

**أثر السياق القرآني في ترجمة بعض معاني "حروف  
الجر" إلى الإنكليزية: نماذج مختارة**

**The Impact of Quranic Context on the Translation of  
Some Meanings of Prepositions: Selected Verses**

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## المستخلص

تتناول الدراسة الحالية ترجمة بعض حروف الجر عند اقترانها بالأفعال في القرآن الكريم، وكيفية تأثر دلالاتها بالسياق القرآني. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على معاني فئة من حروف الجر واستعمالاتها البلاغية ضمن سياقها القرآني، وكيف أنها تتغير أحياناً إلى ترجمة دقيقة إلى اللغة الإنكليزية. وتفترض الدراسة سلفاً أن حروف الجر العزبية لا يمكن استعمالها على سبيل الإنابة في السياق القرآني، إذ أن لكل حرفٍ جرٍ دلالة خاصة به واستعماله المُستقل عن غيره بحسب وضعه الأصلي، الأمر الذي يُنبئ إشكالاتٍ في فهم المعنى المقصود لفئةٍ من حروف الجر لدى فريقٍ من مترجمي معاني القرآن الكريم، بحيث يذهب بمعناه البلاغي المقصود. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة أنموذج لارسن (1984) في تقويم جودة الترجمة؛ بغية التحقق من دقة ترجمة حروف الجر في عددٍ من الآيات القرآنية المختارة، ومن ثم تقديم ترجماتٍ مقترحةٍ تناسب ما استقر عليه البحث من معانٍ تنطوي عليها تلك الحروف في سياقها القرآني؛ لتصحيح الترجمات غير الدقيقة. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن عدداً من ترجمات معاني القرآن الكريم تُفتقر إلى الدقة في ترجمة الأفعال مع حروف الجر المُقترنة بها في الآيات القرآنية قيد الدراسة، إذ لم تولها عناية كافية للمعنى الذي تُعيدُه الأفعال عند اقترانها بلاغياً بحروف الجر في سياقها القرآني.

## ABSTRACT

The present study deals with the translation of some prepositions when attached to their verbs in the Glorious Quran and how their meanings are affected by the Quranic context. The study aims to highlight the meanings and rhetorical uses of some prepositions within their Quranic context, and how they are sometimes inaccurately translated into English. The study hypothesizes that prepositions cannot be used alternatively in the Quranic context, since each preposition has its own meaning and use, which poses problems of misunderstanding the intended meaning of some prepositions on the part of some translators of the Glorious Quran, and consequently leads to a loss of the intended rhetorical sense. Larson's (1984) model of translation quality assessment (TQA) is adopted in the present study to test the accuracy of translating prepositions in some selected Quranic verses and give feedback to correct mistranslations according to their Quranic context. The study concludes that some translations of the meanings of the Glorious Quran lack accuracy in rendering the verbs along with their prepositions in the selected Quranic verses, where they did not pay attention to the meaning implied in the verbs with the prepositions rhetorically attached to them in their Quranic context.



## 1. Introduction

The need to translate the Glorious Quran into the languages of other nations has arisen as a result of the lack of knowledge of the Muslims of those nations about the Arabic language. Hence, each nation translated the Glorious Quran into its own language, so that many different translations have emerged. However, we must bear in mind that any attempt to translate the Quranic verses into other languages requires a massive effort from the translators in order to attain the implicit and intended meaning.

Translation is broadly defined as an act of communication between languages. However, to mention but a few, Buzelli (1969, p. 140) views translation as a process through which ideas and thoughts are transferred from one language into another. Newmark (1981, p. 7) and Al-Zarqani (1995, p. 111) view translation as a craft that attempts to replace a message or statement in a language by the same message or statement in another language, fulfilling all of its meanings and purposes. However, Bassnett (2002, p. 20) argues that "translation is intimately tied up with the context in which it is made. Therefore, any assessment of a translation can only be made by taking into account both the process of creating it and its function in a given context". Translation, after all, helps to develop the exporting and importing of ideas and concepts among cultures. Thus, it may either be a driving force boosting the intellectual and cultural development, or a vector of damage (Gouadec, 2007, pp. 9-10).

