

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Translating Chapter Titles in the Bible: Strategies and Implications for Arabic Renditions

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the functions and strategies of translating biblical titles as paratextual elements across English and Arabic. The analyzed data are ten representative bible headings in the Genesis Book [1] and their equivalents in the Arabic version [1]. Those ten were selected out of the 25 representative titles, which represent the 4000 titles in the NIV, where the focus was on the titles that are nominalizations or have a nominalized part. Nord's [2] functional model of translation was used in analyzing the selected data. The results showed that the English titles are concise, informative, and theologically-oriented, whereas the Arabic ones pose extension to parallel the theological orientation of the English ones, informative, and thematic. It has been concluded that the most important function of Arabic titles is their reframing role to compensate for the targeted function of the English titles. It is implied that translators should merge the syntactic, cultural, and theological factors to give a complete, adequate, and functional equivalent for a given biblical title. Further research can be done to include analyzing other biblical titles. The implications of this study are of vital importance in the domain of translation teaching.

KEYWORDS: The Genesis Book, Biblical titles, Translational functions, Translational strategies, Nominalization.

مقالة بحثية

عناوين فصول الكتاب المقدس: الاستراتيجيات والآثار المترتبة على الترجمات العربية

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الملخص :

تستكشف هذه الدراسة وظائف واستراتيجيات ترجمة عناوين النصوص التوراتية كعناصر نصية موازية بين الإنجليزية والعربية. وتمثل البيانات المُحللة في عشرة عناوين نموذجية من سفر التكوين [1] وما يُقابلها في النسخة العربية [1]. وقد تم اختيار هذه العناوين العشرة من بين 25 عنواناً نموذجياً، والتي تُمثل 4000 عنوان في النسخة الدولية الجديدة (NIV)، حيث انصب التركيز على العناوين التي تُعدّ أسماءً أو تحتوي على جزء اسمي. واستُخدم نموذج نورد الوظيفي للترجمة [2] في تحليل البيانات المُختارة. وأظهرت النتائج أن العناوين الإنجليزية موجزة، وغنية بالمعلومات، وذات توجه لاهوتي، بينما تُقدم العناوين العربية امتداداً يُوازي التوجه اللاهوتي للعناوين الإنجليزية، وهي غنية بالمعلومات وذات طابع موضوعي. وقد خُصص إلى أن أهم وظيفة للعناوين العربية هي إعادة صياغة المعنى لتعويض الوظيفة الأساسية للعناوين الإنجليزية. ويُستنتج من ذلك أنه ينبغي على المترجمين دمج العوامل النحوية والثقافية واللاهوتية لتقديم مُكافئ كامل ومناسب ووظيفي لعنوان توراتي مُحدد. يمكن إجراء المزيد من البحوث لتشمل تحليل عناوين أخرى من الكتاب المقدس. وتكتسب نتائج هذه الدراسة أهمية بالغة في مجال تدريس الترجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : سفر التكوين ، العناوين الانجيلية ، الوظائف الترجمة ، الاستراتيجيات الترجمة ، التحويل الإسمي .

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Introduction

This study compares and assesses the functions of translating 50 titles as paratextual elements in the Genesis Book of the Old Testament [1] as paratextual elements across English and Arabic [1]. However, the study presented and focused on translating 25 highlighted representative titles (See the appendix), taking into consideration the scope of this paper. Since translating biblical titles is seen as a complex process, translators are entitled to balance between loyalty to the source language and aligning with the linguistic and religious expectations of the target readership. Translating chapter titles reflects some significant functions such as playing an interpretive role, facilitating understanding of key events and the theological themes involved. For sure, titles have their functions to realize, a case which influences the process of translating them.

