

## **A Study of Antonymy in the Glorious Qur'an With Reference to Its Realizations into English**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims at investigating how some translators of the meaning of the Glorious Qur'an deal with antonymy. It also aims at reviewing many different types of antonymy in the Glorious Qur'an, and how some translators rendered this relation. Among the aims of this study is investigating how far the translators are accurate in rendering antonyms based upon the context and the interpretive meaning.

This study hypothesizes that antonyms are context-bound, and they create problems in translation. Antonymy is a rhetorical aesthetic device, which has not given a due attention by the Glorious Qur'an translators.

We conclude that antonymy plays an important role in language use. The English language differs from the Arabic one in its degree or number of antonymous words; it has many more. Some of them are concerned with rendering antonyms, irrespective of their parts of speech.

### 1. The Concept of Antonymy in Arabic

The notion of antonymy in Arabic is viewed differently by different scholars. Ibn Manduher (1980: 170) remarks that *Adādd* (opposites) is a plural form of *dāed* (antonym) which is a term used by Arab linguists to refer to these words of one form with two antonymous senses, i.e. homographic words with opposite meanings. Matloob (1980: 441) adopts Al-Masry's definition of multi- oppositeness by stating that the correct usage of Multi- oppositeness signifies a speaker's desire to seek what should be there in a speech. If he states things at the beginning of his speech he puts their opposites at the second half, so that the first contrasts with the first and the second with the second, leaving out nothing by the way of contradictions and agreements. This is exemplified as follows:

(الليل: ٥-١٠)

(As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him (5) And believes in Al-Husna (6) We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness) (7) But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient (8) And believes Al-

Husna (9) We will make smooth for him the *path for evil* (10) (Hilali and Khan,1996:838-9).

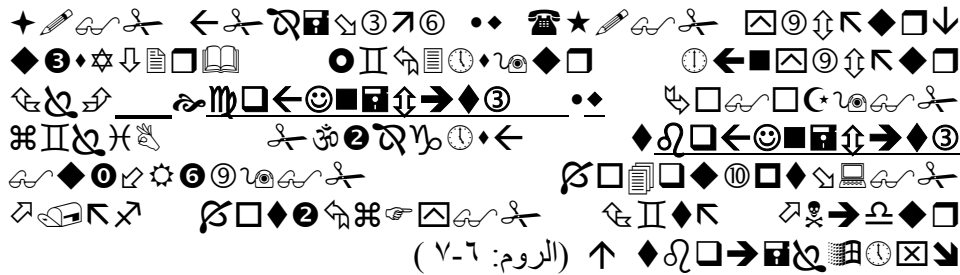
Oppositeness is classified into two types: Positive and Negative Oppositeness. The former is defined as the combination of two positive, contrasting words. It is exemplified in the following Ayah (Matloob, 1980: 441):

﴿وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ لِلْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ إِنَّمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ عِبَادًا لِّمَن شَاءَ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ شَرِيفًا ﴿١٢٧﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٣٩﴾ وَإِذْ يُرَادُ الْبَنِيُّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

(الكهف: ١٨) ↑

(And you would have thought them *awake*, whereas they were *asleep*. And we turned them on their right and on their left sides, and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance [of the Cave or in the space near to the entrance of the Cave (as a guard at the gate)]. Had you looked at them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them) (Hilali and Khan,1996:387).

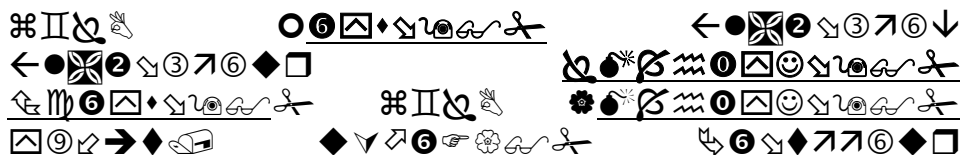
Whereas, the latter is defined as the juxtaposition of a word and its negative. It is exemplified by Matloob (1980: 442) in the following Ayah:





((It is) a Promise of Allah (i.e. Allah will give victory to the Romans against the Persian), and Allah fails not in His Promise, but most of men *know not* (6) They *know* only the outside appearance of the life of the world (i.e. the matters of their livelihood, like irrigating or sowing or reaping, etc.), and they are heedless of the Hereafter (Hilali and Khan,1996:540).

Matloob and Al-Baseer (1982: 438) state that oppositeness obtains when juxtaposing two opposite words in a speech or a line of poetry, such as, *importation* and *exportation*, *night* and *day*, and *black* and *white*. They (1982: 440) add that oppositeness can also be classified in the light of the class of a word as in noun vs. noun, verb vs. verb, or preposition vs. preposition:









1- The two lexical items involved in oppositeness are both nouns i.e. noun vs. noun, as in : “الحي the living” and “الميت the dead” in the following Ayah:




  
 (الروم: ١٩) ↑

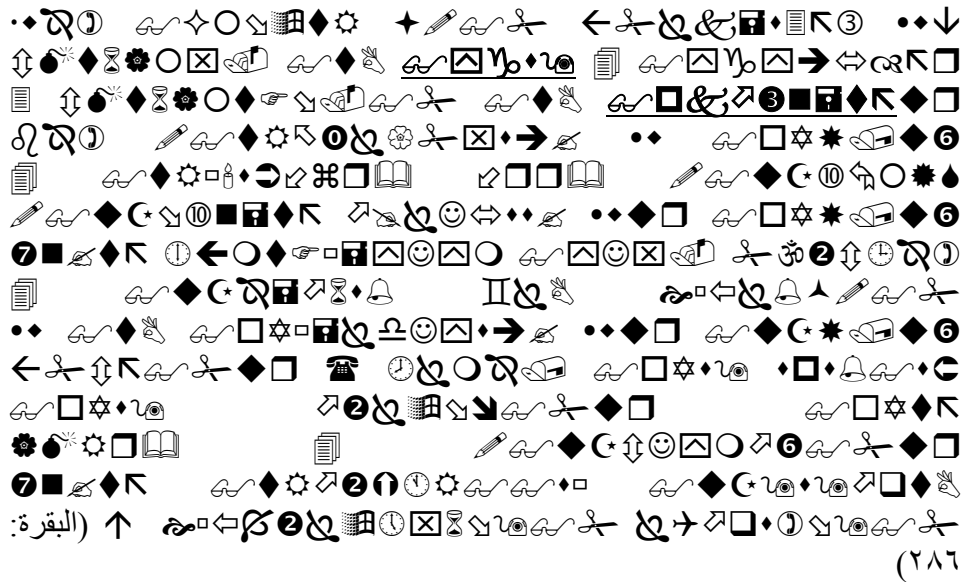
(He brings out *the living* from *the dead*, and brings out the *dead* from the *living*. And He revives the earth after its death. And thus shall you be brought out (resurrected)) (Hilali and Khan,1996:542).