## 2. Types of Quranic Translation

**1. Word-for-word translation:** It implies translating every word in the Glorious Quran into its TL equivalent. In this method of translation, the focus is on the form of the SL text, and it preserves the ST grammar and meanings regardless of interpretation. However, this method is impossible and unacceptable according to the Sharia (Al-Qattan, 1993, p. 325).

**2. Literal translation:** It implies replacing the SLT with the TLT, taking into account the TL grammar, albeit also a word-oriented method of translation (cf. Horace and Cicero: cited in Bassnett, 2002, pp. 51, 66). However, this is the 'dominant method' of translation that is also unacceptable according to the Sharia (Ibn Qudama, 1968, p. 486). It is worth mentioning that literary translation entails a particular talent on the part of the translator in terms of style, sensitivity, and creativity (Gouadec, 2007, p. 29).

**3. Interpretive translation:** In this method of translation, the translator must fully understand the Quranic text via resorting to the interpretation of the Quranic text, then he undertakes to translate it into the TL,



adopting the TL grammar and style to explain and clarify the deep meaning of the ST. This method of translation is the appropriate one according to the Sharia (Ibn Taymiyya, 1991, p. 44).

It is worth noting that scholars concerned with the Islamic religion laid a set of rules to be followed by the translators of the Glorious Quran for the sake of having an adequate and accurate translation of the Quranic texts (Al-Ubaid, 1998, pp. 93-141). Among these rules are:

- a. The translator should be well aware of the interpretation of the Glorious Quran.
- b. The translation must be based on the most correct interpretations.
- c. The translator must note at the beginning that his translation is based on what is understood from the interpretation of the Quranic text.

### 3. Problems of Translating Quranic Text

No one denies the fact that the translated text of the Glorious Quran can in no way attain the beauty, eloquence, and style of the Glorious Quran. The unique style and effect of the Glorious Quranic verses pose a huge challenge to translators to reproduce the same meaning and effect through the process of translation. Therefore, there are some problems encountered by the translators of the Quranic text that cause the translated version to be inadequate and inappropriate.

**1. Semantic problems:** The vocabulary of the Arabic language are words that have straightforward meanings on the one hand, and they are sometimes restricted words and phrases that serve other or additional meanings, on the other hand (Al-Muraghi, 1926, pp. 6-7).

**2. Structural problems:** The Arabic syntax consists of interrelated structures. The pronouns are among the elements that need a prior reference in the structure to be clear and understood for both the Arabic reader and translator alike. For instance, in the following Quranic verse: [البقرة: 146] ﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ﴾, the underlined object pronoun 'هـ' in Arabic comprises a problem, since it most probably refers to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) or to the book of the Glorious Quran or even to the truth -change the prayer direction towards the Kaaba- (Sabra, 2001, pp. 100-101). This is obvious from the following versions:

- “Those to whom we gave the scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Mohammed SAW or the Ka'ba at Makkah) as they recognize their sons.” (Al- Hilali and Khan, p. 31)
- “The people of the book know this as they know their own sons.” (Ali, p. 20)



- “Those whom We have given the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons.” (Shakir, p. 10)
- “Those unto whom We gave the Scripture recognise [this revelation] as they recognise their sons.” (Pickthal, p. 10)

#### 4. Context-bound Functions of Prepositions

Prepositions are generally defined as words that are used with nouns or pronouns to grammatically link them to other words in a sentence (Lovinger, 2000, pp. 298-299; Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 452). Halliday (1985, p. 142) states that "prepositions work as mini-verbs where the prepositional phrases represent independent assertions". The meanings of prepositions vary, depending on their interactions with other elements, or on their use in different communicative contexts; that is, they link certain elements in an utterance to an interpretive context (O'Dowd, 1998, pp. 7-65). However, Lovinger (2000, p. 298) argues that “preposition is a deceptive part of speech, simple on the surface while troubling to learners of English and sometimes to native speakers as well.” Consequently, the choice of a preposition can mostly determine the meaning of a sentence (ibid., Lovinger, p. 299). Prepositions are among the rhetorical and linguistic devices that contribute to the distinctive style and discourse of the Glorious Quran. Thus, one of the main challenges posed by the language of the Glorious Quran is how to accurately convey its rhetorical meanings in translation, and the translators must be aware of the explicit as well as the implicit meanings of the prepositions (Hummadi et al, 2020, pp. 1-2). Accordingly, one can generally say that prepositions have functional meanings according to their relations to the elements in a sentence within a context, and that the change of a preposition can cause the verb to acquire a new functional meaning. Prepositions, or prepositional phrases, after all, constitute a big challenge as to how appropriately and accurately they are rendered.