According to [3], titles can be descriptive or allusive. Being descriptive, titles provide a description for the topic of the text, whereas allusive titles figuratively indicate the content of the text (for more details on titles, their functions, and translation, (see, e.g., [4]; [5]; [6]; [7]). Regardless of the type of a title, a title should capture the purpose of that text it introduces; however, he also adds that a title can be informative [1, p. 148]. Thus, the challenging task of a translator regarding titles is to reveal that purpose or the real intentions of the author [8]. Another promoting function of titles is directing the reader towards the topic of the text, in a way motivating readers to plumb the text (see, e.g. [9]; [10]). Translating titles is a process that requires

fidelity to the source text or produces a purposeful translation [11, p. 15]. [12] adds that titles can function to name, inform, seduce (to appeal to the reader), describe, and entail intertextuality. He also refers to the strategies used in rendering titles, including literal translation, reformulation or creating a new title. Adopting such strategies, he adds, can fulfill the appointed function behind a given title, reflecting upon the idea that translating titles is not a matter of transferring words but reformulating a new title for the sake of facilitating communication and attracting readership.

The model of analysis adopted throughout this study is Nord's [2] *Translating as a Purposeful Activity*. The translation unit of analysis adopted in this study is the paratextual unit of titles, following [13, p.117] paradigm in that "the units of comparative analysis would always merge as coupled pairs of target- and source-text segments, 'replacing' and 'replaced segments, respectively". Accordingly, translation "is the replacement of an original text with another text" [13, p.3]. This goes in line with Catford's view of translation, as referred to in [14] in the sense that meaning "can only be replaced, so that it functions in a comparable way in its new contextual and textual environment" [14, p.13] where replacement reads meaning as merging text and context (see, e.g. [15]; [16]).

This study aims to align the translation of the English Genesis Book titles with their Arabic equivalents in [1]. Another significant aim is to compare and assess the functions and strategies of translating the above titles as paratextual elements, building on [2]. The focus will be on the most recurrent ones,

especially those that are not studied in the previous studies.

This study is a qualitative descriptive study and is limited to just the titles in the Genesis Book of the Old Testament and their translational Arabic equivalents in [1], where the targeted items are 25 from which ten representative items are selected. Their functional features are compared within the perspectives of [2].

This study posed the following research questions:

1. What are the functions of rendering the NIV Genesis titles into Arabic in Kitāb al-Ḥayāt version?
2. What are the linguistic, cultural, and theological expectations regarding balancing loyalty in translating Book titles?

Literature Review

In this study, the researcher examines the functions and the impact of translating titles from the NIV version into Arabic. There are various studies that examined translating titles from English into Arabic. For instance, [17], as a specific type of proper names, the titles of works of art constitute a very important and highly translation-sensitive element of art discourse. Her study aimed to demonstrate how specific titling in arts affects the translation process. To that end, a brief overview of the title's role in verbal and non-verbal discourse is given. Furthermore, it is shown how, due to the involvement of heterogenic semiotic codes, specific functioning of titles results in a different perception strategy, making most routine title translation strategies inapplicable. The paper concluded that the choice of translation

strategy is determined by various extra-linguistic factors, such as alternative titling, back-translation situations, and the requirements of the commissioner. In dealings with art titles, most translation techniques that work for other proper names prove useful, among them: semantic translation, translation by tradition, transcription, reproduction in the original spelling, etc. However, translators should be aware that, due to the involvement of heterogenic semiotic codes, specific functioning of titles results in a different perception strategy; therefore, routine and traditional title translation strategies in artistic discourse often prove inadequate. The translators' concern is to preserve the integrity of a work of art and consistency in titling when they face dealing with alternative titles, matching titles to images, or giving new names to works of art. Decision-making happens under multiple constraints, the commissioner's requirements and lack of relevant information among them.

In a study on translating 70 film titles into Arabic, [18] recommended that translators should analyze the titles under investigation and grasp the messages of these titles. After fulfilling these, translators are in a position to provide the closest equivalents. In addition, such titles encapsulate cultural references as well as their aesthetic weight. There are various studies that have examined translating titles across English and Arabic. These include [19] who used the instruments of checklist and interviews to extract her data. She found that there is an influence on translating titles by neutral gender words.

Another study by [20] who explored translating 100 English book titles whose Arabic translations were manipulated in light of [12] model. Their study revealed that there were various manipulation aspects used including explicitness, offering interpretations, adding/removing genre information and other related ones. As for [12], he has mentioned certain functions for titles, including naming, informative, and seductive. Regarding the translation strategies adopted in translating titles, these include literal translation, reformulation, or creating a new title, used to realize the intended function behind the given title.