2- The two lexical items involved in oppositeness are both verbs i.e. verb vs. verb, like “توتى *give*” and “تنزع *take*”; “عز *endue with honour*” and “تذل *humiliate*” in the following Ayah:

  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
 (عمران: ٢٦)

(Say O Mohammad pbuh): “O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You *give* the kingdom to whom You will, and You *take* the kingdom from whom You will, and you will *endue with honour* whom You will, and You *humiliate* whom You will. In Your Hands is the good. Verily, You are able to do all things) (Hilali and Khan,1996:71).

3- The two lexical items involved in oppositeness are prepositions i.e. preposition vs. preposition, as with “لـ *for*” and “على *upon*”, it is exemplified in the following Ayah:



(Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope; *for* him is the reward for that which he has earned and *upon* him the punishment for that evil which he has earned. “Our Lord! Punish us no if we forget or fall into error, our Lord lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us (Jews and Christians); our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strengthen to bear. Have mercy on us. You are our Maula (Patron, Supporter and Protector, etc.) and give us victory over the disbelieving people) (Hilali and Khan,1996:66-7).

**2. Classification of Antonymy in Arabic:**

Arab rhetoricians classify antonymy into many types. In this section, we are going to deal with Al-Qaraan (1994:39).

## 2.1 Lexical Antonymy:

It is a type of oppositeness of meaning that is achieved by juxtaposing two lexical items opposite in meaning in a direct way literally or figuratively. It falls into two subdivisions:

### a- Literal Antonymy:

Ibn Al-Muataz (cited in Ibid: 39) uses the following Prophet's hadith to illustrate what is meant by the literal antonymy.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم للأنصار: (إنكم لتكثرون عند الفزع و تقلون عند الطمع)

This hadith was said by prophet Muhammed (p.b.u.h) to his companions of the inhabitants of Medina who embraced and supported Islam: (You *increase* in number in case of fear, but *decrease* in case of greediness).

Considering the example above, one can infer that both words *increase* and *decrease* are opposite lexically and semantically, and both of them are verbs. So, literal antonymy is the relation of oppositeness that holds between two words whether in or out of context. Mentioning the word *increase* brings into one's mind its antonym *decrease* (Ibn Almuataz (cited in Al-Qaraan: 39).

Al-Katib (cited in Al-Qaraan,1994: 41) argues that rhetoricians unanimously believe that oppositeness is achieved by juxtaposing and paralleling a word and its antonym i.e. not juxtaposing a noun vs. verb or verb vs. noun, since juxtaposing a noun vs. noun or verb vs. verb signifies a well rhetorical effect in

text. According to Al-Qaraan (1994: 53-8), this type falls into three subdivisions under one title 'Negative vs. Positive Antonymy'. Arab rhetoricians unanimously believe that the negative vs. positive antonymy is based on three concepts:

1 -The two antonyms are juxtaposed according to negation vs. affirmation. Al-Askary (cited in Ibid) remarks that negative vs. affirmative antonymy is achieved by negating the first part of the speech then, introducing its affirmative form. It is exemplified through the following Ayahs:

(البقرة: ٧٧)

(*Know they (Jews) not* that Allah *knows* what they conceal and what they reveal? ) (Hilali and Khan,1996:16).

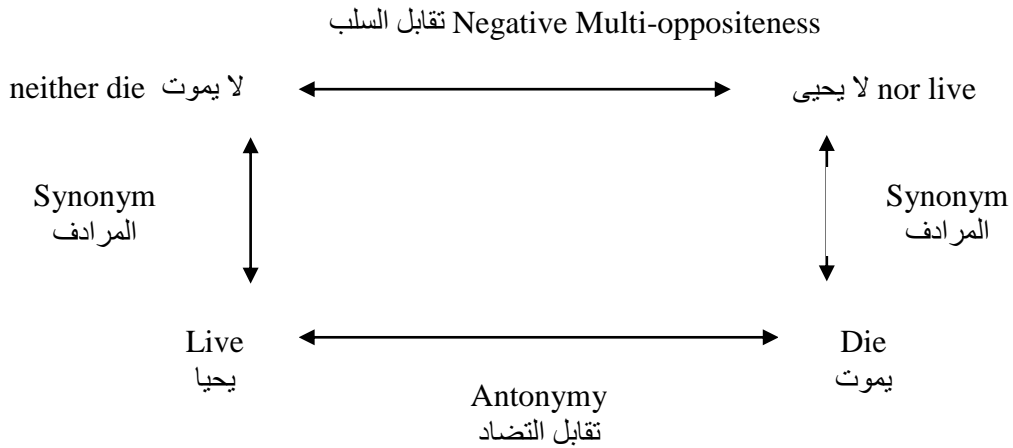
2- The two antonyms are juxtaposed according to imperative v. negative imperative . Al-Askary states that this type is to prohibit something, then command something else. It can be exemplified in the following Ayah:

(الإسراء: ٢٣)





*nor live* is يموت *die*, the two synonyms are antonyms as exemplified in the following figure:

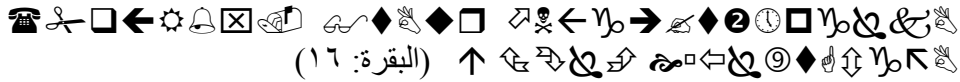


**Fig.: (3) Negative vs. Negative Antonymy**  
 Al-Oarran (1994: 58)

**b- Figurative Antonymy:**

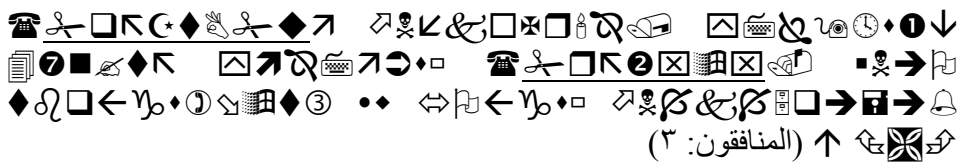
Al-Masry (cited in Al-Qaraan,1994: 43) tries to set a definition for figurative antonymy by stating that antonymy is of two types; literal antonymy and figurative antonymy, the one of a literal meaning is called correlative oppositeness طباق, while, the one of a complete figurative meaning or of a partial one is called correlative correspondence تكافؤ, provided that the two antonyms are attributed to the same subject. He exemplifies this type through using the following Ayah.





