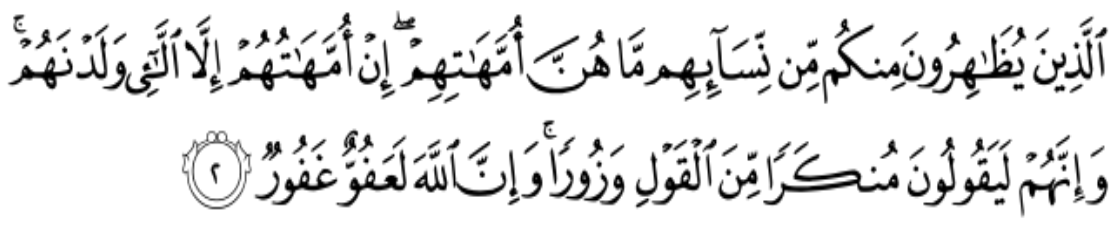
#### **4.1.1.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verse 1 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

Ibn Kathir interpreted this verse by telling the story of Khawlah Bint Tha'labah and the disagreement between her and her husband Aws Bin As-Samit, and how she was complaining him to Prophet Mohammad.

Referring to Ibn Kathir's interpretation and comparing it with the four translations, it is remarkably noticed that both Al-Hilali and Khan's translation and Khattab's translation are the closest to Ibn Kathir's intralingual interpretation of this verse; as they took into their consideration the background context of the verse and the reason for its revelation and used different paratextual translation strategies through their translations processes which affected the transparency of their translation positively and led to transparent and understandable translations very close to Ibn Kathir's interpretation of the same verse. Shakir's and Arberry's translations were far from Ibn Kathir's interpretation; due to the use of literal translation method and the ignorance of the background context of the verse, and the lack of the use of paratextual strategies.

#### 4.1.2 Verse 2:

##### 4.1.2.1 Translations of Verse 2:

	
<p><b>1) Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 2 as (Those who turn their wives to be prohibited for them through Zihar (الظهار)[1] they are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who gave them birth. And surely, they say an evil and a false ...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 977)</p> <hr/> <p>“[1] (V.58:2) Zihar (الظهار) The case in which the husband says to his wife: you are as the back of my mother to me (i.e. forbidden for me to contact).” (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 977)</p>
<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 2 as (The Ruling on Zihar), and then continued to translate the verse as (Those who liken their wives to their mothers and divorce them ‘must realize’ their wives are never their mothers. No one could be their mothers but those who born them. Their state is surely hateful and falsehood ...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 317)</p>

<p><b>3) Shakir's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 2 as (Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers' backs, they could not be their mothers; their mothers merely those who born them; and certainly they say a repulsive utterance and a false ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 2 as (Those saying to their wives, 'Become to me like the back of my mother,' indeed they cannot be their mothers; those who gave them birth could only be their mothers, certainly their saying is an evil word and a false ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>

#### **4.1.2.2 As-Sa'di's Interpretation of Verse 2:**

As-Sa'di (2002) referred to the custom of divorce which was followed in the (Jaheliyah) calling it (Az-Zihar), in that case a man would tell his wife that she is to him as the back of his mother or that she is now unlawful for him. This verse means that how can men think in such way and say these words, and compare their mothers who bore them to their wives? Allah Exalted described this as something highly hateful, ugly and surly false. (As-Sa'di, 2002, p. 995)

#### **4.1.2.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verse 2 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

The translations of the meanings of the Quran are not a substitute for it, which makes the proper contextual transferring of the verses meaning is more important.

AlHilali and Khan attempted to preserve the Quranic term (Zihar) through their translation defining and explaining it to the target reader through a footnote. Khattab also kept the word (Zihar) in his translation by using thematic translation when he titled verse



2 and verse 3: (The Ruling of Zihar); to clarify that these verses discuss the ruling of Zihar in Islam. Also, he applied expansion strategy by using additional explanatory words to his translation to help disambiguate the meaning of the verse.

Arberry used the explication strategy by adding 'Be as my mother's back,' attempting to convey the intended meaning of the word (Zihar). Shakir used purely literal translation. Both Shakir and Arberry did not mention the word Zihar in their translations.