However, the alternation of prepositions sometimes leads to a lack of accuracy and clarity, as in the case of some Quranic verses when translated into English, since the meanings of some verbs will change according to the preposition attached to the verb, which is referred to as the ‘**inclusion**’. Thus, Ibn Jinni (1988, p. 308) and Al-Askari (n.d., p. 13) state that if prepositions are used alternatively, they will have different meanings along with the verbs included. Al-Samarraei (1989, pp. 7-8) confirms that prepositions in essence are not alternated, since each preposition has its own meaning and use, and that even though two or more prepositions may have the same use or a close meaning, they are still not identical.

From what has been mentioned so far, it is evident that a preposition is not independent by itself; rather, it is an empty word as it

exists to give a meaning when attached to the verb and complement (Al-Suyuti, 1974, p. 144).

## 5. Meanings of Prepositions

A preposition may have meanings other than its original one in the structures, and that the preposition in Arabic has its own uniqueness, particularly in the Glorious Quran (Mat and Zulfadhli, 2016, p. 287). Thus, we will attempt to highlight the meanings of some prepositions, taken mostly from Al-Asfahani (1990, pp. 505- 511) and Ibn Jinni (1988, pp. 59-61), as far as our study is concerned.

1. **مِنْ** comes in different meanings or purposes, such as:
  - a. The beginning of a location, as in: e.g. سرنا **مِنْ** الموصل We walked **from** Mosul city.
  - b. Part of something, as in: e.g. أخذت **مِنْ** المال I took some **of** the money.
  - c. Elucidation as in: e.g. ﴿فاجتنبوا الرجس **مِنْ** الأوثان﴾ [الحج: 30] “*Avoid the uncleanness **of** the idols.*” (Shakir, p.156)
  - d. Alternative as in: e.g. ﴿أرضيتُمْ بالحياة الدنيا **مِنْ** الآخرة﴾ [التوبة: 38] “*Are you contented with this world’s life **instead of** the hereafter?*” (Shakir, p. 85)
  - e. Superfluous in negative rather than affirmative structures as in: e.g. ما رأيت **مِنْ** احدٍ I didn’t see anyone/ I saw no one/ I did see no one.
2. **إِلَى** has different meanings embodied in the following examples:
  - a. مشيت من البصرة **إِلَى** الكوفة I walked from Basra **to** Kufa
  - b. ﴿فاغسلوا وُجوهَكُمْ وأيديكُمْ **إِلَى** المرافق﴾ [المائدة: 6] “*Wash your faces, and your hands **up to** the elbows.*” (Pickthal, p. 47)
  - c. ﴿ثُمَّ أَتَمُّوا الصِّيَامَ **إِلَى** اللَّيْلِ﴾ [البقرة: 187] “*Then complete your fast **Till** the night appears.*” (Ali, 24)
  - d. ﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ **إِلَى** أَمْوَالِكُمْ﴾ [النساء: 2] “*and do not devour their property (as an addition) **to** your own property.*” (Shakir, p. 34)
  - e. ﴿مَنْ أَنْصَارِي **إِلَى** اللَّهِ﴾ [آل عمران: 52] “*Who will be my helpers **in** Allah’s cause?*” (Al- Hilali & Khan, p. 76)
3. **فِي** has also different meanings exhibited in the following examples:
  - a. اللص **فِي** الحبس The thief is **in** jail.
  - b. ﴿ولأصليبننكم **فِي** جذوع النخل﴾ [طه: 71] “*and I will certainly crucify you **on** the trunks of the palm trees.*” (Shakir)
  - c. ﴿فادخلي **فِي** عبادي﴾ [الفجر: 29] “*Enter thou, then, **among** My devotees!*” (Ali, p. 450)
4. **عَنْ** has the following meanings:
  - a. Moving away or separation, as in: e.g. ﴿فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ **حَتَّى** جين﴾ [الصافات: 174] “*So withdraw from them [O Muhammad] awhile.*” (Pickthal, p. 216)
  - b. Beside or next to, as in: e.g. ﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَّأٍ فِي مَسْكِنِهِمْ آيَةٌ **عَنْ** جَنَّتَانِ عَنِ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ﴾ [سبأ: 15]