(These are they who have purchased *error* for *guidance*, so their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided) (Hilali and Khan,1996:5).

Al-Qaraan (1994:43) comments that purchasing *الظلة error* for *الهدى guidance* is a figurative usage. They (the hypocrites) preferred deviation from guidance to misguidance. This meaning includes those who first believed, then disbelieved, whom Allah described in the following Ayah:



(That is because they *believed*, and then *disbelieved*; therefore their hearts are sealed, so they understand not) (Hilali and Khan,1996:761).

Al-Qarran (1994: 45) adds that figurative antonymy is of two types; the first one is obtains if the two antonyms are used figuratively, thus relation that holds between them is called correlative correspondence. The second one can be achieved if one antonym is used figuratively and the other literally; then the relation that holds them is called juxtaposition of correlative correspondence and correlative oppositeness *إنتلاف الطباق و التكافؤ*. An example of the first type (Correlative Correspondence) is the above Ayah. Then, he

(ibid.) exemplifies the second type (juxtaposition of correlative correspondence and correlative oppositeness *إنتلاف الطباق و* إنتلاف التكافؤ) through the following line of a poem by Dubul Al-Kuzaai:

لا تعجبي ياسلم من رجل ضحك المشيب برأسه فبكي

O' Salma wonder not of a man who

*Cried* for grey hair *laughed* in his head

The poet above compares *grey hair* with *a person who laughs*, so *his white teeth became visible*, which are likened by the poet to *grey hair*, while, *cried* is used here in its literal meaning.

## 2.2 Semantic Antonymy

Al-Askary (cited in Al-Qaraan, 1994:47) distinguishes between lexical antonymy and the semantic one. He argues that some earlier people juxtaposed two words to be opposites according to their near-antonymous meaning, not to their literal meaning. For instance, in the following line of Al-Hutia poem:

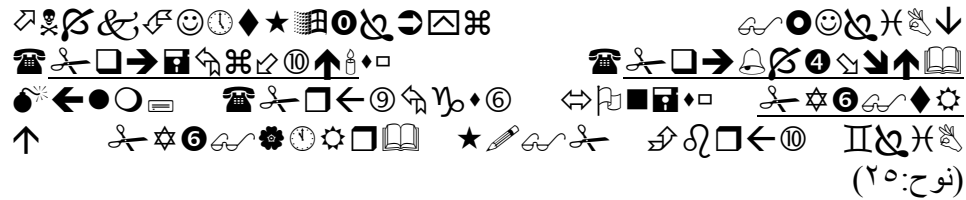
و أخذت أطرار الكلام فلم تدع شتماً يضر ولا مديحاً ينفع

You controlled the conversation yet you left nothing unsaid, whether a bad *insult* or a good *praise*.

the poet uses *شتماً insult* on the basis of its near-synonymous meaning with *الهجاء satire* which is the lexical antonym of *مدحاً praise* i.e. the antonymous relation that holds between *insult* and *praise* is

not a lexical one (not based on lexical antonymy) (Al-Qaraan,1994: 47).

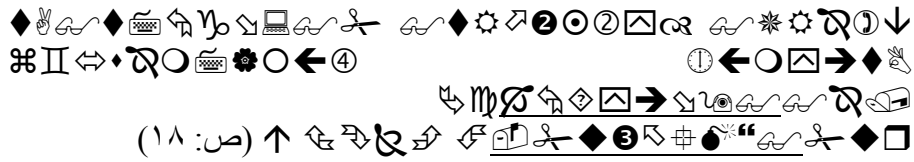
He (Ibid: 48) remarks that Osama bin Monqith mentions a type of antonymy which he confirms as a semantic one. He calls it *hidden* or *implied antonymy*. He uses the following Ayah for exemplification:



(Because of their sins they were drowned, then were made to enter the Fire. And they found none to help them instead of Allah) (Hilali and Khan,1996:789).

Al-Qaraan (1994:48) argues that an implied antonymy is held between drowned and fire, since drowned is relevant to water and enter to fire. So, a semantic antonymy is achieved between water and fire. Such kind of antonymy is called *incomplete appositiveness* المطابقة غير المحضة by Hazim Al-qartajany, while Mohammad Ali Al-jarjany calls it *implied oppositeness* المطابقة الخفية. Al-Masry argues that the semantic antonymy can be achieved according to two concepts:

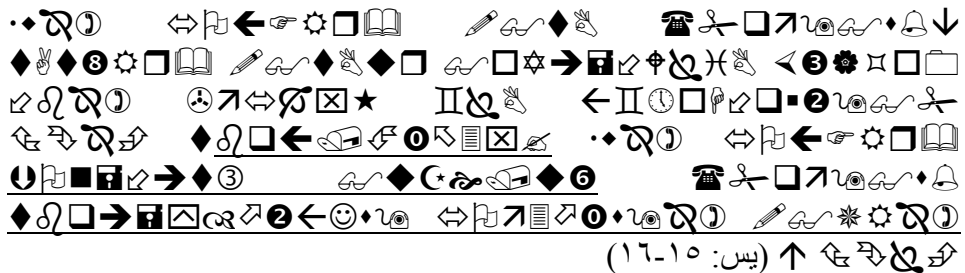
- A- The juxtaposed antonyms are words i.e. word vs. word, this concept is exemplified in the following Ayah:


 (Surely We made the mountains to sing the glory (of Allah) in

unison with him at the evening and the sunrise) (Hilali and Khan,1996:610).

The semantic antonymy is held between العشي *the evening* and الإشراق *the sunrise*, so a relation of incongruity is achieved between them, since the antonym of *the evening* is *the morning* rather than *the sunrise*.