#### **4.1.2.4 Translators Consideration of Background Context in Translating Verse 2 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

AlHilali and Khan and Khattab used different paratextual translation strategies in attempt to refer to the background context of the verse by explaining the word Zihar. On the other hand, Shakir and Arberry neglected the background context of the verse through their translations.

#### **4.1.2.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verse 2 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

In his interpretation As-Sa'di explained the verse by defining the word (Zihar) or (dhihar) referring to it as a divorce that was practiced during the (Jahiliyah). AlHilali and Khan's translation was the closest to As-Sa'di's interpretation; because of their explanation of the word (Zihar) in their translations using footnote as paratextual strategy.

Also, Khattab's translation was close to As-Sa'di's interpretation due to his attempt to clarify that the word (Zihar) means a (divorce). Shakir and Arberry's translations were far from As-Sa'di's interpretation because they both didn't mention the word Zihar and explain its meaning in their translations.

### 4.1.3. Verses 3 and 4:

#### 4.1.3.1 Translations of Verses 3 and 4:

<p>وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا ذَلِكَ  تَوْعظونَ بِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾</p> <p>فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَإِطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ  مِسْكِينًا ذَلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾</p>	
<p><b>1) Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 3 as (And those who turn their wives forbidden to them through pronouncing Zihar and want to renege their word, (the penalty in such condition) is to release a slave before they both contact again. That is a referent for you (by this you might not redo such a bad command) ...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 977)</p> <p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 4 as (This whoever cannot afford the required money for releasing a slave, he should fast for two consecutive months before they contact again. And who is incapable to do that, then he must feed sixty needy (Maskin). By that you would believe in Allah and in his messenger ...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, pp. 977-978)</p>
<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 3 and verse 4 by (The Ruling on Zihar), and translated verse 3 as (Those who apply this method to divorce their wives, and then 'desire' to withdraw their word, then they should in advance free a slave and before they contact once again. This is a 'penalty' that is a deterrent to you ...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 317)</p>

	<p>Khattab (2016) translated verse 4 as (And for the husband who is unable to give so, then fasting two successive months before they both contact once again. And if the husband cannot bear ‘fasting’ then feeding sixty needy. This confirms your belief in God and his messenger ...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 317)</p>
<p><b>3) Shakir’s translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 3as (Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers’ backs, then want to repeal their say, they have to release a captive before they contact again; this is to warn you ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 4 as (And who doesn’t have the means then fast two months consecutively before touching one another; and who is unable, then feed sixty poor persons; by this you might beleive in Allah and his messenger ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry’s translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 3 as (Those who say to their wives, 'You are like the back of my mother,' and then recede their saying, then they must free a salve, before they both contact each other again. This admonishes you ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 4 as (Who doesn’t find the means, fast two consecutive months, in advance of contacting once again. But if someone is incapable, then feed sixty needy people, by that you might have faith in God and his messenger...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>

#### **4.1.3.2 As-Sa'di's Interpretation of Verses 3 and 4:**

According to As-Sa'di (2002) what is meant by verses 3 and 4 is that if a husband wish to connect his wife whom he divorced by pronouncing (zihar) on her, he has to give the assessed expiation which should be given as the husband wants to retract what he said to his wife and before having intercourse with his divorced wife. This expiation is to free a slave, who can be male or female, but it is specified that he /she has to be able to work and free of defects. That ruling has been accompanied by the warning, thus the one who decides to divorce his wife by pronouncing zihar on her and is told that he has to free a slave, will abstain from doing that. Anyone who does not own a slave to be free or doesn't have money to buy one, then he should fast for two successive months, and that should happen before the husband and his divorced wife touch each other again, and the one who is incapable to fast, have to feed sixty needy persons enough food to suffice them. By committing to Allah's rulings and obeying him, one's faith would improve and expand to reach proficiency. (As-Sa'di, 2002, pp. 995-996)

#### **4.1.3.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verses 3 and 4 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

All Al-Hilali and Khan and Khattab used interpretive translation to explain to the target reader that the penalties for saying (Zihar) are to free a slave or to fast two successive months, so they added the word (penalty) between parentheses to their translations to produce clear and comprehensible translations. By that they confirmed Al-Rubaii (2013) and Amoori (2017) believe that in order to produce clear translation and explanation the translators must gain a previous background of Islamic laws and history.

On the other hand, Shakir and Arberry applied literal translation only to transfer the meaning of the two verses, not applying any paratextual strategies; which produced less transparent translations.