“Certainly there was a sign for Saba in their abode; two gardens on the right and on the left.” (Shakir, p.205)

c. After or a state after another, as in: e.g. ﴿لَتَرْكَبِنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ﴾

[19: الانشقاق:] “That you shall most certainly enter one state after another.” (Shakir, p. 301)

5. **عَلَى** has the following meanings:

a. Physical elevation, as in: e.g. ﴿وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ﴾ [22: المؤمنون:] “and **on** them, and **on** ships you are carried.” (Al- Hilali & Khan, p. 456)

b. Figurative or abstract elevation, as in: e.g. ﴿وَلَهُمْ عَلَى ذَنْبٍ﴾ [الشعراء: 14] “and they have a crime **against** me.” (Pickthal, p. 171)

c. Obligation or responsibility, as in: e.g. ﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ﴾ [البقرة: 183] “fasting is **prescribed to** you.” (Ali, p. 23)

d. Adverbial or locative meaning as in at/to, as in: e.g.

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ﴾ [النمل: 18] “until when they came **to** the valley of the Naml.” (Shakir, p. 180)

6. **بِـ** has the following meanings:

a. Attachment, as in: e.g. I held the rope **with** my hand.

b. Instrument, as in: e.g. ﴿وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ﴾ [البقرة: 45] “Nay, seek ((Allah) ’s) help **with** patient perseverance and prayer.” (Ali, p. 11)

c. Adverbial meaning (in/at), as in: e.g. ﴿وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ﴾ [آل عمران: 123] “and Allah did certainly assist you **at** Badr.” (Shakir, p. 29). E.g. We met **in** the morning.

d. Oath, as in: e.g. ﴿قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَّا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾ [يوسف: 73] “They said: **By** Allah! Indeed you know that we came not to make mischief in the land.” (Al- Hilali & Khan, p. 314)

e. Extra for emphasis, as in: e.g. ﴿وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ [البقرة: 74] “and Allah is not at all heedless of what you do.” (Shakir, p.5)

f. Cause or reason, as in: e.g. ﴿فَكَلَّا أَخَذْنَا بِنَبِيهِ﴾ [العنكبوت: 40] “So We took each one **in** his sin.” (Pickthal, p. 189)

## 6. Model Adopted

The model adopted in the present study is Larson’s model of TQA (1984) to evaluate the quality of translation and test the accuracy of the translated Quranic verses, and then feedback will be given to correct any inaccurate translations that might be spotted. Larson (1984, pp. 482-485) proposes three criteria for assessing the translation, which are **accuracy**, **clarity**, and **naturalness**. However, as far as our study is concerned, only the ‘**accuracy**’ criterion will be adopted. Larson argues that the ‘**accuracy**’ criterion is the top priority for testing and assessing translations, as translators are prone to making mistakes during the process of conveying the intended meaning of the original text. Thus,



accurate translation, according to her, must be devoid of ‘*addition*’, ‘*omission*’, or ‘*wrong information*’, which constitute the backbone of the ‘accuracy’ criterion.

## 7. Methodology

The following procedure has been followed in the present study:

1. Six different Quranic verses containing rhetorical uses of prepositions have been selected.
2. Assigning the selected verses to four test-subject translators of the Glorious Quran.
3. Analyzing the English renderings of the selected verses according to Larson’s model of assessment to highlight the problems of inaccurate renderings of the rhetorical and implied meanings of some prepositions when they are uniquely used in their contexts.
4. Providing feedback to correct the inaccurate renderings, relying on the prominent exegetes of the Glorious Quran.