B- The two juxtaposed antonyms are a word and a clause i.e. word vs. clause. He exemplified this in the following Ayah (Al-Qaraan,1994: 48-9):


 (They (the people of the town) said: “You are only human beings

like ourselves, and the Most Gracious (Allah) has revealed nothing. You do nothing but lie” (15) The messengers said: “Our Lord knows that we have been sent as Messengers to you ) (Hilali and Khan,1996:589).

In the above Ayah تكذبون *lie* is in a semantic antonymous relation with ربنا يعلم إنا إليكم مرسلون *Our Lord knows that we have been sent as Messengers to you* which signifies that they are *telling the truth* قول الحق .

### **3. The Concept of Antonymy in English**

Lyons (1968:463) maintains that the term antonymy is used to refer to lexical items that are opposite in meaning in that they are gradable opposites. This state of gradation is the most essential characteristic of defining antonyms. So, antonymy in Lyons's view is kept to refer just to gradable opposites and not to all opposites. Antonymy may be exemplified by such pairs as: *old/ young, wide/ narrow, big / small*, etc. He confirms that all of these pairs are seen in terms of degrees of the quality involved since we can describe something as either *wide, big, old*, or very: *wide, big, old* or *wider than, bigger than, older than*. So, we have a state of gradation. Lehrer and Lehrer (1982: 484) argue that in common parlance, and even in dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms, antonymy has a very broad meaning, sometimes equivalent to all types of opposition, including Aristotle's distinction between contradictories, in which the negation of one predication entails its contradictory, (*true – false* or *red – not red*) and contraries, in which the assertion of one predication entails the denial of its contrary, but in which both contraries may be false, e.g. *red – green* or *big – small* ). They (Ibid: 487) confirm that:

*“A and B are antonyms if everything that is A is not B and everything that is B is not A (in other words, A and B are disjoint) and if everything that is A is more (less)  $\emptyset$  (on the appropriate scale) than everything that is B; but there are some things that are more (less)  $\emptyset$  than anything that is B that are not A”.*

There are many linguists who show their interest in antonymy, make their own classifications of different types of opposites and discuss why some words fail to be antonyms while they do contrast in some way. Therefore, it would be more reasonable to study antonymy in the way of discussing various types of opposites rather than just gradable opposites. So, we are going to investigate many different classifications of oppositeness of meaning relationship:

#### **4. Classification of Antonymy in English**

Saeed (1997: 66) claims that “in traditional terminology, antonyms are words which are opposite in meaning”. So, he suggests that it is useful to identify several different types of relationship under a more general label of opposition. They are:

##### **1- Simple Antonyms**

They are the antonyms which can be represented through the relation that holds between words such as that the positive of one



implies the negative of the other. Such pairs are sometimes called complementary or binary pairs, for instance:

*dead / alive*                      (*of e.g. animals*)

So, using these words literally, *dead* implies *not alive*, etc. which explains the semantic oddness of a sentence like:

- *My kitty is dead but luckily it's still alive* ( Saeed,1997:66).

## **2- Gradable Antonyms**

Saeed (Ibid: 67) states that gradable antonyms are represented through the relationship that holds between opposites where the positive of one term does not necessarily imply the negative of the other, e.g. *rich / poor, fast/ slow, young / old, beautiful / ugly*. Such a relation is typically associated with adjectives and has two major identifying characteristics: firstly, there are usually intermediate terms. So, one can find: (*warm...tepid...cool*) between the gradable antonyms *hot* and *cold*. This means that something may be neither *hot* nor *cold*. Secondly, the terms are usually relative, so a *thick pencil* is likely to be thinner than a *thin girl*.

## **3- Reverses**

Reverse opposites are yet another type of opposites which include adjectives or adverbs which signify a quality or verbs or nouns which signify an act or state that reverse or undo the quality, act, or state of the other. Although, they are neither contradictory

nor contrary terms, they present a clear opposition. Many verbs contained in this class, e.g., *tie/untie*, *marry/divorce*, *enter/leave*, *appear/disappear* can be thought of as a subtype of directional opposites, because they all describe activities which result in an object undergoing a change from one state to another; the two members of the reversed pair involve the same two states, but the direction of change is different in each case. For example, the verb *tie* means roughly “to cause something to go from the state of being untied to the state of being tied”, while *untie* means “to cause something to go from the state of being tied to the state of being untied.”

#### **4- Converses**

These are terms which describe a relation between two entities from alternate viewpoints, as in the following pairs:

*Own / belong to*

*Above / below*

*employer / employee*

Thus, if we are told that *Helen is David's employer* we know that *David is Helen's employee*. Such relationships are part of the speaker's knowledge (Ibid: 67).

#### **5- Taxonomic Sisters**

The term '*antonymy*' is sometimes used to describe words which are at the same level in taxonomy. So, taxonomic sisters are

classification systems, as an example, we take the colour adjectives in English, and give the selection below:

Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Purple	Brown
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One can say that the words *red* and *blue* are sister-members of the same taxonomy and therefore incompatible with each other. So, we can say: *His car isn't red, it's blue*. Other taxonomies might include days of the week, types of dogs...etc. (Saeed, 1997: 68).

### 5- Data Analysis

#### Nouns:

#### SL Text: (1)

قوله تعالى ﴿فَلْيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْبُرْءِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَيَهْتَدُونَ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْتَدِي الْقَوْمَ الْحَكِيمَ﴾  
﴿فَلْيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْبُرْءِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَيَهْتَدُونَ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْتَدِي الْقَوْمَ الْحَكِيمَ﴾  
﴿فَلْيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْبُرْءِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَيَهْتَدُونَ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْتَدِي الْقَوْمَ الْحَكِيمَ﴾  
﴿فَلْيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْبُرْءِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَيَهْتَدُونَ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْتَدِي الْقَوْمَ الْحَكِيمَ﴾  
﴿فَلْيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْبُرْءِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَيَهْتَدُونَ لِلَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْتَدِي الْقَوْمَ الْحَكِيمَ﴾  
(النحل: ٦٢) ↑