A study by [8] revealed that translating titles is challenging and it requires linguistic, socio-cultural factors, commercial interests, and ethical considerations. Another study was conducted by [21] examining 200 English and Arabic book titles, revealing that there have been different strategies used including literal translation, translation plus transliteration, translation plus addition and modification, and so on.

[3, p. 56] has revealed that translating titles is a difficult task because the translated “title should sound attractive, allusive, suggestive, even if it is a proper name, and should usually bear some relation to the original if only for identification”. In addition, Kelan and Xiang [22, p. 80] proved that “translators should keep the characteristics of the original [titles] and consult the cultural backgrounds to keep the informative, aesthetic and commercial functions in balance”. Taking into consideration the scope of this study, the

researcher is not going to discuss studies related to nominalization and its functions in discourse and translation because there are a lot of studies dealing with nominalization. However, one can refer to important studies related to nominalization (see, e.g. [23];[24];[25]; [26]; [27], [28]; [29]; [30]; [31]; [32]; [33]; [34]; [35]; [36]; [37]; [38]).

Materials and Method

The current study employs a qualitative textual analysis approach. A corpus of 50 nominalized chapter titles was compiled from a widely circulated English Bible edition, (NIV) and its corresponding translation in Arabic Bibles,[1]. The analysis draws upon functionalist translation theory (see, e.g. [2]; [39]), with a focus on semantic accuracy, syntactic transformation, and liturgical compatibility. Particular emphasis is placed on how translators preserve or adapt theological weight and stylistic solemnity through nominal structures, as informed by Arabic grammatical norms [40], and ecclesial expectation. For the sake of brevity, the researcher presents the key points in [2] that are of relevance in the analysis of the data targeted.

Key points of functionalism in Nord's (1997) *Translating as a purposeful activity*

In this book, Nord states the aspect of translating seen as a form of translational interaction, intentional interaction, interpersonal interaction, a communicative action, intercultural action, and a text-processing action. The basic functionalist theory focused upon is *Skopos* Theory applied to translating as an activity in itself. Thus, translation is seen as a human action or

activity carried out by agents, attempting to replace and reproduce the communicative purposes intended by senders in the process of communication. Those communicative purposes are directed towards receivers; the same processes and procedures happen in the process of translating. According to [2, p. 1], situations "are embedded in a cultural habitat.... And communication is conditioned by the constraints of the situation-in-culture". Translators are the mediators between different cultures through filling the gap where there are differences among them (p. 17). One of the important points in Nord's account of translating as a text-processing action is that the source text "is just one of various sources of information used by the translator" (p. 25).

In functionalist approaches, the Skopos rule represents the top-ranking rule, which is explained by Vermeer (1989a, p. 20, cited in [2, p. 29] as follows:

Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The Skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people they want it to function.

In light of the above key points set by [2], this paper attempts to explore the nuances of translating the biblical paratextual elements of The Genesis titles in the NIV into Arabic in Kitāb al-Ḥayāt version.

Analysis

This study seeks to uncover the functions of translating biblical titles across English and

Arabic. The analysis is approached within the confines of [2] functionalist approach. Out of the 50 titles of the Genesis, ten representative ones will be analyzed in terms of their structures and functions in this section.

(1) Source text title: Genesis 1:1 The Beginning (grammatically nominal). This title is highly condensed, abstract, and vague (beginning of what?). Target text title in Kitāb al-Ḥayāt: بدء الخليقة (The Beginning of Creation) (double nominal construction). This title is not literally translated, but functionally produced. According to [2], the process of translation is guided by Skopos or the purpose of the translation, a process which is constrained by three points: the target audience, the text function, and fidelity. The purpose of the translation is to provide a clear text by utilizing the strategy of explicitness so that the reader faces no barrier in understanding the intention of the source text author. The function of this title is a thematic marker, assuming shared background knowledge; whereas the Arabic one is highly informative, anchoring the title theologically and universally. This reflects a shift from implicit to explicit rendering. This matches Nord's view that: Translators may legitimately add information according to the function of the target text. Thus, the title بدء الخليقة meets the expectation of the Arabic readership. As for fidelity, loyalty to the biblical message is achieved through the use of Genesis, which refers to creation. This last point is achieved in the Arabic title through explicitness.