## 8. Data Analysis

The following data are taken from different verses and surahs of the Glorious Quran:

**SLT (1):** ﴿كَذَلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ﴾ [Ad-Dukhan: 54]

**TLTs:**

1. “So (it will be). And we shall marry them to Hur (fair females) with wide, lovely eyes.” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 674)
2. “So; and We shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big, and lustrous eyes.” (Ali, p. 353)
3. “Thus (shall it be), and We will wed them with Houris pure, beautiful ones.” (Shakir, p. 243)
4. “Even so (it will be). And We shall wed them unto fair ones with wide, lovely eyes.” (Pickthal, p. 240)

**Table (1): Data Analysis of SLT (1) and its TLTs**

ST	﴿كَذَلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَاهُمْ بِحُورٍ عِينٍ﴾ [Ad-Dukhan: 54]							
TT	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
			Addition	Omission	Different meaning			
	Al-Hilali & Khan	Nil	-	+	-	+	-	-
	Ali	Nil	-	+	-	+	-	-
Shakir	Nil	-	+	-	+	-	-	



Picktha II	Nil	-	+	-	+	-	-
Percentage (%)							0 %

## DISCUSSION:

The verb (زَوَّجَ) in Arabic, meaning ‘to marry’ or ‘to wed’, normally takes two objects, so the second object in Arabic took the preposition **بِـ**, where most Quranic exegetes agree that the verb (زَوَّجَ) implies the meaning of ‘to associate’, ‘to gratify’, or ‘to bestow honor’. Thus, as al-Farahidi (1995, p. 63) states, the preposition ‘**بِـ**’ is inserted here to add this implied meaning, which must be taken into account in the translation. Accordingly, the four translators are unaware of the presence of the Arabic preposition, which is inserted for additional implied rhetorical meaning, and they unconsciously neglected it in their translations. Consequently, this affects the accuracy criterion of conveying the implied rhetorical meaning, where they opt for form-based translation. This is due to the fact that marriage in this life absolutely differs from that in the afterlife. The former may involve gratification or not, continuity or discontinuity, whereas the latter entails an unbroken union and a gratification free from distress (Al-Sa’di, 2000, p.635). Hence, since the discourse in the present Quranic verse pertains specifically to the marriage of the afterlife, it is more appropriate and indeed more compelling to construe the verb (زَوَّجَتْهُمْ) ‘to wed them’ as carrying the meaning of the verbs ‘to associate’, ‘to gratify’, or ‘to bestow honor’. In this sense, a proposed rendering of the aforementioned Quranic verse could be: ((*So, and We gratifyingly wed them to Houris*)).

**SLT (2):** ﴿وَأَصْلَبَنكُمْ فِي جُدُوعِ النَّخْلِ﴾ [Taha:71]

**TLTs:**

1. “And I will surely crucify you **on the trunks** of date-palms.” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 420)
2. “And I will have you crucified **on trunks** of palm-trees.” (Ali, p. 209)
3. “And I will certainly crucify you **on the trunks** of the palm trees.” (Shakir, p. 146)
4. “And I shall crucify you **on the trunks** of palm trees.” (Pickthal, p. 145)

**Table (2): Data Analysis of SLT (2) and its TLTs**

S T	﴿وَأَصْلَبَنكُمْ فِي جُدُوعِ النَّخْلِ﴾ [Taha:71]
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T T	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
			Addition	Omission	Different meaning			
	Al-Hilali & Khan	on	-	-	+	+	-	-
	Ali	on	-	-	+	+	-	-
	Shakir	on	-	-	+	+	-	-
	Pickthall	on	-	-	+	+	-	-
Percentage (%)								0%