#### TL Texts:

1. (They attribute to God what they hate (for themselves), and their tongues assert the falsehood that *all good things* are for themselves: without doubt for them is *the Fire*, and they will be the first to be hastened on into it) (Ali,1989:672)
2. (They assign to Allah that which they dislike (for themselves), and their tongues assert the falsehood that *the better things* will be theirs. No doubt for them is *the Fire*, and they will be the first to be

hastened on into it, and left there neglected) (Hilali and Khan,1996:355)

3. (And they assign unto Allah that which they (themselves) dislike, and their tongues expound the lie that *the better portion* will be theirs. Assuredly theirs will be *the Fire*, and they will be abandoned) (Pikthall,1999:252)

4. (They ascribe to Allah what they themselves dislike. Their tongues utter falsehoods (when they say) *the finest of wages* shall be theirs. Without doubt, *the Fire* shall be theirs and they will be hastened to (Qaribullah and Darwish,2001:273)

5. (And they assign to Allah what they dislike, and their tongues assert the lie that they will have *the best*. No doubt for them is *the Fire* and they will be abandoned) (Sahik and Khatri,2005:378)

**Interpretation:**

Allah said: ﴿وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ﴾ (They assign to Allah that which they dislike (for themselves), which means, daughters, and partners, who are merely His servants, yet none of them would like to have someone sharing in his wealth. ﴿وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنَى﴾ (and their tongues assert the lie that the better things will be theirs.). This is a denunciation of their claims that better things will be theirs in this world, and in the Hereafter. ﴿لَا حَرَمَ﴾ (No doubt), means, truly it is inevitable that ﴿أَنَّ لَهُمُ النَّارَ﴾ (for them is the Fire), on the Day of

Resurrection. ﴿وَأَنَّهُمْ مُّفْرَطُونَ﴾ (and they will be forsaken). This means that they will be forgotten and neglected there. ﴿مُفْرَطُونَ﴾ (they will be forsaken) means `they are hastened into the Fire. There is no contradiction between the two, because they will be hastened into the Fire on the Day of Resurrection, then they will be forgotten there, i.e., left to dwell there for eternity (Ibn Kathir, 2002:330-1, Vol. 4).

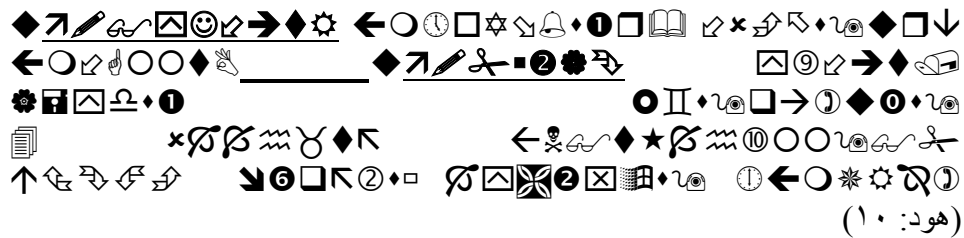
**Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is held between الحسنى and النار. الحسنى in this Ayah means the good things in this world and paradise in the Hereafter. النار means hellfire. Based on Ibn Kathir's interpretation , one can note that translators 1, 2 and 5 succeed in rendering the above Ayah, that is, they choose appropriate equivalents for الحسنى to mean *good things* as an opposite to the *bad things* which they assign to Allah. As for the translators in 4, they render الحسنى into *the finest wages*, which imply good reward in this life and Hereafter. This is somehow an appropriate choice, that is, they neglected the oppositeness relationship holding between ما يكرهون to mean bad things and الحسنى to mean good things. Translator 3 renders الحسنى into *the better portion* which as far as Ibn Kathir's interpretation is concerned, is an inappropriate equivalent for الحسنى since it does not signify the

interpretive meaning of the SL text. The relationship holding between الحسنى and النار is called semantic antonymy.

We can notice that some of the translators above succeeded in transferring and rendering the SL text antonymous relationship, while others do not.

**SL Text: (2)**



**TL Texts:**

1. (But if We give him a taste of (Our) favours after adversity hath touched him, he is sure to say, “All evil has departed from me”. Behold! He falls into exultation and pride) (Ali,1989:516)
2. (But if we let him taste good (favour) after evil (poverty and harm) has touched him, he is sure to say: “Ills have departed from me.” Surely, he is exultant, and boastful (ungrateful to Allah))  
 (Hilali and Khan,1996:287)
3. (And if We cause him to taste grace after some misfortune that had befallen him, he saith : The ills have gone from me. Lo! he is exultant, boastful) (Pikthall,1999:201)

4. (And if after *adversity* had come upon him, We let him *taste prosperity*, he says: 'Evil has left me! ' see, he is jubilant and boastful) (Qaribullah and Darwish,2001:222)

5. (But if We give him a taste of *favor* after *hardship* has touched him, he will surely say, 'The evils have departed from me'. Indeed, he is exultant and boastful) (Shaik and Khatri,2005:304)

**Interpretation:**

Allah explains that when any hardship befalls man after he/she has experienced blessings, he/she is disheartened and he despairs of any good in the future. He/she denies and rejects (the bounties) of his/her previous condition. Thus, he/she behaves as if he/she has never seen any good and he/she loses all hope for relief (from his/her situation). Likewise, if any blessing befalls him/her after displeasure, ﴿لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي﴾ (he is sure to say, "Ills have departed from me.") This means that he/she will claim that no harm or calamity will afflict him/her after this (blessing). ﴿إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ﴾ (Surely, he/she is exultant and boastful (ungrateful to Allah).) This means that he/she is pleased with what he/she has in his/her hand and ungrateful (to Allah). At the same time, he/she is boastful towards others. (Ibn Kathir,2002: 182, Vol. 4).

**Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is held between the nouns *نعماء* and *ضراء*. It is called literal antonymy. According to Ibn Kathir and Al-Esfahani (1997: 814-5) the word *نعماء* refers the good state of man, i.e. being in a good prosperous state whether physically, morally or socially.

Investigating the translations above, we can note that translators 2, 1 and 5 render *نعماء* into *good (favour)*, *favours* and *favor* respectively. It seems that the three translators adopt communicative translation by using *favour* and its derivations. These are appropriate equivalents. As for translator 4, he uses *prosperity*, which is an appropriate equivalent to *نعماء*. Furthermore; it is harmonic with its antonym *adversity*. That is, the translator keeps the rhetorical and the rhythmic value of the SL text in his rendition. The word *نعماء* is rendered by translator 3 into *grace*. It is believed that, he succeeds in his rendition, that is *grace* is a good equivalent to *نعماء* since one of its meanings is divine goodness and pleasantness.