#### **4.1.3.4 Translators Consideration of the Background Context in Translating Verses 3 and 4 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

Both the third and the fourth verses are related to the second verse, which all talk about the ruling of Zihar in Islam. That fact was taken into the consideration of all the translators through their translations.

#### **4.1.3.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verses 3 and 4 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

As-Sa'di in his interpretation of verses 3 and 4 clarified the expiation of Zihar, that as the husband made his decision to retract Zihar which he pronounced on his wife, then the expiation is to free a slave, and whoever cannot find a slave he should fast for two successive months before they touch each other, and the one who can't do so, then he must feed sixty needy persons.

Al-Hilali and Khan and Khattab resorted to use the word (penalty) as an equivalence to the atonement of (Zihar) in Islam; which closer their translations to As-Sa'di's interpretation.

#### 4.1.4. Verses 8 and 9

##### 4.1.4.1 Translations of Verses 8 and 9:

<p>         أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ التَّجْوَى ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَجَّوْنَ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ          وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَيَقُولُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا          اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ حَسْبُ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ يَصَلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٨﴾ </p> <p>         يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَنَجَّيْتُمْ فَلَا تَنَجَّوْا بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَجَّوْا          بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ </p>	
<p><b>1)Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 8 as (Didn't you see those who were prohibited from carrying on secret conversations, and then get back to what they had been prohibited from, and plot for evil and wrongdoing or disobedience towards the Messenger (Mohammad صلى الله عليه و سلم), And if they turn up to you, they do not greet you with Allah's greeting, telling themselves: "Why wouldn't Allah chastise us for our utterance? ...") (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 979)</p> <p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 9 as (O you believers! If you want to carry on secret conversations, then don't do that for evil and wrongdoing and disobedience towards the messenger (Mohammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) and instead do that through Al-Birr (the righteousness) and At-Taqwa (the piety and virtues)... ) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p.979)</p>

<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 8 by (Wicked Secret conversations) and then translated the verse as (Haven't you seen they who were prohibited from making secret conversations, and despite that they 'constantly' go back to which they were prevented from, plotting in evil, aggressiveness, and disobedience towards the messenger? And then they don't greet you according to how God greets you, 1169 and ask each other , "Why doesn't God punish us regarding our saying? ...)" (Khattab, 2016, pp. 317-318)</p> <hr/> <p>"1169 A few Jews in an attempt to ridicule the Prophet; they used to manipulate with words greeting him by saying for instance 'Assam Alaikom' (Let death be onto you) instead of saying 'Assalam Alaikom' (Let peace be onto you)-that is Islam greeting put by God." (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)</p> <p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 9 by (Secret conversations' Guidelines) and then translated the verse as (O you who believe, if you talk in private, don't let that be for evil and aggression and disobedience towards the messenger, and let that be for righteousness or goodness...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)</p>
<p><b>3) Shakir's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 8 as (Haven't you seen those who are prohibited from secret talks, and then they get back to do what they are prohibited, and they run secret talks for evil and revolt or disobedience to the messenger, and if they greet you</p>

	<p>in a greeting that Allah does not greet you with, and they think at themselves: Why would not Allah punish us because of our saying? ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 9 as (O you believers! when you talk together privately, you do not talk in sin and rebellion or disobedience towards the messenger, instead talk in righteousness and advocate (in contrast with evil) ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 8 as (Don't you know about they who were prohibited from conversing together in secret, and then they go back to what they were prohibited, and they talk together secretly in evil and enmity, and disobedience towards the messenger? And then if they meet thee, they don't greet thee with the greeting of God; and then they think between themselves, 'Why God does not punish us because of our say? ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 9 as (O you, who believe, if you conspire privately, then don't conspire in evil and aggression and disobedience towards the messenger, instead conspire in devotion and fearing of God ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>



#### **4.1.4.2 Ibn Kathir's Interpretation of Verses 8 and 9:**

##### **(The Evil of the Jews)**

Ibn Kathir (2000) related the beginning of verse 8 with the case of the Jews who the Prophet Mohammad had a peace agreement with, who used to speak secretly between themselves when one of the Prophet's Companions go over them, making him think that they are plotting to hurt him, so he would panic and change his way. Then the Prophet recommended the Jews to give up their bad secret talks (Najwa), but they did not obey him. Ibn Kathir linked the rest of the verse with the story of some Jews who greeted the Prophet saying (As-Sam Alayka) (death be upon you), when he answered them (Wa Alaykom As-Sam) (May death be upon you too). The Jews meant to manipulate with the Islamic greeting meaning trying to turn it to be an indecent term, in order to question the prophet hood of Mohammad, claiming that if he has been a truly Prophet, then Allah would have chastised us. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, p. 1839)