### DISCUSSION:

It is known that the crucifixion is usually depicted *on* the trunks of palm trees, not *in* them. However, in the above Quranic verse, the preposition *في* 'in' is used in its original sense in this context instead of *على* 'on' and not as an alternative to indicate severe torture and punishment. In other words, the intensification pertains to the manner, due to the severity of hammering into the beams, as if the pharaoh meant to embed their bodies in the trees and become part of them. Al-Tabari (2000, p.p. 16,115) states: "It was said '*in the trunks*' because the one crucified upon the wooden beam is raised and positioned upon it." Ibn Ashur (1984) confirms that Crucifixion is an intensified form of fastening, that is, binding the body to an upright beam or driving nails into it. Accordingly, it is incorrect to translate the verb "أَصْلَبْتَكُمْ" simply as "to crucify" in the sense of placing the body upon something. Rather, the intended meaning involves the implication of the verb 'embed' or 'nail.' It is as though Pharaoh said, "I will embed your bodies into the trunks of palm trees," that is, insert them into the wood. The verse thus indicates that he did not merely intend to hang them on palm trunks, but he would drive nails into their flesh until their bodies penetrated the wood itself. Thus, the preposition *في* 'in' is used here instead of *عل*, which is irreplaceable in this Quranic context. The above four translators are inaccurate in their renderings of the verb with its attached preposition, where they didn't pay attention to the deep and intended meaning behind the use of the verb *أَصْلَبْتَكُمْ* along with its preposition *في* in this Quranic context. Based on the previous discussion, a proposed rendering of this Quranic verse could be: ((*And I will surely nail you into the trunks of the palm trees*)).

**SLT (3):** ﴿فَأَسْأَلُ بِهِ خَيْرًا﴾ [Al-Furqan: 59]

**TLTs:**

1. "Ask Him (O Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, concerning His Qualities: **His** rising over His Throne, His creations, etc.), as He is *AI-*



- Khabir* (The All-Knower of everything i.e. Allah).” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 485)
2. “ask thou, then, about Him of any acquainted (with such things).” (Ali, p. 245)
  3. “so ask respecting it one aware.” (Shakir, p. 171)
  4. “Ask anyone informed concerning Him!” (Pickthal, p. 169)

**Table (3): Data Analysis of SLT (3) and its TLTs**

ST	﴿فَاسْأَلْ بِهِ خَبِيرًا﴾ [Al-Furqan: 59]							
	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
Addition			Omission	Different meaning				
TT	Al-Hilali & Khan	Ask Him	-	+	-	-	+	-
	Ali	Ask about Him	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Shakir	Ask it	-	+	-	+	-	-
	Pickthall	Ask anyone	-	+	-	+	-	-
Percentage (%)								0%

## DISCUSSION:

The verb ‘اسأل’, ‘ask’, in Arabic normally takes the preposition ‘عن’, ‘about’, which implies ‘inquiry’ or ‘information seeking’ (Al-Suyuti, 1974, p. 216). However, in the above-mentioned Quranic verse, we find that it is followed by the preposition ‘بـ’. This unusual linguistic collocation prompted linguists and exegetes to consider the verb ‘إسأل بـ’ here, as carrying or including the meaning of such verbs as ‘إسأل باهتمام/ بإسأل بعناية/ بإسأل باشتغال/ ‘ask carefully about’ (Al-Baydawi, 1998, p. 483). This is because taking the verb ‘ask’ alone explicitly means clear inadequacy and ignorance of the Quranic context behind deviating from the normal collocation of the verb with its normal preposition to attain the deep rhetorical and implicit meaning. One can thus see how the four translators, according to the table, are inaccurate in their renderings of the exact intended meaning behind the unusual use of the aforementioned verb with its preposition in Arabic. Despite adopting omission (as shown in translations 1, 3, and 4) and different information (as in 2), their renditions are all inaccurate since they all fail in considering the significant meaning of the preposition ‘بـ’ attached to the verb ‘إسأل’.



Hence, based on the statistics of the previous table and discussion, a proposed rendering is supposed to include such a word as ‘*carefully*’, as follows:

((so ask *carefully about Him a versed one*)).