With regard to *ضراء*, one can note that translator 2 uses *evil (poverty and harm)*. Such rendition is a mixture of a communicative and interpretive translations, where he uses *evil* as a communicative equivalent for *ضراء* then, he uses a parenthesized *poverty and harm* trying to make an interpretive rendition. As for translators 1 and 4, they render *ضراء* into *adversity*. It is an appropriate equivalent to





3. (... He saith, Verily she is a cow neither *with calf* nor *immature*; (she is) between the two conditions; so do that which ye are commanded.) (Pikthall,1999:9)

4. (... "He says she is a cow neither *old*, nor *virgin*, middling between both." Therefore, do as you have been ordered.)

(Qaribullah and Darwish,2001:10)

5. (... "He says, 'It is a cow neither *old* nor *young*, but of middle age between the two,' so do what you are commanded)

(Shaik and Khatri.2005:13)

### **Interpretation:**

Allah mentions the stubbornness of the Children of Israel and the many unnecessary questions they asked their Messengers. This is why Allah made the decisions difficult for them. Had they slaughtered a cow, any cow, it would have been sufficient for them. Instead, they made the matter difficult, and this is why Allah made it even more difficult for them. They said, ﴿ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ﴾ (Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!), meaning, "What is this cow and what is its description" Musa said, ﴿إِنَّهُ يَمُوتُ إِنَّهَا بِمَرَّةٍ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بَكْرٌ﴾ (He says, 'Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young'), which means that it is neither old nor below the age of breeding ﴿عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ﴾ (But (it is) between the two

conditions) means, "Neither old nor young. Rather, it was at the age when the cow is strongest and fittest." (Ibn Kathir, 2002:136, Vol. 1).

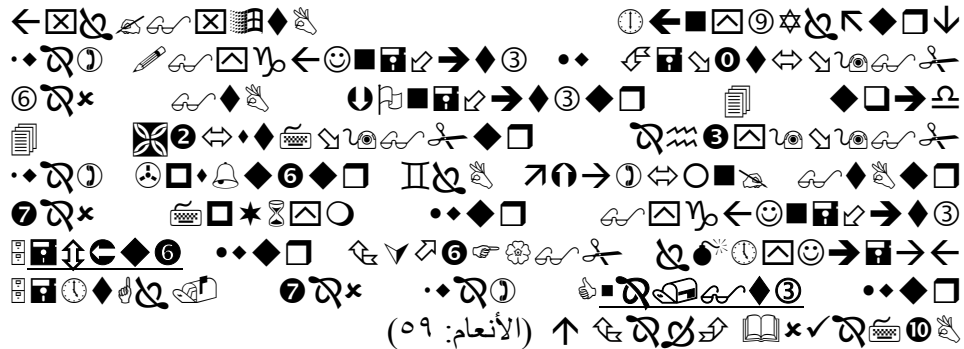
**Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is held between the two adjectives; *فَارِضٌ* and *بِكْرٌ*. Based on Al-Esfahani (1997: 631), *فَارِضٌ* means *very old*, whereas; *بِكْرٌ* according to (ibid: 140) means too young. Accordingly, Ibn Kathir interprets these two antonyms into too old and too young. Studying the aforementioned translations, one can note that translators 1, 2 and 5 render the antonymous relation holding between *فَارِضٌ* and *بِكْرٌ* by adopting faithful translation. So, they succeed in transferring this relation. That is, the translators were entirely faithful to the SL text norms. As for the translators in 4 they succeed in rendering *فَارِضٌ* into *old*, but they did not in rendering *بِكْرٌ*, that is they choose inappropriate equivalent which is *virgin*, thus adopting literal translation in their rendition of this word. Since *virgin* is an adjective of female (human or animal) who has never had sexual intercourse, and does not necessarily refer to a young female; for, sometimes a female remains virgin even in advanced age because of not having sexual intercourse. So, the translators in rendition 4 fail in transferring the SL antonymous relationship.

With regard to translator 3, his rendition for *فَارِضٌ* is inappropriate because he does not commit himself to the SL text constraints, that is, he renders the adjective *فَارِضٌ* into a

prepositional phrase *with calf*. It is inappropriate equivalent, since it is not necessarily that every cow with a calf is an old one (i.e. in many cases cows have calves in young age). So, he fails in his rendition of the antonymous relationship. Moreover, the antonymous relationship in the SL text is formed by an adjective vs. adjective, whereas translator 3 reproduces it into a compound vs. adjective. As for the second part of the antonymous relation, translator 3 renders it into *immature*, which is the synonym of young. So, as far as the SL text norms are concerned, his rendition of the second part of the antonymous relation is acceptable and appropriate. Although, both *with calf* and *immature* are in an antonymous relation, they lack the antonymous meaning intended in the SL text.

**SL Text: (2)**



**TL Texts:**

1. (...He knoweth whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf doth fall but with His knowledge. There is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything *fresh* or *dry* (green or

withered), but is (inscribed) in a Record Clear (to those who can read)) (Ali,1989:304)

2. (... And He knows whatever there is in the land and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything *fresh* or *dry*, but is written in a Clear record) (Hilali and Khan,1996:178)

3. (... And He knoweth what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falleth but He knoweth it, not a grain amid the darkness of the earth, naught of *wet* or *dry* but (it is noted) in a clear record.)

(Pikthall,1999:120)

4. (... He knows that which is in the land and sea. No leaf falls except He knows it, and there is no grain in the darkness of the earth, *fresh* or *withered*, but is recorded in a clear Book.)

(Qaribullah and Darwish,2001:134)

5. (...And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. And not a leaf falls but He knows it. And there is not a grain in the darkness of the earth and not anything *moist* or *dry* but is written in a Clear Record) (Shaik and Khatri,2005:183)

**Interpretation:**

Allah says next, ﴿وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ﴾ (And with Him are the keys of the Ghayb (all that is hidden), none knows them but He.) Al-Bukhari recorded that Salim bin `Abdullah said that his

father said that the Messenger of Allah says, «مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ خَمْسٌ لَا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ»

«The keys of the Unseen are five and none except Allah knows

them: ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنزِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا

﴿(Verily, Allah! With Him (Alone) وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿

is the knowledge of the Hour, He sends down the rain, and knows that which is in the wombs. No person knows what he/she will earn tomorrow, and no person knows in what land he/she will die.