##### **(Manners of the Najwa, (Secret Counsel))**

Ibn Kathir (2000) explained that in verse 9 Allah the Exalted guides his servants not to hold evil and bad counsels such as aggression, sin and disobedience to the Messenger, instead they have to do that for Al-Bir and Al-Taqwa, also to keep themselves away from the hypocrites and disbelievers. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, pp. 1839-1340)

#### **4.1.4.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verses 8 and 9 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

Discussing results related to the translations of Verses 8 and 9, we can note that Khattab added a footnote to support his translation in an attempt to clarify to the reader the reason of the revelation of verse 8. Also, he titled verse 8 as (Evil, Secret Talks) and verse 9 as (Guidelines for Secret Talks).

Al-Hilali and Khan employed literal translation and they also applied the functional equivalent, paraphrasing and expansion as translation strategies to convey the meanings of (Al-Birr and At-Taqwa), using parentheses to clarify their equivalent of Al-Birr as (righteousness) and At-Taqwa as (piety and virtues). However, Shakir's and Arberry's translations were purely literal translations.

#### **4.1.4.4 Translators Consideration of the Background Context in Translating Verses 8 and 9 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

The context in which verse 8 was revealed is the story of the Jews who used to say 'As-sam alaikom' (death be upon you) and not 'Asalam alaikom' (Peace be upon you) when they addressed the Prophet to ridicule him. Regarding verse 9 the reason for revelation is that Allah the Exalted wanted to teach his servants to stay away of the hypocrites and disbelievers.

Khattab's translation was the only translation which considered the background context of verse 8 when he added a footnote mentioning the story of the greeting between the Prophet and the Jews, in which this verse was revealed.

Shakir's , Arberry's Al-Hilali and Khan's translations didn't pay any attention to the background context of the two verses, and ignored mentioning the story behind it, which produced ambiguous translations.

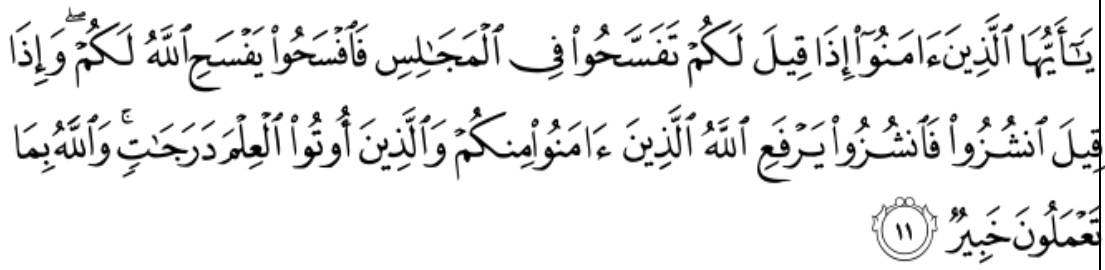
That surely agrees with Kim's (2006) Recommendation that translator must build relevant background knowledge in order to start the process of translation and then finish it successfully.

#### 4.1.4.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verses 8 and 9 from Surat Al-Mujadilah

Khattab produced an interpretive translation, using the footnote to clarify the reason of revelation of verse 8; which helped his translation to be found as the closest to Ibn Kathir's interpretation, who similarly mentioned through his interpretation the story of the greeting between the Prophet and the Jews, which was the reason behind this verse revelation. On the other hand, the other translations failed to convey the core meanings of the two verses, leaving the reader with literal mysterious translations.