**SLT (4):** ﴿سَيَّمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ﴾ [Al-Fath: 29]

**TLTs:**

1. “The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is **on** their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers).” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 697)
2. “**On** their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration.” (Ali, p. 365)
3. “their marks are **in** their faces because of the effect of prostration.” (Shakir, p. 251)
4. “The mark of them is **on** their foreheads from the traces of prostration.” (Pickthal, p. 248)

**Table (4): Data Analysis of SLT (4) and its TLTs**

ST		﴿سَيَّمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ﴾ [Al-Fath: 29]						
TT	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
			Addition	Omission	Different meaning			
	Al-Hilali & Khan	on	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Ali	on	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Shakir	in	-	-	-	+	-	+
	Pickthall	on	-	-	+	-	+	-
Percentage (%)								25%

## DISCUSSION:

The rhetorical use of the Arabic preposition ‘**في**’ *in*’ instead of ‘**على**’ *on*’ in the above Qur’anic verse indicates that the mark stems from within the believers and is firmly settled in their faces, like light, rather than being merely a superficial, outward trace. This suggests that the inward effect of worship becomes manifest outwardly in their dignified composure. Thus, as al-Tabari confirms, God, Almighty, informs us that the distinguishing mark of those people whose qualities He describes is visible on their faces as a result of prostration. He did not restrict this to a particular time; rather, it applies at all times. This mark implies radiance and brightness upon their faces as an effect of prostration (Al-Tabari,



2000, p.p. 264–265). Accordingly, the preposition ‘في’ ‘in’ conveys a sense of penetration and settledness, making the mark an integral part of their being and appearance. Conversely, ‘على’ ‘on’ suggests a superficial or incidental trace, something outward and removable (Ibn Ashur: 1984). Therefore, based on the discussion and the table statistics above, one can notice that three translators out of four are not aware of the purpose behind the rhetorical use of the preposition ‘في’ instead of ‘على’ in their translations, where they use the English preposition ‘on’ which doesn’t account for the intended meaning of the Quranic verse, unlike Shakir who is aware of the rhetorical use of ‘في’ and uses the English preposition ‘in’. Hence, to convey the intended meaning of the Quranic verse in the translation, a word such as ‘fixed’ or ‘settled’ can be used in translation to clarify the intended meaning in the TL. Thus, suggested renderings of the Quranic verse can be either to adopt that of Shakir, or any of the following two options:

((*Their marks are fixed in their faces*)).

((*Their marks are settled in their faces*)).

**SLT (5):** ﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِي النَّمْلِ﴾ [An-Naml: 27]

**TLTs:**

1. “Till, when they **came to** the valley of the ants.” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 506)
2. “At length, when they **came to** a (lowly) valley of ants.” (Ali, p. 256)
3. “Until when they **came to** the valley of the Naml.” (Shakir, p. 180)
4. “Till, when they **reached** the Valley of the Ants.” (Pickthall, p. 178)

**Table (5): Data Analysis of SLT (5) and its TLTs**

ST ﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِي النَّمْلِ﴾ [An-Naml: 27]								
TT	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
			Addition	Omission	Different meaning			
	Al-Hilali & Khan	To	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Ali	To	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Shakir	To	-	-	+	-	+	-
	Pickthall	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Percentage (%)								0%

## DISCUSSION:

The verb ‘**came**’ in Arabic normally takes the preposition ‘**الى**’ ‘**to**’ or may even occur without a preposition. It is not supposed to take the preposition ‘**على**’ ‘**upon**’. However, interpreters of the Glorious Quran argue that the verb, along with this preposition in the above-mentioned Quranic verse, carries such implied meanings as ‘**come across**’, ‘**come upon**’, or ‘**overlook**’ (Fadhil, 2005, pp. 211-212). Accordingly, contextually speaking, to translate the verb ‘**أتى**’ into ‘**come to**’ doesn’t give the precise meaning, since the coming or arrival of Prophet Solomon and his soldiers to the valley of the ants had not yet taken place; otherwise, the ant’s statement: “*O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his armies crush you, unperceiving*” would be useless or illogical for her to issue such a warning out of concern for the other aunts’ lives. Therefore, the above translations do not fulfil the exact meaning of the verb with its unusual preposition, since the translators didn’t take this deviation, which has an implicit meaning, into account. A proposed rendering of the above Quranic verse would thus be: ((*Until, when they came upon the valley of the aunts*))