(2) Source text: Genesis 4: Cain and Abel (proper names coordinated, ellipsis use,

functionally identificatory purpose. Target text: Kitāb al-Ḥayāt: تقدمتا قابين و هابيل (The Offering of Cain and Abel) (grammatically nominalized, referring to a ritual event, and interpretive). To Nord (1997), translators are in a position to reframe the content of the title if necessary. In the Arabic title, it is thematically explicit and narratively accessible. The very use of the nominalization (تقدمتا) represents the religious referential meaning, framing the narrative of the title via ritual obedience. One of the functions referred to by Nord is the interpretive one, which is reflected in the Arabic title. Thus, the nominalization (تقدمتا) reflects a formal elevation. In the biblical title, again there is loyalty to the message intended with no theological addition, whereas the Arabic one reflects a nominalized event, i.e. the offering. The translator purposefully introduces a nominalized event group, a shift which prioritizes the Arabic reader orientation

(3) Source text: From Adam to Noah (Genesis: 5) (prepositional group, explicit time span, historical orientation with no event indicated). This prepositional group functions as a genealogical frame where the reader is in front of succession over time. On the other hand, in the target text Kitāb al-Ḥayāt, namely (نرية ادم) (The Offspring/ Lineage of Adam), does not reflect a literal translation nor is it a formal equivalent. This nominalization construction starts with an abstract collective noun (نرية), which underlines continuity and biological and covenantal lineage. In addition, the use of the proper noun (ادم) grammatically functions as

a genitive construct to the preceding collective noun.

(4) Source text: Genesis: 7 (Entering the Ark) starts with a nominalized gerund, having both event-focus and action-orientation. There is an implication of a physical movement by the participants intended. Functionally, this title indicates a narrative episode, highlighting an action on the part of both humans and animals. In the target text, namely (الامر بملء) (The Command to Fill the Ark), it does not literally match the English title nor does it represent an event equivalence. It starts with a nominalization abstract act, which is (الامر), indicating a divine injunction, not a physical movement. There is another verbal noun, namely (ملئ) (to fill), representing the gist of the command. Thus, the Arabic nominalization title encapsulates both a given speech act and a process, reframing the episode in its events and command.

(5) Source text (NIV): Genesis: 10. (The Table of Nations) (سلالات أبناء نوح). This paratextual element is a biblical technical term referring to the peoples descended from Noah and his sons. The nominalized element (Table) metaphorically indicates a structured lineage categorization. However, the naming of Noah and his descendents is not direct, unlike the Arabic one. It implies that the Table of Nations is an established terminology, which the readership knows. In the target text, the title addresses a general Arabic readership, hence there is an explicit rendering, directly mentioning the name intended. As for the functional strategies adopted, the English paratextual element is a functional adaptation, whereas the Arabic one

is an explicitation by using an identifying nominal group, i.e. not reproducing the metaphorical structure. The Skopos targeted is achieving communicative impact, a case which reflects the translator's fidelity.

(6) Source text (NIV): Genesis: 14. Abram Rescues Lot. This paratextual element draws the readers' attention to the narrative of rescue of Lot by Abram. It is a finite clause where the agent (Abram) is foregrounded. On the other hand, the Arabic Kitāb al-Ḥayāt version highlights the action of rescue through the use of the nominalization (إنقاذ). According to Nord, the communicative needs of the audience determines the translation strategy adopted, thus in Kitāb al-Ḥayāt, Arabic favors nominalized titles in religious texts, a stylistic conformity achieved. The prepositional group (من الأسر) is related to the foregrounded nominalization (إنقاذ), where it explains the situation through clarifying the nature of the rescue. Accordingly, there is a shift at the thematic level: the NIV targets the agent through the focus on subject, while Kitāb al-Ḥayāt targets the patient through the focus on the event. In terms of loyalty, the translator can make changes to achieve the communicative accessibility, though the Arabic title sacrifices the agent, i.e. there is agent loss.