Verily, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware) Allah's statement , ﴿وَيَعْلَمُ ﴿

﴿مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ﴿ (And He knows whatever there is on the land and in

the sea) means that Allah's honored knowledge encompasses everything including the creatures living in the sea and on the land, and none of it, not even the weight of an atom on earth or in heaven, ever escapes His knowledge. Allah's statement, ﴿وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا ﴿

﴿يَعْلَمُهَا ﴿ (not a leaf falls, but He knows it.) means that He knows the

movements of everything including inanimate things. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record.) (Ibn Kathir,2002:158-9, Vol.3).

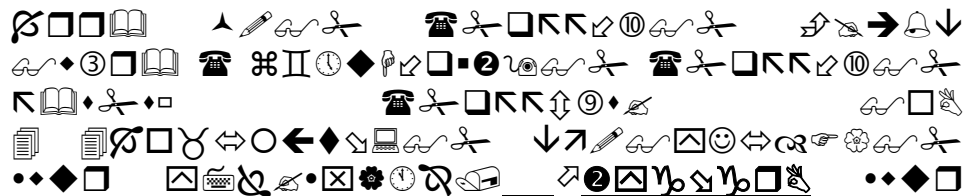
### **Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is between the adjectives; رطب and يابس . According to Ibn Kathir and Al-Esfahani (1997: 356), رطب in this Verse means the *fresh* (i.e. ripe) fruits,

grains and foods), whereas *يابس* in this Verse, based on Al-Esfahani (ibid: 889) and Ibn Kathir, refers to the plant which was *fresh* then turned dry. Considering the above renditions, one can note that translators 1, 2 and 4 render *رطب* into *fresh* communicatively to be in- convenient with its collocation in the Ayah. But translators 3 and 5 translate *رطب* literally, trying to transfer the lexical antonymous relationship of the SL text into the TL text. That is, if one checks English-English dictionaries, one can find *wet* or *moist* as an antonym of *dry*. On the contrary, one cannot find *fresh* among the antonyms of *dry*. So, the first three translators render the lexical antonymy of the SL text into a semantic one. It is believed that translators 3 and 5 choose inappropriate equivalents for *رطب* , that is, neither *wet* nor *moist* collocate with fruits, grains or any other plant to mean ripe. For instance, *\*wet orange* or *\*moist apple* seems odd, that is *wet* or *moist* here does not signify *fresh* or *ripe*. So, although they rendered the SL antonymous relation into TL one, they fail in choosing appropriate equivalents that transfer the SL antonyms' interpretive meaning.

**Verbs:**

**SL Text: (1)**







**TL Texts:**

1. (... Neither speaking thy Prayer aloud, nor speaking it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between) (Ali,1989:726)
2. (...And offer your Salat (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice, but follow a way between) (Hilali and Khan,1996:384)
3. (...And thou (Muhammad), be not loud voiced in thy worship nor yet silent therein, but follow a way between) (Pikthall,1999:271)
4. (... Pray neither loudly nor to quietly, rather, seek a middle course between them) (Qaribullah and Darwish,2001:293)
5. (...And do not be loud in your prayers and not be silent therein, but seek a moderate way between that) (Shaik and Khatri,2001:405)

**Interpretation:**

Allah says: (Say) O Muhammad, to these idolators who deny that Allah possesses the attribute of mercy and refuses to call Him Ar-Rahman, (Invoke Allah or invoke Ar-Rahman (the Most Gracious), by whatever name you invoke Him (it is the same), for to Him belong the Best Names). This means that there is no difference between calling on Him as Allah or calling on Him as Ar-Rahman because He has the Most Beautiful Names, ﴿وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا﴾ (And offer your Salah neither aloud nor in a low voice) means, that nor recite it so quietly that your companions cannot hear the Qur'an and learn it from you, i.e. do not make your voice so soft that the one who is trying to listen without being seen cannot hear anything

at all. Perhaps he/she will pay attention to some of what he/she hears and benefits from it (but follow a way between ) (Ibn Kathir,2002: 79, Vol. 5).

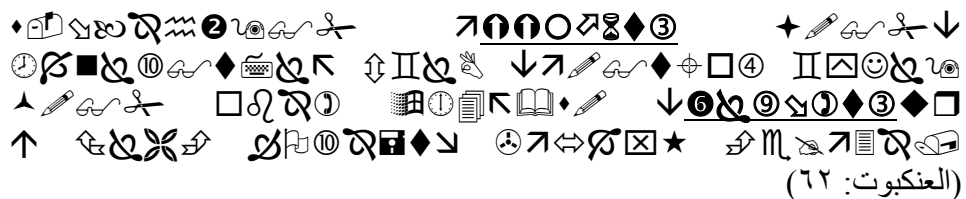
### **Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is held between the imperative verbs تجهر and تخافت . Such a type of relation is called literal antonymy. According to Al-Esfahani (1997:208-9) the word الجهر is used with two senses; sight sense and hearing sense. With regard to sight sense it means the state of visibility being plain. For instance, His Almighty saying “...لن نؤمن حتى نرى الله “ “...We shall never believe in you until we see Allah plainly...(2:55) and “...أرنا الله جهرة...(النساء: ١٥٩)“ “...Show us Allah in public...(4: 153). As for the hearing sense الجهر means speaking loudly. For instance, His Almighty saying “وإن تجهر بالقول “ “And if you (Muhammad) speak (the invocation) aloud, then verily, He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden (20:7), and in “إنه يعلم الجهر من القول و يعلم ما تكتمون “ “(Say O Muhammad) Verily, He (Allah) knows that which is spoken aloud (openly) and that which you conceal (21:110). As for تخافت , based upon Al-Esfahani (1997: 289) يخفت means to become inaudible and to become silent. But sometimes it signifies speaking in a very low voice. For instance, His Almighty's saying “يتخافتون بينهم إن لبثتم إلا عشراً (طه: ١٠٣)“ “They will speak in a

very low voice to each other (saying): “You stayed not longer than ten (days) (20:103)”.