#### 4.1.5. Verse 11:

##### 4.1.5.1 Translation of Verse 11:

	
<p><b>1) Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 11 as (O believers! Whenever you are asked to give room in the gatherings, then give room and (spread). Allah shall give you (spacious) room. And whenever you are asked to stand up [To do good deeds or for Jihad (to fight in Allah's purpose), or for performing a prayer], then stand up. Allah shall elevate the grades of those who believed, and knowledgeable people...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, pp. 979- 980)</p>

<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) titled verse 11 by (Gatherings' Etiquette) and then translated the verse as (O you who believe! If you were asked to give room in assemblies, then do that. God shall give room for you. And if you were asked to stand up, then do that. God shall raise those who were faithful, and 'elevate' the degree of those who were given knowledge ...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)</p>
<p><b>3) Shakir's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 11 as (O you believers! If you are asked to give room in the gatherings, then make a vast space, Allah shall give you plenty, and if you are asked to stand up, then stand up. Allah shall raise the believers, and who granted knowledge high grades...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 11 as (O believers, you were told 'Give room in your gatherings', then do that, and the God shall give you room; and if you were told, 'get up', get up, and then God shall promote the grades of the believers and those who have been granted knowledge...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>

#### **4.1.5.2 Ibn Kathir's Interpretation of Verse 11:**

##### **(Manners for Assemblies)**

Ibn Kathir (2000) stated that verse 11 talks about the good manners of assemblies which Allah Exalted teaches to his servants and orders them to make room for each other in the assemblies whenever they are asked to do so. Ibn Kathir clarified that this verse was revealed on the etiquettes of gatherings in the assemblies where Allah Exalted is being remembered, because when someone joins in assemblies with the Prophet, the people there would be afraid of losing their places, so they would hesitate to offer a room for them. Also Allah Exalted commands his believing servants to respond to whatever good they are called to do. Allah Exalted will elevate the status and increase the virtue of those who make rooms and rise up for their brothers, and those who have been gifted with knowledge. (Ibn Kathir, 2000, pp. 1840-1841)

#### **4.1.5.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verse 11 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

In their attempts to translate verse 11, Khattab, Shakir and Arberry resorted to use literal translation to transfer the verse meaning. On the other hand, Al-Hilali and Khan produced clearer translation as a result of using both expansion and paraphrasing strategies; by using parentheses to add the reasons why the believers should rise up and the definition of the word (Jihad), when they said (for good deeds such as prayers or for Jihad (fighting for Allah's Cause) or even for any other good reason).

Those results agree with Naseef's (2018) point of view that the Holy Quran translators should have a great knowledge of morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical features of the verses to be able to get the core meaning and to find a precise equivalent in the target language (TL).

#### 4.1.5.4 Translators Consideration of the Background Context in Translating Verse 11 from Surat Al-Mujadilah

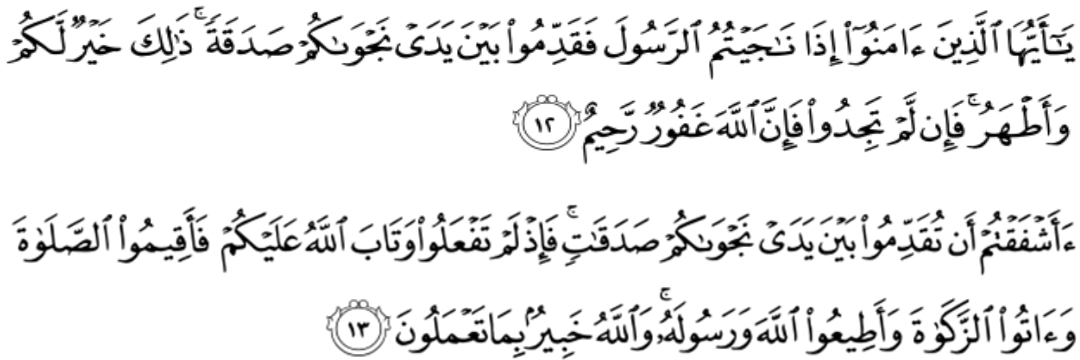
According to Ibn Kathir's interpretation, this verse was revealed to show the Etiquette of gatherings in the places where Allah the Exalted is mentioned. Allah the Exalted ordered his servants to make room for another in assemblies. But none of the translators mentioned that fact through their attempts to translate this verse.

#### 4.1.5.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verse 11 from Surat Al-Mujadilah

Al-Hilali and Khan's translation is closer to Ibn Kathir's interpretation of this verse than the other translations. They added many definitions and explanatory phrases to their translation in order to convey the meaning of the verse clearly. On the other hand, the other translations were lack of illustrations and more faithful to the source text (the verse).