(7) Source text (NIV): The Covenant of Circumcision vs. Target text (Kitāb al-Ḥayāt): (العهد و الختان). The NIV textual element is a complex nominal group where the item (circumcision) functions as a genitive, identifying the target of the covenant. This title highlights the religious contact between covenant and the ritual

targeted. On the other hand, Kitāb al-Ḥayāt utilizes parataxis through the use of the coordinating conjunction *wa*. In the NIV, familiarity with the biblical covenant theology is presupposed through the use of the genitive *of*, where Kitāb al-Ḥayāt uses the paratactic conjunction *wa* as an equivalent to enhance clarity on the part of the Arabic readership. It is a purposeful adaptation through the use of this associative relationship. Thus, the translator remains loyal to the intended theological message. In a corpus-based pragmatic study on the functions of the Arabic *wa*, [41] listed 11 pragmatic functions including addition, indicating resumption, restating, showing simultaneity and others. However, they did not include the function of accompaniment, which applies in this context. In Arabic, the function of accompaniment is a key one, and it carries an associative role.

(8) Source text (NIV): Genesis: 19: Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed vs. Target text (Kitāb al-Ḥayāt): (إهلاك سدوم و عمورة).

In the (NIV) version, there is a past participle, showing an implied passive construction. Grammatically, it is a nominalized clause with a semantic focus on destruction. On the other hand, the Arabic version starts with a verbal noun (إهلاك) followed by the proper nouns denoted. It is a nominalization realized lexically by (إهلاك) and not (تدمير) to convey the sense represented by the biblical event, i.e. to reflect upon its theological impact. By translating it as such, there is a kind of adequacy achieved. The NIV paratextual text reflects an informative, narrative voice, whereas the Arabic one shows a didactic

framing behind the informative function of that text. Functionally, the event of destruction is conveyed through nominalization.

(9) Source text (NIV): Genesis:23. The Death of Sarah vs. Target text (Kitāb al-Ḥayāt): (موت سارة و دفنها). The source paratextual element is informative and it highlights Sarah's death. In the Arabic title the informative function has been extended to include Sarah's burial, which was not mentioned in the ST, indicating a complete narrative scope. Thus, it is a shift from little framing to a comprehensive one. According to Nord's skopos paradigm, the target intended function determines the translational choice. That is, the addition of the burial event serves a sort of Skopos-driven explicitation.

10. Source text (NIV): Genesis:23. A Wife for Isaac vs. Target text (Kitāb al-Ḥayāt): (البحث عن زوجة لاسحاق). The NIV title is a paratextual element which is informative, focusing on the result: Isaac ends up with a wife. In the Arabic version, it is both a process-oriented and informative, where the focus is on the action and the narrative development of the search. That is, the Arabic title reflects a narrative, which is like a journey for a target. The use of the preposition (for) in the English text serves the function of purpose, which is reflected in the Arabic text as a nominalization process, namely (البحث عن) (looking for).

Results and Discussion

The results of the above analyses can be summarized in the following tables:

Table 1:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 1:

Text 1	English title	Arabic title
Features	Condensed, abstract, shared knowledge	Explicit, addition, rather functional
Function	Thematic marker, biblical familiarity	Informative, maintaining fidelity to biblical message

Table 2:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 2:

Text 2	English title	Arabic title
Features	Proper names	Nominalized, thematic
Functions	Identification	Ritualistic, interpretive

Table 3:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 3:

Text 3	English title	Arabic title
Features	Prepositional group, proper names	Abstract collective noun +proper noun
Functions	Explicit time span, genealogical framing	Continuity, covenantal lineage

Table 4:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 4:

Text 4	English title	Arabic title
Features	Nominalized gerund, event-focus, action-oriented	Nominalized abstract speech act, Process
Functions	Narrative episode	Divine injunction, reframing episode

Table 5:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 5:

Text 5	English title	Arabic title
Features	Technical metaphoric	Explicit identifying

	element	nominal group with a genitive element
Functions	Structured lineage classification, functional adaptation	Achieving communicative impact

Table 6:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 6:

Text 6	English title	Arabic title
Features	Finite clause, agent foregrounded	Nominalized group + prepositional group, no agent
Functions	Attention to the narrative	Highlighting the action of rescue

Table 7:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 7:

Text 7	English title	Arabic title
Features	Complex nominal group	Paratactic structure
Functions	Familiarity with biblical theology	Purposeful adaptation

Table 8:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 8:

Text 8	English title	Arabic title
Features	Nominalized + implied passive	Nominal group starting with a verbal noun
Functions	Semantic focus on destruction	Biblical event, adequacy achieved, didactic framing

Table 9:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 9:

Text 9	English title	Arabic title
Features	Complex genitive nominal group	Complex paratactic nominal group

Functions	Event of Sarah's death	Addition of Sarah's burial, Skopos-driven explicitation
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Table 10:

Features and Functions of English Title and Arabic Title of Text 10:

Text 10	English title	Arabic title
Features	Nominal group + preposition of purpose	Nominalization + prepositional group
Functions	Informative, result focus	Informative, process developed

The discussion will target the most important issues regarding the structure and functions of some biblical titles from the Genesis (NIV) and their Arabic counterparts in Kitāb al-Ḥayāt. In one of the titles, there is a nominalized gerund, which foregrounds the event and highlights the action to conform to the narrative progression of the source text. The title, therefore, guides the reader's expectations concerning the action under investigation. On the other hand, the Arabic nominalized title demonstrates an abstract speech act, highlighting the illocutionary force of the text. That is, the episode, reframed out of a narrative sequence, is viewed as a divine decree. Out of this shift, one can deduce that Arabic biblical discourse tends to adopt this divine injunction, namely theological abstraction. Structurally speaking, English titles that start with a gerund can be rendered as a nominalized expression in Arabic.

The title *The Table of Nations* is one of the important biblical paratextual elements in the Genesis. According to [42, p. 31], one of the basic functions of metaphors "relates to the representation of (particular aspects of)

reality" (p. 31). In additions, metaphors can "persuade, reason, evaluate, explain, theorize, offer new conceptualizations of reality and so on.". According to [3], one of the procedures for translating metaphor is that translators "may replace **the image in the SL with a standard TL image** which does not clash with the TL culture," (p. 89, emphasis in the original). In this procedure, he mentioned the word *Table*, having different connotations according to context. Another important procedure that matches the translation of *The Table of Nation* is the conversion of metaphor to sense (p. 90). In the Arabic version, it has been translated into (سلالات أبناء نوح), which reflects the sense of this metaphoric genealogical expression. It is a conversion of this metaphor into the sense it gives which is *The Genealogies of the Sons of Noah*. It is a matter of clarification to manifest something which is not apparent in the target culture [43, p.245].

In one of the paratextual English elements, there is a finite clause of the structure (SVO), where there is an agent and a complete information structure. In such constructions, where the agent is foregrounded, the reader is directed towards the performer of the action. Another function behind using a finite clause is its reinforcing of the narrative nature of the source text. It is the structure that characterize the procedure of storytelling, a structure that invites the audience of pursuing the narrative development through identifiable actors. In contrast, the Arabic paratextual element is realized as a nominalized group with a prepositional group as a complement. In this structure, there is no agent, resulting in

triggering the scale towards the action, which is the act of rescue. This structural shift helps Arabic foreground the event outcome rather than the narrative mechanisms that create the event itself. Functionally, such a shift reveals that English biblical titles indicate narrative attention, whereas the Arabic ones encapsulate thematic highlighting. In English, the reader is oriented towards the story world through the agent foregrounding, but in Arabic the title produces two functions: summarizing and interpretation, a case which represents the event as a salvation act.