Investigating the above translations, it can be noted that translators 2, 1, 4 and 3 render the verb *تجهر* into adverbs; *aloud*, *aloud*, *loudly* and *loud voiced* respectively. Translator 5 rendered the verb *تجهر* into the adjective *loud*. In all the renditions above *تجهر* is rendered appropriately , that is, they transfer the interpretive meaning of the SL. With regard to the verb *تخافت* , translators 2 and 1 render it into adjectival clauses ; *low voice* and *low tone* respectively. As for translators 3 and 5 they render the verb *تخافت* into an adjective ; *silent*. In rendition 4, although *quietly* forms a good antonymous relationship with *loudly*, it is inappropriate equivalent for *تخافت*. Similarly, in renditions 3 and 5 , *silent* is an inappropriate equivalent for *تخافت*, which means lower your voice and does not mean to be silent.

**SL Text: (2)**



**TL Texts:**

1. (God *enlarges* the sustenance (which He gives) to whichever of His servants He pleases; and He (similarly) *grants by (strict) measure*, (as He pleases). For God has full knowledge of all things)

(Ali,1989:1046)

2.(Allah *enlarges* the provision for whom He wills of His slaves, and *straitens* it for whom (He wills). Verily, Allah is the All-Knower of everything) (Hilali and Khan,1996:538)

3. (Allah *maketh* the provision *wide* for whom He will of His bondmen, and *straiteneth* it for whom (He will). Lo! Allah is Aware of all things) (Pikthall,1999:390)

4. (Allah *outspreads* and *restricts* His provision to whomsoever He will of His worshipers. Allah has knowledge of all things)

(Qaribullah and Darwish,2001)

5. (Allah *extends* provision for whom He wills of His slaves and *restricts* it for him. Indeed, Allah is All-Knower of all things)

(Shaik and Khatri,2005:563)

**Interpretation:**

Almighty Allah makes the provision of people different, so that some are rich and some are poor, and He knows best what is suitable for each of them, who deserves to be rich and who deserves to be poor. Allah expands the provision for whom He wills of His servants, and straitens it for whom (He wills). Verily, Allah is the All-Knower of everything.). So, Allah states that He is the alone who creates everything, and that He alone is controlling them. (Ibn Kathir,2002:123, Vol. 6).

**Discussion:**

The antonymous relationship in this Ayah is held between the verbs *يَبْسُطُ* and *يَقْدُرُ*. This relation is called semantic antonymy, that is *يَقْدُرُ* is the synonym of *يَقْبِضُ* which forms a lexical antonymy when juxtaposed with *يَبْسُطُ*.

The antonymous relationship in this Verse is held between the verbs *يَبْسُطُ* and *يَقْدُرُ*. Based on Al-Esfahani (1997: 122-3) *يَبْسُطُ* is to spread something to make it spread and wide. For instance, His Almighty's saying “والله جعل لكم الأرض بساطاً (نوح: ١٩)” “And Allah has made for you the earth a wide expanse (71:19). Sometimes *يَبْسُطُ* is used to mean *increase*. For example, His Almighty's “...الله يقبض و يبسط... (البقرة: ٢٤٥)” “And it is Allah that decreases or increases (your provisions)...(2:245)” and “ولو بسط الله ولو بسط الله “ “And if Allah were to enlarge the provision for His slaves...(42:27)”. Concerning *يَقْدُرُ*, according to Al-Esfahani (1997: 659) it means *restrict* or *decrease*. For instance His Almighty's saying “لينفق ذو سعة من سعته و من قُدِر عليه رزقه فلينفق مما “ “Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him...(65:7)”. ”أتاه الله... (الطلاق: ٧)”

Studying the renditions above, one can note that the five translators rendered the verb *يَبْسُطُ* into the verbs; *enlarges*, *enlarges*, *outspreads*, *make the wide* and *extends* respectively. The renditions of translators 1 and 2 for *يَبْسُطُ* into *enlarges* are inappropriate, that is,

although one of its synonyms is *increase* , it does not collocate with *provision* and *sustenance* respectively. Similarly, translators 3, 4 and 5 render *بيسط* literally into *outspreads*, *maketh wide* and *extends*. They are inappropriate equivalents for *بيسط* , that is, they do not convey the same interpretive meaning of the SL text.

*يَقْدُرُ* is rendered by translators 2 and 3 into *straitens*, which signifies restrict in range or scope or makes narrow in size. *Straiten* does not convey or have the same interpretive meaning of *يَقْدُرُ* . Translator 1 renders the verb *يَقْدُرُ* into the verbal clause *grants by (strict) measure*; this rendition is an appropriate equivalent, that is, it conveys the same interpretive meaning of *يَقْدُرُ* . As for translators 4 and 5, they render *يَقْدُرُ* into *restricts*, but only the latter succeeds in rendering the antonymous relationship by choosing the two antonyms *extends* vs. *restricts*.

## 6- Conclusions:

The study has come up with the following concluding remarks:

- 1- Whenever a sentence contains an antonym or an antonymous pair, it implicitly or explicitly contains a comparison. The important point to note is that the denial of the one member of antonymic opposition does not always imply the assertion of the other.

- 2- Antonyms form mostly pairs, not groups like synonyms; *above: below, absent: present, alike: different, asleep: awake, back: forth, bad: good, big: little, etc.*
- 3- Usage is what determines the meanings, or senses, of any word, and the context in which it is used to disambiguates one sense of the word from its other senses.
- 4- The language of the Glorious Qur'an has its own unchangeable meaning which no other language can accurately express. The phenomenon of antonymy in the Verses of the Glorious Qur'an asserts that it is one of the Qur'anic miraculous techniques and one of the most beautiful aspects of rhetoric and rhythm of the Arabic language.
- 5- The results of this study support the fact that the Qur'anic language is a unique one; no other language can achieve its miraculous nature whether in form or content, not even Arabic in which the Qur'an is revealed.
- 6- There are some translators whose language margins or expressions are more rhetorical, cohesive or rhythmic...etc. than the others. In fact, all of these renderings are mere translations. One should not base his/her faith or belief upon them even if his/her mother tongue is not Arabic, because a translator might translate a religious text according to his/her

own understanding to the text or his/her tendency towards a certain religious school (mazhab).

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