#### 4.1.6. Verses 12 and 13

##### 4.1.6.1 Translations of Verses 12 and 13:

	
<p><b>1) Al-Hilali and Khan's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 12 as (O you believers! If you (wish to) confer the messenger (Mohammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) individually, then give charity in advance of your counsel. This is good for you and purer ...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p.980)</p>

	<p>Al-Hilali and Khan (2011) translated verse 13 as (Are you fearful of giving charity in advance of your individual counsel (with the messenger)? If you did not do it, and Allah has pardoned you, then (at least) establish As-Salat (the prayers), spend Az-Zakat (obligatory charity) and comply to Allah (i.e. do whatever Allah and his messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم demanded you to do...) (Al-Hilali and Khan, 2011, p. 980)</p>
<p><b>2) Khattab's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Khattab (2016) titled verses 12 and 13 by (Charity in advance of Consulting the Messenger) 1170, and translated verse 12 as (O you who believe! If you conferred the messenger in private, then spend some charity in advance of your counsel. That is good for you and purer...) (Khattab, 2016, p.318)</p> <p>Khattab (2016) translated verse 13 as (Do you feel fear of giving charity in advance of your private counsel 'with the messenger'? As you are incapable of doing so, and God has pardoned you, then 'keep' performing prayer, give alms-tax, and comply to God and his messenger...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)</p> <hr/> <p>“1170 Some companions used to ask the messenger unimportant questions. For instance: what was hidden inside the pockets, where were the lost animals or even about rulings that would complicate Muslims matters. Thus these verses were revealed to prevent this practice.” (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)</p>

<p><b>3) Shakir's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 12 as (O you believers! when you confer the messenger, then give charity in advance of your consultation; it is good for you and purer ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Shakir (n.d.) translated verse 13 as (Are you fearful that you would not be (capable of) giving charity in advance of your counsel? Thus if you are not going to do so and Allah has pardoned you, then keep performing prayers, paying the alms and comply to Allah and his messenger...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>
<p><b>4) Arberry's Translation:</b></p>	<p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 12 as (O you who believe, when you consult the messenger, in advance of your conspiring spend alms; this is good and purer for you...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p> <p>Arberry (n.d.) translated verse 13 as (Do you feel afraid; to offer alms in advance of your conspiring? Then if you did not do so, and God pardoned you, then establish prayers, give alms and comply to God and his messenger...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)</p>

#### **4.1.6.2 As-Sa'di's Interpretation of Verses 12 and 13:**

As-Sa'di (2002) pointed that the reason behind revealing verse 12 is that Allah Exalted wants to discipline his servants and teach them how to respect the Prophet Mohammad and venerate him. So Allah commanded them to give charity before converse with the



Prophet privately. Thus, this will purify them from bad manners and show them the adequate conversation etiquette with the Prophet, rather than conversing with him for unnecessary reasons, this will differentiate between those who really need to learn and benefit from him and those who aim just to chitchat and disturb the Prophet. As for those who are unable to give it, they are not obligated to give charity; Allah Exalted made it easier for them, and made it allowable for them to converse privately with the Prophet. Allah Exalted pardoned them and ordered them instead to do very important worships these are to establish prayer in a proper way and to give zakat on their wealth (for those who are entitled to do so). Allah Exalted also demanded them to obey Allah Exalted and his Prophet by responding to their commands. (As-Sa'di, 2002, p. 998).

#### **4.1.6.3 The Paratextual Strategies Used by the Translators in Translating Verses 12 and 13 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

Al-Hilali and Khan resorted to literal translation to deliver the meaning of verse 12, and for verse 13 they applied paraphrasing and expansion strategies in order to explain the meaning of As-Salat as (the prayers) and give Zakat as (obligatory charity), in addition to show how to obey Allah exalted and his Messenger by doing all what they order us to do. What made his translation more transparent than the other translations is his attempt to clarify the case in which these two verses were revealed.

Khatab's applied thematic translation by titling these two verses by (Charity before consulting the prophet), he also added a footnote to his translation explaining the story of the revelation of these verses and the aim behind ordering Muslims to give charity if they want to consult the Messenger Mohammad privately. Shakir and Arberry used literal translation to translate the two verses.