As for the seventh representative title, the function of the genitive (of) is to show specification, i.e. what kind of covenant is. According to [44, p. 890], prepositional phrases can function as appositive or non-appositive, "and in either function, they can be restrictive or non-restrictive". For example, in the phrase "The issue of student grants', the function is both appositive and restrictive. This is similar to the function of the paratextual element 'The covenant of circumcision'. In the Arabic version, this function has been rendered through the particle *wa*, which conveys the function of accompaniment and association.

The tenth paratextual element poses a formal similarity across the English and the Arabic one though there is a delicate functional discrepancy between them regarding the information structure and processing. In English, the title has two nominal groups related by a preposition of purpose. This preposition functions as a foregrounding of the intended result of the episode. Such a

construction provides information for readers by presenting what is achieved: the result of the episode is highlighted. In the Arabic title, the translation starts with a nominalization giving the meaning of (looking for), which is combined with a prepositional group. Such a counterpart reproduces the informative role played by the English paratextual element. However, the focus is on the processing of the information of that action and not on its final outcome. Nominalization helps create an ongoing process as asserted by Halliday in his treatment of grammatical metaphor [45]. Such a realization helps interpret the action as purposeful rather than focusing on the final result. Functionally speaking, both of these paratextual elements are informative but they differ in their orientation of information. The scope of information is condensed in the English title, but the Arabic one extends to highlight how the purpose is to be achieved on the conceptual level.

Conclusion

Translating nominalized chapter titles in the Bible into Arabic is a process that blends linguistic competence and religious discourse nuances. The current study specifies four major translational strategies. One-to-one nominalization recreates stylistic loyalty and liturgical dignity; extending nominal groups reinforces narrative unfolding; thematic reframing helps the paratextual element acquire cultural and theological authority; and rendering gerundial nominalized groups into an abstract nominalized speech act. Translators should pay greater attention to the stylistic and theological dimensions of

chapter titles, and this can support both scriptural understanding and theological practice on the part of the Arab Christian world.

As for the first research question, there are important functions that translators should consider while rendering titles, irrespective of other functions mentioned in the previous studies. One of these functions is the reframing role, which in Arabic transforms the narrative episode into a didactic lesson. According to Nord, this reframing role represents a function-oriented translation decision. In such a case, the purpose of the translation foregrounds the target reader's expectations and their religious conventions. Such titles help readers recognize a specific interpretive position. Another important point in such titles is the discrepancy involved in the processing of the action or event involved. Here, there is a shift from a focus on the event in the English paratextual element to a focus on the theological abstraction in the Arabic one. Functionally speaking, Arabic paratextual authority enriches the sacred and prescriptive characteristic of the discourse, whereas the English one reinforces the narrative texture of the discourse. This supports the active role in meaning making and reception of titles, a case which should be adequately conveyed by translators.

Another important function concerns grammatical agency and information structure that affect the communicative role of titles as paratextual elements. One of the English titles is a finite clause of the structure SVO, where the agent is foregrounded. Finite

clauses support the narrative/ textual meaning of the text, inviting the target readership to pursue the events through explicit agency [46]. On the other hand, Arabic uses a nominalized group followed by a prepositional group, as an equivalent to the English clause, fulfilling a summarizing and interpretive function. According to [2], this shift is viewed as a purpose-driven adaptation, where the Arabic title gives a priority to conceptual framing and moral significance. In addition, the absence of the agent in the Arabic gives a sense of universality, a case which centralize the act of rescue. The choice of the translator is both stylistic and functional. In an Arabic religious translation, this testifies to the representation of thematic and doctrinal foregrounding, reframing the cognitive process of the episode.

In the translation of the genealogical metaphoric title *The Table of Nations*, translators should adopt the strategies mentioned. One of these adequate strategies is using conversion from metaphor to sense. Most important is the fact that Arabic and English heavily depend on the context of the text in creating an adequate title for that text. In another paratextual instance, there is the sense of specification realized by the genitive *of*, which is both restrictive and appositive, and in Arabic translators can resort to the use of the particle *wa*, which is functionally and stylistically adequate.