**SLT (6):** ﴿فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا﴾ [AI-Baqarah: 158]

### TLTs:

1. “So it is not a sin on him who performs *Hajj* or *Umrah* (pilgrimage) of the House (the *Ka 'bah* at Makkah) to perform the **going (Tawaf) between them** (*As-Safa* and *Al-Marwa*).” (Al-Hilali & Khan, p. 32)
2. “So if those who visit the House(161) in the Season or at other times, should **compass them round**, it is no sin in them.” (Ali, p. 21)
3. “so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit [to it], there is no blame on him if he **goes round them both**.” (Shakir, p. 11)
4. “It is therefore no sin for him who is on pilgrimage to the House [of Allah] or visiteth it, to **go around them** [as the pagan custom is].” (Pickthal, p. 11)

**Table (6): Data Analysis of SLT (6) and its TLTs**

ST	﴿فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا﴾ [AI-Baqarah: 158]							
TT	Translators	Translations	Accuracy (+/-)			Form-based translation (+/-)	Meaning-based translation (+/-)	Appropriateness (+/-)
			Addition	Omission	Different meaning			
			Al-Hilali &	going between	-			



Khan	them						
Ali	compass them round	-	-	+	-	-	-
Shakir	goes round them both	-	-	+	-	-	-
Pickthall	go around them	-	-	+	-	-	-
Percentage (%)							25%

## DISCUSSION:

Basically, the verb of motion 'طاف' / *tafa*/ does not have a correspondent equivalence in English. This justifies the reason behind paraphrasing, explaining, or even borrowing. However, in Arabic, the verb takes more than one preposition, namely 'على' (on) or 'بـ' (by, in, between, at, around, ...etc.) as in the present Quranic verse (Al-Ahmadi, 1979, p. 131) and (Ibn Mandur, 1994, p. 225). The preposition 'بـ' is usually attached to the verb 'طاف' expressing different situations; it gives the meaning of going 'around' when it is related to the Holly Ka'ba. Conversely, it gives the meaning of 'between' when it is related to moving seven times in between Safa and Marwa (holy places near the Ka'ba).

As for the translations of the present verse, different renditions are observed concerning the preposition under study. Ali, Shakir, and Pickthall mistakenly render the preposition 'بـ' as shown in the table aforementioned, which makes the TT meaning mismatch the ST one. That is, the motion that is related to Safa and Marwa entails going back and forth between them rather than around them, which fits the situation of motion related to the Holly Ka'ba. Al-Hilali and Khan, on the other hand, give an accurate rendition using 'between' as a functional equivalent for the preposition in question. This reflects their understanding of the ST situation.

## 9. Findings

Having carried out the analyses and discussions of the Quranic verses according to Larson's model, the study has found that most of the translators adopt both form-based and meaning-based strategies of translation. However, almost all of their renditions are inaccurate. The only appropriate renditions are those of Al-Hilali and Khan in text no. (6) and Ali in text no. (4). This consequently leads to the unawareness of the deep and implicit meaning behind such rhetorical deviations of the verbs with their prepositions. The translators seem to lack a profound look at the marked structure and style, pertaining to the unusual use of these prepositions.

As for the model adopted, especially the three procedures, 'addition', 'omission', and 'different meanings', it is found that the



procedure of 'different meaning' is the most attained one, followed by that of 'omission', whereas the 'addition' procedure is the least attained one by the translators.

## 10. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the data analysis, the research comes to the conclusion that what some translators have proven in their translations of the Glorious Quran is a lack of understanding the exact intended meaning behind the miraculous and rhetorical Quranic use of some prepositions instead of others. This consequently necessitates a review of these translations, in the light of a precise scientific method that takes into account the Quranic secrets behind their use; and this is the core of the present research.

The study also concluded that quite a few translators of the meanings of the Glorious Quran did not take into account the scientific accuracy required in translating the verb included in the Quranic verses in light of the prepositions included in the Quranic context in almost all cases. Therefore, they provided a literal but not an interpretive translation of the verb, and they did not pay attention to the meaning included in the verb with its preposition included in its Quranic context, which affected the power and accuracy of the translations in some Quranic verses. Consequently, this leads us to admit that the phenomenon of 'inclusion' in Arabic in general, and the Glorious Quran in particular, still represents a real problem and a linguistic challenge for translators.

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