Using paratextual translation strategies such as footnotes through the translation process helps to produce more comprehensible target text, which agrees with Abdul-Raof's (2001) recommendation of using explanatory translation. As he pointed out that the purpose from using this methodology is to translate ambiguous texts through commentaries and marginal notes, within the text itself, or through exegetical materials to clarify the complex meanings.

#### **4.1.6.4 Translators Consideration of the Background Context in Translating Verses 12 and 13 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

Khattab considered the background context of the two verses making his translation more comprehensible to the reader by adding a footnote explaining the reason behind the revelation of these verses, referring to some companions who used to ask the Prophet unnecessary questions; then God exalted imposed on Muslims to spend something of charity before consulting the Messenger privately, and then these verses were revealed to cut down such practice. Al-Hilali and Khan, Shakir and Arberry neglected mentioning that story in their translations.

#### **4.1.6.5 The Degree of Transparency and Closeness of the Translations to the Arabic Interpretations of Verses 12 and 13 from Surat Al-Mujadilah**

As-Sa'di in his interpretation mentioned the reason for revelation of these verses in which Allah instructs the believers to give charity before conversing privately with His Messenger Mohammad in order to discipline them and teach them how to venerate and show respect to His Messenger. Khattab's translation was the closest to As-Sa'di's interpretation because he mentioned that fact through paratextual strategies in his translation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Recommendations and Conclusions

#### 5.0. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher introduces some suggestions on how to make the translations of the selected verses clearer and more accurate from her point of view and her perception of each verse. Then, she adds some useful recommendations for future studies and ends the chapter with an inclusive conclusion.

#### 5.1 Suggestions on How to Make the Translations of the Selected Verses Clearer and More Accurate

The table below summarizes some suggestions on how to make the translations of the selected verses clearer and more accurate:

<b>The Verse</b>	<b>The Translator</b>	<b>The ambiguous translation</b>	<b>The suggested improved translation</b>
<b>Verse 1</b>	<b>Shakir</b>	(Allah is aware about her claim that woman who argue with you about her husband and complains him to Allah, ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Allah is aware about her claim that woman ( <b>Khawlah Bint Tha'labah</b> ) who argue with you ( <b>Prophet Muhammad</b> ) about her husband ( <b>Aws Bin As-Samit</b> ) and complains him to Allah, ...)

	<b>Arberry</b>	(God has heard her words that one who argue with you round her husband, and complains to God, ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(God has heard her words <b>(Khawlah Bint Tha'labah)</b> that that one who argue with you <b>(Prophet Muhammad)</b> round her husband <b>(Aws Bin As-Samit)</b> , and complains to God, ...)
<b>Verse 2</b>	<b>Shakir</b>	(Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers back, ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers back <b>by saying (Zihar)</b> [1] ... <hr/> <b>[1] Zihar (الظهار) The husband who says to his wife: you are as the back of my mother to me (i.e. forbidden for me to contact).</b>
	<b>Arberry</b>	(Those saying to their wives, 'Become to me like the back of my mother,' ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Those saying to their wives, 'Become to me like the back of my mother,' <b>by saying (Zihar)</b> [1] ... <hr/> <b>[1] Zihar (الظهار) The husband who says to his wife: you are as the back of my mother to me (i.e. forbidden for me to contact).</b>

Verses 3 & 4	Shakir	(Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers' backs, ... ) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Those who repudiate their wives through comparing them to their mothers' backs, <b>by saying Zihar...</b>
		(They have to <b>release a captive</b> before they contact again; ...)  (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(They have to <b>free a slave</b> before they touch each other, ...)
	Arberry	(Those who say to their wives, 'You are like the back of my mother,'...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Those who say to their wives, 'You are like the back of my mother,' <b>by saying Zihar...</b> )
Verses 8 & 9	Khattab	(but let that be for <b>righteousness and goodness</b> ... ) (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)	(but let that be for <b>Al-Birr (goodness and righteousness) and At-Taqwa (piety and virtues)</b> )