In most of the Arabic titles, translators tend to focus on developing the conceptual salience where meaning is detected through the action. According to [2], translators try to

maintain the informative function through modifying the focus of attention to meet the requirements of the target culture. In some cases, translators try to rebalance the scale between the result and the process of a given action. By doing so, translators can fulfill the linguistic, cultural, and theological expectations to be loyal while rendering titles as paratextual elements across English and Arabic, the point of the second research question.

The most important conclusion is that translators of Arabic titles read the text thoroughly before rendering the title directly, i.e. they do not rely only on the English title. Rather, they rely on the situational context of the text for which they will select an adequate title. This is highly necessary for translators to follow.

For further research, it is recommended that similar studies can be conducted to probe into the functions and strategies of translating biblical titles into Arabic to further the results concerning new findings.

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Appendix: Titles in the Genesis Book (NIV) and their Equivalents in the Arabic Kitāb al-Ḥayāt

No.	English	Arabic
1	The beginning	بدء الخليقة
2	Adam and Eve	ادم و نوح
3	The Fall of Man	سقوط الانسان
4	Cain and Abel	تقدمنا قابين و هابيل
5	From Adam to Noah	ذرية ادم
6	Noah Builds an Ark	نوح يصنع فلكا
7	Entering the Ark	الأمر بملء الفلك
8	The Receding of the Water	تناقص المياه
9	God Blesses Noah	الله يبارك نوحا
10	The table of Nations	سلالات أبناء نوح
11	The Tower of Babel	برج بابل
12	The Call of Abram	دعوة ابرام
13	Abram and Lot	افتراق أبرام

	Separate	ولوط
14	Abram Rescues Lot	إنقاذ لوط من الأسر
15	God's Covenant with Abram	عهد الله مع ابرام
16	Abram Marries Hagar	زواج أبرام من هاجر
17	The Covenant of Circumcision	العهد و الختان
18	The Three Visitors	الزائرون الثلاثة
19	Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed	إهلاك سدوم و عمورة
20	Abraham and Abimelech	ابراهيم وسارة و ابي مالك
21	The Birth of Isaac	مولد اسحاق
22	Abraham Tested	الله يمتحن ابراهيم
23	The Death of Sarah	موت سارة و دفنها
24	A Wife for Issac	البحث عن زوجة لإسحاق
25	The Death of Abraham	موت ابراهيم
26	Isaac Settles in Gerar	أسحاق يقيم في مدينة جرار
27	Isaac Wants to Bless Esau	اسحاق يتأهب لمباركة عيسو
28	Isaac Sends Jacob to Laban	اسحاق يرسل يعقوب الى لابان
29	Jacob's Journey	رحلة ايوب
30	Jacob's Bargain with Laban	مساومة يعقوب للابان
31	Jacob Flees from Laban	يعقوب يخطط للهرب
32	Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau	استعدادات يعقوب للقاء عيسو
33	Jacob Meets Esau	لقاء يعقوب و عيسو
34	Dinah and the	إنتهاك شرف دينة

	Shechemites	
35	Jacob Returns to Bethel	رجوع يعقوب الى بيت ايل
36	Esau's Descendants	ذرية عيسو من بنات كنعان
37	Joseph's Dreams	حلم يوسف و حسد أخوته
38	The Marriage of Judah	يهودا يتزوج ابنة شوع
39	Joseph in Potiphar's House	يوسف في بيت فوطيفار
40	The Cupbearer and the Baker	ساقى فرعون و خبازه في السجن
41	Pharaoh's Dreams	أحلام فرعون
42	Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt	إخوة يوسف في مصر
43	The Second Journey to Egypt	التأهب الى الرحلة الثانية الى مصر
44	Silver Cup in a Saek	الكأس الفضية المفقودة
45	Joseph Makes Himself Known	يوسف يكشف عن نفسه
46	Jacob Goes to Egypt	يعقوب يرتحل الى مصر
47	Joseph's Brothers Meet Pharaoh	لقاء اخوة يوسف بفرعون
48	Manasseh and Ephraim	يعقوب يبارك ابني يوسف
49	Jacob Blesses His Sons	يعقوب يبارك أبنائه
50	Joseph Reassures His Brothers	إحسان يوسف لإخوته