	<b>Shakir</b>	(instead talk in <b>righteousness and advocate (in contrast with evil) ...</b> ) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(instead talk in <b>Al-Birr (goodness and righteousness) and At-Taqwa (virtues and piety)...</b> )
	<b>Arberry</b>	(instead conspire in <b>devotion and fearing of God ...</b> ) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Instead conspire in <b>Al-Birr (goodness and righteousness) and At-Taqwa (virtues and piety)...</b> )
<b>Verse 11</b>	<b>Khattab</b>	(And if you were asked to <b>stand up</b> , then do that...) (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)	(And if you were asked to <b>stand up [1]</b> , then do that...) <hr/> <b>[1]If you were called to do good deeds or for Jihad (to fight in Allah's purpose), or for performing a prayer.</b>
	<b>Shakir</b>	(If you are asked to <b>stand up...</b> ) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(If you are asked to <b>stand up[1]</b> ...) <hr/> <b>[1] If you were called to do good deeds or for Jihad (to fight in Allah's purpose), or for performing a prayer.</b>

	<b>Arberry</b>	(If you were told, ' <b>get up</b> ', <b>get up</b> ...) (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(If you were told, ' <b>get up</b> ', <b>get up</b> [1]...)  <hr/> <small>[1] If you were called to do good deeds or for Jihad (to fight in Allah's purpose), or for performing a prayer.</small>
<b>Verses 12 &amp; 13</b>	<b>Shakir</b>	( <b>Paying the alms</b> and comply to Allah and his messenger...)  (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Pay <b>Zakat (obligatory charity)</b> ...)
	<b>Khattab</b>	( <b>Give alms-tax</b> , and comply to God and his messenger...)  (Khattab, 2016, p. 318)	(Give <b>Zakat (obligatory charity)</b> ...)
	<b>Arberry</b>	( <b>Give alms</b> and comply to God and his messenger...)  (The Quranic Arabic Corpus - Translation, n.d.)	(Give <b>Zakat (obligatory charity)</b> ...)

## 5.2. Conclusion

The reason behind choosing to investigate this subject is the researcher's interest in the Qur'an translation, as it is the miracle of Islam and the source of its teachings and provisions.

The researcher selected four translations for some selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah, these are: Verses 1,2,3,4,8,9,11,12 and 13. These translations are produced by Al-Hilali & Khan, Khattab, Shakir and Arberry. In addition, the researcher selected two Arabic interpretations for the Holy Quran to compare the translations with, these are: Ibn Kathir's and As-Sa'ai's interpretations.

This study investigated the main translation strategies and the paratextual strategies that were used in translating some selected verses from Surat Al-Mujadilah, in addition to the lost in translation caused by the lack of knowledge of the background context of the selected verses.

The translators utilized different main translation strategies in translating these verses such as: paraphrasing, literal translation, expansion, and a couplet of two strategies, and some paratextual translation strategies such as: Footnotes, explanations between parentheses and the translation introduction.

The analysis of the four translations points that the translators sometimes produced unclear and ambiguous translations for several reasons such as misunderstanding the nature of religious texts, the usage of inaccurate equivalent terms or phrases, the lack of knowledge of cultural or linguistic background of the Quranic verses, and the lack of the usage of the paratextual translation strategies through the translation processes.



### **5.3. Suggestions and Recommendations for Future Studies**

The researcher introduces the following propositions in order to get better translation of the religious texts in general and the Quranic verses in particular, according to the results of the study:

- 1) The study recommends that the Holy Quran translation must be led by a committee of experts highly knowledgeable in the history and language of the Quran.
- 2) The translators of the Holy Quran must have reliable Quranic exegesis, in addition to Arabic dictionaries in order to deliver the right core meaning of the Quranic verses.
- 3) The best translation method for translating the Holy Quran is the interpretive translation method which must be applied in the Quranic translation process in order to help the target reader to comprehend the hidden meanings better.
- 4) Due to the deep, referential and descriptive language of the Holy Quran; paratextual translation strategies such as: introductions, explanations and footnotes should be used in the Quranic translation.
- 5) A previous knowledge of the background context of the Quranic verses needed to be translated is a requirement to produce a precise translation and to avoid producing deficient Quranic translations.

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## Appendix

**Zakat:** Amount of money paid by rich people to the poor (Amoori, 2017)

**Al-Jihad:** “A holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty. Also: a personal struggle in devotion to Islam especially involving spiritual discipline.” (Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, n. d.).

**Aldhihar:** “Claiming one's wife is sexually impermissible” (Elewa, 2014).

**Al-Birr:** “goodness and righteousness” (AlHilali & Khan, 2014)

**At-Taqwa:** “virtues and piety”(AlHilali & Khan, 2014)